

# Small Pets



Small pets are ideal for introducing young children to pets. They are often easily handled and cared for. It is important that you look into the most suitable pet for a particular age group, as small pets all have their particular habits. If you would like some further advice, please [contact us](#) for further information.

In this information sheet you will find an introduction to several types of small pets, such as gerbils, guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, rats as well as reptiles and amphibians.

## Gerbils

Like hamsters, gerbils like to sleep during the day and are not suitable for very young children as they are also very quick! Gerbils make for entertaining pets especially if you give them a deep half-full terrarium (glass) tank of dry compost or sand – watch them dig amazing tunnels!

More information - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerbil>

## Guinea pigs

Originally from South America, guinea pigs come in a variety of hair colours and styles – some even Elvis like! It is important to have a hiding place for your guinea as they like to feel safe and get than used to being handled early on.

Guinea pigs love the company of other guinea pigs. Rabbits usually can be a problem as a house mate as they can cause an injury to them easily.

Vitamin C supplementation is required in guinea pigs as they can not make their own. Fresh green vegetables or ¼ Vitamin C tablet dissolved in their water daily is enough to meet their requirements.

More information - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guinea\\_pig](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guinea_pig)

## Hamsters

Hamsters can make good pets if you are night owl! Most people do not realise that these little guys are

nocturnal – they sleep during the day! So when you want to see them in action during the day, all they do is sleep and then they keep you awake at night going around and around and ..... In their little exercise wheel!

Hamsters can be grumpy when woken during the day, so it is not uncommon for these little critters to bite if a finger is poked at them while sleeping. Exercise is important for hamsters and an exercise ball or a series of tubes can be a good way to keep them active. Males can be aggressive so introduce a new house mate at a young age.

More information - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamster>

## Mice

Mice are friendly little creatures and very curious. They can be easily tamed with gentle handling. Keep them occupied with toys and exercise tunnels as these intelligent creatures get bored easily. Mice live for 1-2 years.

More information - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mouse>

## Rats

Rats, contrary to popular belief, probably make for the best rodent pet as they are exceptionally intelligent and affectionate. They rarely, if ever, bite. They get used to being handled early, are quicker and love human company. Rats live for 2-3 years on average.

More information - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rat>

## Reptiles and amphibians

These pets often require very specific housing needs such as specialised lighting, humidity and heat. Please make sure if you are considering such a pet that you thoroughly research its husbandry needs before buying it.

Most problems in these pets relate to poor management and lack of knowledge about their basic requirements. To provide the correct environment for these pets, it is often costly.

**For further information or advice please do not hesitate to contact us.**

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### opening hours

Monday, Wednesday & Friday  
8.30am–6.00pm

Tuesday & Thursday  
8.30am–7.00pm

Saturday  
10.00am–12.00 noon

### clinic hours

Monday–Friday  
9.00–11.00am

Monday, Wednesday & Friday  
3.00–6.00pm

Tuesday & Thursday  
4.00–7.00pm

Saturday  
10.00am–12.00 noon

**Consultation by appointment only**