

# Macaw

*Includes green wing, blue and gold and harlequin*



## CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Macaws are native to Mexico and Central and South America and are among the largest members of the parrot family. They come in many vibrant colors, are sensitive, affectionate and intelligent birds, with a loud voice. Macaws are social and require a lot of attention.



### Is a macaw 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 lifelong 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 macaw may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a macaw and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

<b>Average Size</b>	Up to 33 to 37 inches long	<b>Life Span</b>	40+ years with proper care
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**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 apples, berries, pears, grapes, broccoli, and carrots  
 Clean, fresh, filtered and chlorine-free water changed daily  
 Do not feed birds fruit seeds, avocados, chocolate, alcohol, or caffeine as 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; macaws 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 60"H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 1" apart, makes a good home for your macaw; 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" – 2" 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**

- |                             |   |  |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Recommended Supplies</b> | <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            |
|                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Pellets and fortified seed | <input type="checkbox"/> Treats and play gym | <input type="checkbox"/> Nail clippers and styptic gel |
|                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Food and water dishes      | <input type="checkbox"/> Variety of toys     | <input type="checkbox"/> Book about macaws             |

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### Normal Behavior and Interaction

Macaws are social, enjoy human interaction and need ample time outside of the cage for their physical and mental health

They bond easily to their primary caregiver

Macaws chew aggressively and need a lot of stimulating toys

Their natural calls can be quite loud

### 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 a bowl of filtered, chlorine-free, lukewarm water regularly for bathing; 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
Chlamydiosis	Appetite loss, fluffed feathers, nasal discharge, green stool	Seek immediate veterinary attention
Diarrhea	Fecal portion of dropping is loose, weight loss, ruffled feathers. Variety of causes from diet change to internal parasites	Seek treatment from veterinarian.
Feather Plucking	Bird plucks own feathers	Give attention, new toys, or space. Seek veterinary advice
Proventricular Dilatation Disease	Depression, weight loss, passing undigested food	Seek immediate veterinary attention

### 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.