

Lakes & Borders Ferret Welfare & Rescue

Adoption Advice



WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO DO FOR YOUR FERRET

A **good secure cage** no smaller than 4ft long x 2ft high x 2ft deep placed in a sheltered shady position. A cage in a shed is a good option that way you have an enclosed exercise area while you clean out and your ferrets can let off steam for a while. If you are short of space for a good size cage in a suitable place you can have a two or even three tier cage say 2ft x 4-5 ft high x 2ft deep your ferrets will be happy running up and down access ramps or tubes. - however the best and ideal way to keep a ferret is in an outdoor ferret court (or pen).

A **food dish** - a double cat dish is fine one side for kibble and one for treats. Water bottles.

Food: Any of the dried complete ferret foods are fine, if you go to West Cumberland Farmers for your ferret food & mention you are recommended by us you will get 10% discount.

Ferrets are meat eaters, although they have everything they need in the 'kibble' you might want to give them meat as well. An easy option is chicken wings, or turkey/chicken mince raw, available at the supermarkets. Eggs not more than once a week raw or scrambled, rabbit you can get frozen as pet meat at Pets at Home, small packets or large.

DO NOT GIVE YOUR FERRET CHOCOLATE!!! Like all pets ferrets like things which are not good for them, FERRETS ARE ALSO **LACTOSE INTOLERANT**, but a small amount of yogurt or ice-cream as a special treat will not harm your ferret but may give it diarrhoea. Some ferrets also like fruit, melon is favourite, vegetables, toast and bread, and raisins, these things are ok in **small** amounts. Cod liver oil is a good treat can be used to distract your ferret enabling you or the vet to do what is necessary as ferrets love it. The thing to remember with treats is if a ferret can't kill or find it if it was wild then don't give it to your ferret.

Call Signal Training: its a good idea to train your ferret to a sound with a treat so that it will come no matter where it is. FERRETS HAVE VERY KEEN HEARING.

Sleeping material: Plenty of it in the cold winter months, fleece blankets, one or two of your fleece jumpers, alpaca wool if you can get it - some alpaca keepers will sell bags of seconds wool, **not** woolly jumpers as ferrets get claws caught in it. Hammocks, fleece tubes can be purchased from the rescue or pet shops.

Toilet area: Shavings or cat litter (must be dust free or breathing problems may ensue), ferrets can be litter trained as they generally use the same area each time, litter trays can be purchased designed for ferrets, if you have difficulty getting one a washing up bowl with the end cut lower for easy access will work just as well. Be aware though ferrets do like to ferret under things and possibly will tip the whole lot over. Oh the joy of ferret keeping!

Carrying box, a cat carrier is fine, or ferret box. Harness for walking out, best and safest design can be purchased from the rescue.

Toys: Cat are best, small dog toys, cardboard box with holes cut out, tubes, plastic carrier bags only under supervision but ferrets love them, be imaginative because they will be!!!

THINGS TO BE AWARE OF WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR FERRETS IN THE HOUSE

- Watch your bare feet or toes, ferrets love to attack what they think are little baby mice!
- Ferrets are intelligent, agile and fast little creatures that can squeeze into the smallest of places. Block up small gaps under doors, fires, boilers back of kitchen units, fridges and freezers - they are curious and may get stuck.
- They may well climb into washing machines and dryers and go to sleep, **check your ferret is not inside** before turning them on.
- Toilets, best to keep lid down as they may fall in and drown.
- Rubber gloves, buttons on remote controls, little rubber grips on bottom of food dishes - Ferrets like to eat rubber for some strange reason but it can cause bowel blockage **WHICH WILL KILL YOUR FERRET**.
- They can get into sofas and chairs. This is more annoying than dangerous unless it's a recliner - then beware if your ferret is around **DO NOT USE** a recliner as you could **kill your ferret** if it is caught in the mechanism.
- House plants ferrets will love to dig them out for you, we find if you really want house plants large cobbles firmly pushed around them does the trick.
- Your food - best not to eat in front of your ferret unless you are prepared to share!!!
- Ferret are good climbers you might think its safe but given time your ferret will find a way to get what it can smell.
- If your ferret disappears while in the house 1) listen very carefully for scratching or rustling noises, 2) search all warm dark snuggly places ie- washing baskets, bottom of wardrobes, drawers etc, that it could go to sleep in. 3) use your call signal noise (eg rattle cod-liver oil capsule tub) which the ferret will respond to (and make sure to reward when he comes running for his treat!)
- Always wash your hands after handling food before handling a new or young ferret, a hungry ferret will grab what smells like food and realise too late that it was you.
- Ferrets have poor eyesight but a very keen sense of smell.
- Be prepared to lose socks, slippers, underwear, anything which is yours your ferret will consider theirs and will stash it away in its secret hiding place.

Good luck and have fun!