

shopping list for needed supplies

- appropriately sized habitat
- habitat cover
- book about cockatiels
- high quality cockatiel food
- millet spray
- cuttlebone
- cuttlebone/millet holder
- treats
- habitat paper or litter
- food and water dishes
- variety of perches
- variety of toys
- bird bath
- grooming supplies
- vitamins and supplements
- play gym

sources

Ask an associate about Petco's selection of books on Cockatiels and the variety of Petco Brand products available for the care and happiness of your new pet. All Petco Brand products carry a 100% money-back guarantee.

Because all Cockatiels are potential carriers of infectious diseases, such as Chlamydia, always wash your hands before and after handling your Cockatiel and/or habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of diseases. Work with your avian veterinarian on protocols to treat your bird should the bird contract Chlamydia.

Pregnant women, children under the age of 5 and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing and/or caring for a Cockatiel and should consider not having a Cockatiel as a pet. Go to the Centers for Disease Control at cdc.gov/healthypets/ for more information about Cockatiels and disease. Go to petco.com/caresheet to download other helpful Care Sheets.

This care sheet can cover the care needs of other species. See petco.com for more information.

Cockatiel

nymphicus hollandicus



Care Sheet

Cockatiels are small, crested members of the parrot family. They are known for their mellow nature. Gray is the most common color, but also available in fancy, lutino, and pied color variations.

Cockatiel facts:

- average adult size: 11-14 inches long, head to end of tail
- average life span: up to 25 years with proper care
- diet: herbivores

Bird owners should avoid non-stick cookware and appliances as they can release fumes hazardous to your bird's health.

Note: The information in this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the sources on the following page or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.

diet

A well-balanced Cockatiel diet consists of:

- Specialized pellets should make up 60-70% of diet, fresh vegetables and fruits and small amounts of fortified seeds.
- Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water, changed daily.
- Do **not** feed birds avocado, fruit seeds, chocolate, caffeine or alcohol as these can cause serious medical conditions. Avoid sugar and high fat treats.

feeding

Things to remember when feeding your Cockatiel:

- Fresh food and water should always be available.
- Vegetables and fruits not eaten within a few hours should be discarded.
- Remember, treats should not exceed 10% of total food.

housing

- Cockatiels acclimate well

to average household temperatures, not to exceed 80°F; be cautious of extreme temperature changes. The habitat should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts.

- A habitat approximately 18"W x 18"D x 24"H, with metal bars spaced no greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart, makes a good home for one Cockatiel. It is best to provide the largest habitat possible; a flight habitat is strongly recommended.
- Perches should be at least 5" long and $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter; a variety of perch sizes to exercise feet and help prevent arthritis is recommended.
- A metal grate over the droppings tray will keep the bird away from droppings; line the droppings tray with habitat paper or appropriate substrate for easier cleaning. To avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches.
- Cockatiels can be kept alone to bond with pet parent or in pairs to bond with each other. Different types of birds should **not** be housed together.

- Birds should be socialized daily by the pet parent.

normal behavior

- Cockatiels are known for mimicking repetitive sounds and noises.
- Bond easily with their human companions.
- Parent-raised Cockatiels will require some time to acclimate to human handling.
- Provide foraging toys, which provide important mental stimulation.

habitat maintenance

- Clean and disinfect the habitat and perches regularly; replace substrate or habitat liner twice weekly or more often as needed.
- Replace perches, dishes, and toys when worn or damaged; rotate new toys into the habitat regularly.
- Ensure that there are no habitat parts or toys with lead, zinc or lead-based paints or galvanized parts as these can cause serious medical issues if ingested by your bird.

- Do not use a lot of cleaning agents around your bird as the fumes can be harmful. It is recommended to use a natural cleaning product.

grooming & hygiene

- Provide filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water regularly for bathing; remove the water when done. As an alternative, mist the bird with water.
- Clipping flight feathers is not necessary, but when done correctly it can help prevent injury or escape; consult an avian veterinarian on what is best for your bird.
- Nails should be trimmed by a qualified person to prevent injury to the bird.

signs of a healthy animal

- Active, alert, and sociable
- Eats and drinks throughout the day
- Dry nares and bright, dry eyes
- Beak, legs and feet normal in appearance
- Clean, dry vent
- Smooth, well-groomed feathers

red flags

- beak swelling or accumulations
- fluffed, plucked, or soiled feathers
- sitting on floor of habitat
- wheezing or coughing
- runny or discolored stools
- favoring one foot
- eye or nasal discharge
- red or swollen eyes
- loss of appetite

common health issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Chlamydia	Appetite loss, fluffed feathers, nasal discharge.	Seek immediate avian veterinary attention.
Conjunctivitis	Red eyes, tearing; closed, puffy eyes.	Consult your veterinarian and wipe eyes with warm water.
Diarrhea	Fecal portion of stool not formed. multiple causes, from change in diet to internal parasites.	Consult your veterinarian and ensure proper diet.

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your veterinarian.