

# Cool Climate Chameleon

*Includes Jackson's, dwarf, Fischer's, and four-horned*



## CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Cool climate chameleons were once only found in Africa at elevations higher than 5,000 feet. Like all chameleons, these species change color and use their long, sticky tongues to catch their food.



### Is a cool climate chameleon 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 can accommodate a habitat requiring an electrical heat source.
- I want a pet that doesn't need to be cuddled or touched.
- I feel comfortable feeding live food to a chameleon.
- I can commit to providing proper care for a cool climate chameleon.
- A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this animal.

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

**Average Size** 2 to 10 inches long

**Life Span** Up to 5+ years with proper care

**Diet** Provide a variety of live insects, including gut-loaded (recently fed) crickets, mealworms, and waxworms; Dust the insects daily with a pure calcium supplement and once or twice a week with a vitamin/mineral supplement

**Feeding** Feed adults every other day; juveniles daily

**Housing** Due to the varied sizes and growth rates of reptiles, and their individualized needs, we recommend you consult your qualified reptile veterinarian and a book on this species to determine it's specific housing requirements

Size – Appropriate size and shape habitat to accommodate normal behaviors and exercise, taller than it is wide with all screened sides; recommend PetScreen; do not use fiberglass or aluminum screen; use a basin under the bottom of the cage to catch water

Substrate – No specific substrate is needed, most of these are tree-dwellers and reside on branches and in plants exclusively; use leaf litter, sphagnum moss, and mulch-type substrates

Habitat – A dense area of non-toxic plants to one side for hiding; a more open, exposed area of branches for basking to the other side; use incandescent lighting to heat the entire habitat

Temperature – Temperature gradient (80° F. for the warm end and 65° F. for the cool end); recommend radiant heat; use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as primary heat source

Lighting – Provide needed UVB rays with full spectrum fluorescent light for 10 to 12 hours a day; incandescent bulb is needed for basking area if not using a ceramic heater

Water and Humidity – Not likely to drink from a bowl; rely on moisture on non-toxic plants and in collecting pools in the habitat for drinking; mist chameleons several times a day; maintain humidity in the habitat at 50–100%, depending on the species; use a drip system

Keep chameleons separately; do not house different species of reptiles together

- |                             |   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Recommended Supplies</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat with secure lid        | <input type="checkbox"/> Basking branches and non-toxic plants |
|                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Mist bottle/drip system        | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin/mineral supplement            |
| <i>Depends on species</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer and humidity gauge | <input type="checkbox"/> Incandescent lights or ceramic heater |
|                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Book about chameleons          | <input type="checkbox"/> Full spectrum fluorescent light       |

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### Normal Behavior and Interaction

All chameleons change color, depending on temperature and mood  
Unlike other reptiles, males are generally larger and more vibrant, colorful than females  
Most chameleons become highly stressed when handled; regular handling is not recommended

### Habitat Maintenance

Remove feces from habitat daily; mist frequently to maintain humidity  
Thoroughly clean the habitat at least once a week: set chameleon aside in a secure habitat; scrub the enclosure with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all smell of bleach; add clean substrate

### Grooming and Hygiene

Always wash your hands before and after touching your chameleon or habitat contents to help prevent *Salmonella* and other infectious diseases  
Chameleons regularly shed their skin; ensure humidity of habitat is appropriate to allow proper shedding; to facilitate shedding, mist regularly

### Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Consistent behavior
- Healthy skin
- Clear eyes
- Eats regularly
- Clear nose and vent
- Body and tail are rounded and full

### Common Health Issues

Health Issue (alpha)	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Gastro-intestinal Disease	Runny stools, caked or smeared stool around the vent area, and loss of appetite caused by bacterial or parasitic infection.	Consult your exotic animal veterinarian.
Metabolic Bone/Vitamin Deficiency	Inability to absorb calcium due to insufficient UVB light. If untreated, can lead to a disorder characterized by deformities and softened bones. Swollen limbs and lethargy.	Provide ample UVB lighting and consult your exotic animal veterinarian.
Respiratory Disease	Labored breathing, runny nose, swollen eyes. Can be caused by temperatures that are too cold.	Ensure proper lighting, water, and basking conditions. If condition persists, consult your veterinarian.

### Red Flags

- Mucus in mouth or nose
- Swelling
- Paralysis of limbs or tail
- Bumps, sores or abrasions on skin
- Lethargic
- Labored breathing
- Abnormal feces
- Weight loss or decreased appetite

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

### Sources

*Chameleons, Their Care and Breeding* by Linda J. Davison  
*The New Chameleon Handbook* by Francois Le Berre

**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.