Health & Hygiene

Regular grooming helps to strengthen the bond between you and your pet. When pets are handled a quick health check is advised. Ensure eyes and ears are clean and nails are not too long.

Soiled bedding and stale food should be removed daily. Apart from gerbils all small mammals should be cleaned out weekly with a solution of warm water and mild disinfectant. Gerbils only produce a few drops of urine a day therefore they need less regular cleaning. If your hamster uses one area of its cage as a toilet, there are hamster sized litter trays available for easier cleaning.

Chinchillas and degus perform caecotrophy which is where they produce 2 types of faeces. One is hard and indigestible, the other is soft and is directly consumed from the anus which provides essential nutrients. This is normal behaviour.

Always clean your hands with soap and water after handling, feeding or cleaning your pet and ensure children do the same.

In all cases with any mammal, if your pet appears unwell you should consult your vet.

Insurance is recommended to ensure you are covered for any unexpected vet fees.

Responsible Pet Ownership – Welfare Needs

PamPurredPets are committed to ensure your pet’s welfare needs are met, these are:

- Suitable environment
- Suitable diet
- To be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease
- To be housed with or apart from other animals (if applicable)
- To exhibit normal behaviour patterns

16 years is the minimum age for purchasing livestock.

Livestock Guarantee

We pride ourselves in supplying healthy pets from selected stores, with essential knowledge from our trained staff and offer a follow up call to check all is well.

If your new pet appears unwell within two weeks of purchase, please contact us immediately. We will be happy to replace, refund or consult our own vet depending on each individual case.

City & Guilds Qualification

At PamPurredPets we actively encourage our staff to be knowledgeable in all aspects of pet keeping. We have our own in-house training programme which all staff follow during their first six months with us. After completing this programme many progress on to the City & Guilds in Pet Management, which is a nationally recognised qualification.

Shopping List

- Wooden / Willow toys
- Healthy natural treats
- Tubes / Tunnels
- Litter tray
- Hay rack
- Dust bath / Chinchilla dust
- Cage / Tank
- Wood flakes / Sawdust
- Bedding material
- Water bottle
- Food bowl
- Mineral block / Salt lick
- Vitamin supplement
- Book
- Food
- Exercise ball
- Small Animal Cage Disinfectant
- Wood gnaws

Visit our website: www.pampurredpets.com
Suitability
Hamsters, gerbils, rats, degus and chinchillas all have a natural friendly disposition and if their individual needs are taken into account, they can become very tame and friendly.

Hamsters are nocturnal animals and are very active in the evening and at night, they can be handled during the day provided not suddenly woken from their sleep, they need to live alone as they will fight. Life expectancy of a hamster is 2 to 2½ years.

Gerbils are lively curious animals that rarely bite, they are social creatures and are best kept in pairs or groups of the same sex – mixed pairs will certainly breed. Life expectancy of a gerbil is 2 to 4 years.

Rats are highly intelligent and can become very tame with lots of handling. Rats are social animals and should live with other rats. Litter mates of the same sex are advisable, it is best to purchase at the same time, but they can be mixed with another mate before they are fully grown.

Degus make great pets for older children and adults, they can become tame and friendly with lots of attention. Degus are social animals and should live with other degus. Life expectancy is 5 to 8 years.

Chinchillas are friendly, inquisitive and easy to look after, more suited for older children or adults as they can be a bit shy. Chinchillas can live happily alone if given lots of attention or can be housed with a playmate as long as the same sex. Life expectancy is 5 to 8 years.

Housing
All small mammal cages should be kept indoors and sited away from radiators, draughts, sources of heat, direct sunlight and areas where the temperatures fluctuates. Newspapers should not be used for bedding as the print can be toxic.

Hamsters are very active, so the bigger the cage the better. Cages with a plastic base and wire sides are ideal as hamsters like to climb or crouch in tunnels which are good for hamsters to explore. The floor of the cage should be covered with woodflakes and have paper bedding for nesting. Hay and straw should not be used as the tough strands can hurt their cheek pouches. Within the hamster home there should be a house/place for the hamster to snuggle up and feel safe when they are asleep. Hamsters are very sensitive to fluctuations in temperature. A sharp rise can cause your hamster to become stiff and lifeless, a fall in temperature can cause your hamster to enter a state of hibernation. A gradual return to normal temperature should effect a revival.

Gerbils need a secure home for eating, sleeping and running around. The best gerbil home is a tank / gerbilarium with a well ventilated cover. The tank should have plenty of deep sawdust as a favourite activity of the gerbil is to burrow.

Rats are best housed in a wire cage with a hard plastic / metal base – homes for rats can never be too big as they love to climb, explore and exercise. Multi-level cages with tubes, tunnels and ropes are a good idea as they add interest for the rat. A rat hammock is a place where a rat can hide and rest.

Degus need to be in secure homes as they can be good escape artists! They need wire cages with timber platforms and all chew resistant parts, they prefer to be placed in cool areas. Parrot toys are suited for degus to play with and re-arranging them in the cage can prevent boredom. A dust bath is needed to help keep the degus coat clean and grease free. A handful of soft bedding added to the cage will be sufficient for the degus to make a cosy nest to sleep in.

Chinchillas have wire cages specially designed for them, which have a variety of different ledges and tunnels for activities and all chew resistant parts. A dust bath with bathing dust is essential for the coat of the chinchilla. Chinchillas like to create their own cozy area from soft bedding to snuggle down in.

Feeding
Small mammals can be suspicious of new foods so it is important to change diets gradually by adding a small amount of the new food to the existing and then slowly increasing more of the new diet and decreasing the original food. This should be carried out over a period of 10 days which will cause least disruption to the digestive system.

All small mammals should have a good quality clean food bowl that cannot be chewed. Fresh drinking water should be supplied daily, preferably in a drip feed bottle. Good quality food mixes / nugget diets are available for the specific breed of animal that provide the nutritional value needed. As well as premium nuggets, PamPurredPets offer a premium packaged range based on a mediterranean diet; the rat food contains natural flowers promoting a prebiotic effect and also has ecological ingredients. The gerbil and degus food has high protein and fibre levels is low in fat and aids dental care. The hamster diet contains extra dehydrated fruit and is enriched with calcium. The chinchilla food includes omega 3, aids intestinal care and encourages soft fur. A large variety of natural healthy treats are available for the different mammals. Wooden / willow treats / toys are available and are an excellent choice for helping to prevent dental problems.

Gnaw blocks / mineral stones are a necessity for keeping the teeth nice and trim. Fresh fruit / vegetables should be given sparingly – sugary treats should be avoided. A favourite treat of the chinchilla is raisins.

Chinchillas and degus need a good supply of daily fresh hay, best placed in a hay rack to prevent soiling from the cage floor. Hay is essential for teeth trimming. If it appears your pet is not eating hay, you need to monitor carefully as there could be a problem with pain when chewing, which may indicate an early sign of dental disease.

Handling
All new pets should be allowed 24 hours to settle into their new surroundings before being disturbed or played with. After the 24hr period they should then be rested and feel secure.

Introducing your hand into the cage and offering a small treat, should gain your pets confidence, following on from this stroking can be achieved and then progression to picking up.

Hamsters should be handled when facing their owner so they do not feel threatened; cup both hands around the hamster but do not hold too tightly.

Gerbils should be handled in the same way as hamsters. Never pick a gerbil up by its tail.

Rats with daily handling will approach you, to be stroked and will feel safe crawling onto your palm for a cuddle; if not, the best way to pick up is by cupping your fingers together and gently placing under the rats belly, the other hand can cover the rats body to prevent falls. Never pick a rat up by its tail.

Degus need firm handling as they are wiggly. Patience will be rewarded as they will sit quietly and enjoy being stroked.

Chinchillas can be shy and sensitive and a bit wriggly, but by handling and stroking every day their confidence will be gained and the handling will be enjoyed.