

Leopard Gecko Care Guide

Lifespan: Average 6-10 years, males can live to be 20 years

Size: Average 8-10 inches, males are typically larger than females.

Housing Size

Solitary leopard geckos (unless they are a giant), should not be housed in a tank bigger than 20 gallons. They can get overwhelmed and not know where to find heat water etc. However, they should not be housed in less than 10 gallons. A 20 gallon tank is the best recommended size for an adult leopard gecko.

Cohabbing

Cohabbing: Males and males cannot be housed together due to aggression, and neither can males and females, unless you are an experienced breeder. Trying to cohab males and females without having the necessary knowledge and equipment for breeding can be dangerous for the female, and even deadly if she becomes egg bound. Females and females are the only ones that should/can be cohabbled together.

Substrate

Leopard geckos should not have any loose substrate in their tank as it can get swallowed by them, and they are very prone to impactions which can lead to death. Substrate options can include, artificial turf (repti-carpet), newspaper, paper towels etc.

Heating/Lighting

Leopard geckos are desert creatures, therefore their temperatures need to be 73 degrees fahrenheit ambient air, and 88-90 degrees in their hot hide and basking side. The temperature can drop to 70 degrees at night. In order to achieve the correct temperatures in the tank, we recommend place a heat mat under one side of the tank, placing a hide over that mat, to create the hot hide. Usually a heat mat is not enough to create the high temps that they need. In that case you can use a low wattage blue night time bulb and place it to the side of the hot hide (as you want to still have a cool side to the tank, but not create an oven inside of the hide). This light can be turned off at night to create a small temperature drop and help the gecko have a day/night schedule. It is very important to have a temperature gradient across the tank so the gecko can move to get more heat, or to cool down. It is necessary to buy a good quality DIGITAL thermometer to measure the temps in the tank to ensure that the gecko is not too hot or too cold.

Humidity

Humidity does not need to be high in the tank itself, only 20-50%. Any higher than that and the gecko can get sick, but any lower than that, he can have troubles shedding as well as other health issues. It is necessary to buy a DIGITAL hygrometer to provide the correct humidity levels for him. Also, they need a humid hide. You can create a humid hide by putting sphagnum moss inside a hide, and keeping it moist. This will help the gecko when it is time to shed, or if he needs more humidity. Please make sure you are checking and changing the moss regularly so it doesn't get moldy.

Hides

Leopard geckos do need places to hide, so it's best to have at least 3 in the tank (a hot hide, cool hide, and a humid hide), but you can have more. Don't overcrowd the tank, but give the gecko plenty of hiding opportunities.

Diet

They are nocturnal, so it's best to feed them at night, when they are most active. Adults should receive 3-4 insects daily, and have them be calcium dusted twice a week. Increase the amount of calcium you are giving them if you notice any signs of weakness, tremors, or holding legs in an odd position. Geckos can receive too much calcium, so just be mindful of how often they are getting it. They should have a variety of insects in their diets, such as mealworms, crickets, dubia roaches etc. Wax worms are very high in fat, and should be fed sparingly.

Tail health/dropping

A plump tail is a sign of a healthy gecko. They store water and fat in their tail for energy. Their tail should always have a good amount of weight on it. Leopard geckos can drop their tails with improper handling, or with too much stress. Do not be alarmed if this happens, as the tail does regenerate within a couple months. However, the gecko will probably be weak and lethargic, seeing as the tail contains stored energy. Take extra caution when dealing with the gecko, and make sure that the tank remains super clean so the stub does not get infected.