

Cockatoo

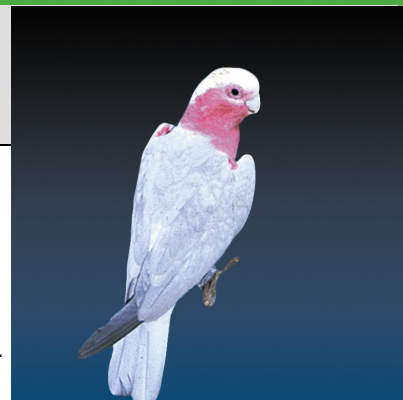
Includes rose-breasted and umbrella



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Cockatoos, large members of the parrot family from Australia, are known for their impressive crests. One of the most affectionate and loving of all parrots, they have a powerful “flock urge,” and need to be treated as part of the family. They require a lot of attention and play time.



Is a cockatoo 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:

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

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

Average Size 12 to 18 inches long **Life Span** 40+ 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 fruits and vegetables, such as grapes, pineapple bits, and corn on the cob

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; cockatoos 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 36" W x 36" D x 48" H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 1" apart, makes a good home for your cockatoo; as with all animals, it is best to provide the largest habitat possible; a flight cage is strongly recommended

Perches should be at least 9" long and 1" 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"/> Mineral block | <input type="checkbox"/> Variety of perches and toys |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pellets and fortified seed | <input type="checkbox"/> Treats | <input type="checkbox"/> Nail clippers and styptic gel |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Food and water dishes | <input type="checkbox"/> Play gym | <input type="checkbox"/> Book about cockatoos |

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Normal Behavior and Interaction

Cockatoos are highly intelligent and inquisitive
They are escape artists, so their cages need to be well-secured
Cockatoos often show their mood with their crest: standing straight up, moving up and down slowly, or sliding back, depending on how they are feeling emotionally

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 appear normal
- Smooth, well-groomed feathers

Common Health Issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Feather Plucking	Bird plucks own feathers; may be due to boredom, poor diet or other illness.	Relieve boredom with attention, new toys, or space; improve diet. Seek veterinary advice.
Neuropathic Gastric Dilatation	Depression, weight loss, passing undigested food.	Seek immediate veterinary attention.
Obesity	Overfeeding or poor diet	Regulate amounts and types of food.
Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease Virus	Abnormal feather color, feather loss, beak deformities.	Seek veterinary advice.

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.