shopping list
for needed supplies

- appropriately sized habitat
- book about Hermit Crabs
- a variety of Hermit Crab food and treats
- sponges or water pillows
- substrate
- moss
- food and water dishes
- hideaway place
- climbing décor and plants
- spray bottle for reptiles
- under-tank heater and thermometer
- extra shells (larger sizes)
- water conditioner
- salt
- habitat light

sources

Ask an associate about the Petco library of books on Hermit Crabs and the variety of Petco Brand products available for the care and happiness of your new pet.

Because all invertebrates are potential carriers of infectious diseases, such as Salmonella, always wash your hands before and after handling your Hermit Crab and habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of diseases.

Pregnant women, children under the age of 5 and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before caring for an invertebrate and should consider not having an invertebrate as a pet. Go to the Centers for Disease Control at cdc.gov/healthypets, for more information regarding invertebrates and disease.

This Care Sheet may cover the care needs of other species. Go to petco.com/caresheet for more information.

hermit crab
coenobita spp.

Hermit Crabs are nocturnal scavengers. They can live in groups or individually.

hermit crab facts:

average adult size: 2 to 6 inches long, depending on species
average life span: 10+ years with proper care, depending on species
diet: omnivore

Will reach adult size in 2 years, depending on species and under ideal conditions; upgrade habitat size as your invertebrate grows.

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.

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housing

- A 10 gallon terrarium (minimum) is recommended for adult Hermit Crabs.
- Provide climbing décor and hiding areas. New shells should be a bit bigger than the current shell.
- Maintain 70–80% humidity by misting daily as needed (required to keep gills moist, prevent dehydration and ease molting).
- Bromeliads and Spider plants are recommended for the habitat.
- Mix sand with a mulch-type substrate such as coconut fiber or forest bedding so it’s at least 3 inches deep. Can also include moss.
- Temperature should be between 70° and 80° with an under-tank heater as heat source.
- Provide lighting for 10–12 hours per day.
- Keep two shallow dishes of water in the habitat at all times: one with fresh, de-chlorinated water and one with salt water. The water should not be any deeper than ½ inch; any deeper and your Hermit Crab could drown. A sponge can be placed in the dish to help your Hermit Crab climb in and out. The sponge should be changed regularly to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria.
- Hermit Crabs are social and do well in groups but can be housed individually. Do not house different invertebrate species together.

feeding

Things to remember when feeding your Hermit Crab:
- Fresh, clean, chlorine-free water should be available at all times. They may not drink from a bowl but will rely on plants or sponges for moisture.
- Crush all pelleted foods before feeding and feed at night.
- Hermit Crabs appreciate variety in their diet.

A well-balanced Hermit Crab diet consists of:
- High-quality Hermit Crab food and treats.
- Supplement diet with vegetables (spinach, carrots and romaine lettuce) and non-citrus fruits (mangos, banana peels, coconut and papaya) as treats.
- Nuts, seaweed, brine shrimp and fish flakes can also be offered as treats.
- Provide carotene and calcium supplements (such as cuttlebone).

diet

normal behavior

- Hermit Crabs usually molt once or twice a year by burying themselves in the sand. Don’t disturb the process as the crab is very fragile. Protect the molting crab by placing a divider in the tank or moving the other crabs to another tank. Ensure proper humidity.

signs of a healthy animal

- Healthy appetite
- Active

common health issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Symptoms or Causes</th>
<th>Suggested Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mites</td>
<td>Mites appear in the habitat or directly on the crab.</td>
<td>Completely clean habitat, replace substrate and bathe crab in lukewarm water. Ensure no mites are visible on the crab before returning to clean habitat.</td>
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grooming & hygiene

- Bathe Hermit Crabs every week in a non-metal container with a little lukewarm, fresh, de-chlorinated water. Keep water level low and immerse the crab upside down and let it right itself or put the crab in the container and let it walk around. When the bath is done, remove the crab, drain the water out of the shell and place in a secure container with paper towels to dry off.
- Don’t put a wet crab back into the habitat as the substrate will stick to it.

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