

Cockatiel

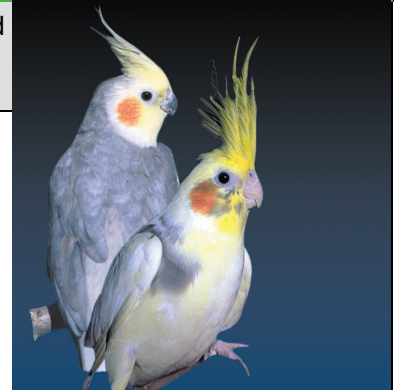
Includes fancy, grey, and pied



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Cockatiels are small, crested members of the parrot family and the world's second most popular pet bird. Originating in Australia, they are known for their mellow nature and easy care. Gray is the most common color.



Is a cockatiel the right companion animal for you?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

1. I have an appropriate and safe space for this bird.
2. I know that choosing this bird can be a long-term commitment.
3. I will provide daily, supervised time for this bird outside a cage.
4. The natural sounds of this bird will be acceptable to family members and neighbors.
5. A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

If you answered "Yes" to these statements, a cockatiel may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a cockatiel and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

Average Size 11 to 14 inches long

Life Span Up to 25 years with proper care

Diet Specialized pelleted diets are highly recommended and should consist of 60–70% of the diet; use fortified seeds in moderation as they are higher in fat and less nutritious than pellets

Fresh fruit and vegetables such as strawberries, apricots (no pits), bananas, dark green leafy vegetables (like spinach or kale), peas, carrot tops, celery, and corn

Clean, fresh, filtered and chlorine-free water changed daily

Do not feed birds fruit seeds, avocados, chocolate, alcohol, or caffeine; these can cause serious medical problems

Feeding If your bird is used to a seed diet, convert to pellets gradually; fresh pellets or seeds and fresh, clean, chlorine-free water should always be available

Fresh fruits and vegetables should be given daily and discarded when not eaten within 24 hours; cockatiels appreciate quality and variety in their food

Housing Birds acclimate well to average household temperatures; be cautious of extreme temperature change; cage should be placed off the floor in an area that is well-lit and away from drafts

A cage approximately 24" W x 14" D x 24" H, with metal bars spaced no greater than ½" apart, makes a good home for your cockatiel; as with all animals, it is best to provide the largest habitat possible; a flight cage is strongly recommended

Perches should be at least 5" long and ½" 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 cage paper or appropriate substrate for easier cleaning; to avoid contamination, do not place food or water containers under perches

Bird owners should avoid non-stick cookware and appliances as they can release fumes hazardous to your birds health

Recommended Supplies

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cage and cage cover | <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming spray | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin supplements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cage paper or substrate | <input type="checkbox"/> Bird bath | <input type="checkbox"/> Variety of perches and toys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pellets and fortified seed | <input type="checkbox"/> Play gym and treats | <input type="checkbox"/> Cuttlebone and millet spray |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food and water dishes | <input type="checkbox"/> Book about cockatiels | <input type="checkbox"/> Nail clippers and styptic gel |

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Normal Behavior and Interaction

Cockatiels are known for mimicking repetitive sounds and noises
Bond easily with their human companions and will follow them everywhere

Habitat Maintenance

Clean and disinfect the cage and perches regularly; replace substrate or cage liner weekly or more often if needed; replace food and water daily

Replace perches, dishes, and toys when worn or damaged; rotate new toys into the habitat regularly

Ensure that there are no cage parts or toys with lead, zinc or lead and lead-based paints or galvanized parts as these can cause serious medical issues if ingested by your bird

Grooming and Hygiene

Provide filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water regularly for bathing, and remove the water when done; as an alternative, mist the bird with water or a grooming spray

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 Bird

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

Common Health Issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Chlamydiosis	Appetite loss, fluffed feathers, nasal discharge.	Seek immediate veterinary attention.
Conjunctivitis	Red eyes; tearing; closed, puffy eyes.	Wash eyes with warm water; seek treatment from veterinarian.
Diarrhea	Fecal portion of stool not formed. Multiple causes, from change in diet to internal parasites.	Seek veterinary attention. Ensure correct diet. Reduce fruit intake.

Red Flags

- Beak swelling or accumulations
- Wheezing or coughing
- Eye or nasal discharge
- Fluffed, plucked, or soiled feathers
- Runny or discolored stools
- Red or swollen eyes
- Sitting on floor of habitat
- Favoring one foot
- Loss of appetite

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

Sources

Avian Medicine: Principles and Application by Ritchie, Harrison, and Harrison
The ASPCA Complete Guide to Pet Care by David L. Carroll
The Simple Guide to Bird Care and Training by Julie Rach

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