

Parakeet (Budgerigar)

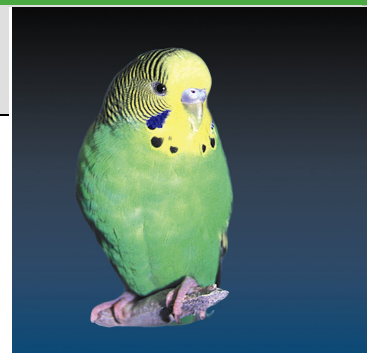
Melopsittacus undulatus



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Parakeets, also called budgerigars, are small members of the parrot family and the most popular species of bird in the United States. They are small and easy to care for. Parakeets can become good talkers or mimics.



Is a parakeet 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 location and space for this bird.
- I will provide a safe environment for this bird.
- I will provide daily, supervised time for this bird outside a habitat.
- 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 parakeet may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a parakeet and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

Average Size 7 inches long **Life Span** 10 to 20 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 vegetables and fruits, such as grated carrots, raw broccoli and green, leafy vegetables and apple slices

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

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

A habitat approximately 18"W x 18"D x 24"H, with metal bars spaced no greater than 1/2" apart, makes a good home for your parakeet; as with all animals, it is best to provide the largest habitat possible; a flight habitat is strongly recommended

Perches should be at least 4" long and 3/8" 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 habitat 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"/> Habitat and habitat cover	<input type="checkbox"/> Grooming spray	<input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin supplements
	<input type="checkbox"/> Habitat paper or substrate	<input type="checkbox"/> Millet spray	<input type="checkbox"/> Variety of perches
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pellets and fortified seed	<input type="checkbox"/> Play gym	<input type="checkbox"/> Variety of toys
	<input type="checkbox"/> Food and water dishes	<input type="checkbox"/> Treats	<input type="checkbox"/> Cuttlebone
	<input type="checkbox"/> Book about parakeets	<input type="checkbox"/> Bird bath	<input type="checkbox"/> Nail clippers and styptic gel

Parakeet (Budgerigar)

Melopsittacus undulatus



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Normal Behavior and Interaction

Parakeets are talkers, but their little voices are sometimes hard to hear
Active and need daily time out of their habitats to interact with the family
Enjoy a variety of chew toys; social and get along well with their own kind

Habitat Maintenance

Clean and disinfect the habitat and perches regularly; replace substrate or habitat 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 habitat 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; 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
Because all parakeets are potential carriers of infectious diseases such as Psittacosis, always wash your hands before and after handling your parakeet and/or the habitat contents to help prevent the potential of spread of diseases.
Pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing and/or caring for a parakeet and should consider not having a parakeet as a pet. For more information regarding parakeets and disease, contact the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/> and PETCO at <http://www.petco.com/pet care info/animal care sheets>.

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
Diarrhea	Fecal portion of stool not formed. Multiple causes	Seek veterinary attention; ensure correct diet; reduce fruit intake
Feather Plucking	Bird plucks own feathers	Relieve boredom with attention, new toys, or space; improve diet; seek veterinary advice
Mites (Scaly Face and Leg Disease)	White scales around eyes, beak (cere), legs, and feet	Seek treatment from veterinarian

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.