

House Gecko

Hemidactylus frenatus



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

The gentle house gecko is one of the most popular geckos. They are small, hardy, and have skin that sometimes appears transparent. They change color according to mood. Good at climbing vertical surfaces, they may walk across the ceiling of their habitat.



Is a house gecko 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 can accommodate a habitat requiring an electrical heat source.
2. I want a pet that doesn't need to be cuddled or touched.
3. I feel comfortable feeding live food to a gecko.
4. I can commit to providing proper care for a house gecko.
5. A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

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

Average Size 4 to 5 inches long

Life Span 5+ years with proper care

Diet Provide a variety of insects, including gut-loaded (recently fed) crickets, waxworms, butter worms, small mealworms; provide a multiple vitamin/mineral supplement once or twice a week and calcium daily

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 – 10-gallon tank with secure screen lid for one or two geckos

Substrate – Use pelleted or mulch-type; geckos may eat their substrate; if they do, switch to something they cannot eat, like paper or cage carpet, or an edible substrate

Habitat – Thick branches for climbing; décor and an area elevated off of the floor of the habitat for hiding are also recommended; humidity of about 75% should be maintained in the habitat at all times

Temperature – Temperature gradient (90° F. for the warm end and 70° F. for the cool end); recommend radiant heat; use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as primary heat source

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

Water – May not drink from a bowl; misting the tank may be necessary to provide moisture on non-toxic plants and in collecting pools in the tank; a shallow bowl of fresh, chlorine-free water should be available daily for when they do drink

House adult males separately; do not house different species of reptiles together

Recommended Supplies

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat with secure lid | <input type="checkbox"/> Shallow water bowl | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basking rock and logs | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin/mineral supplement | <input type="checkbox"/> Substrate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humidity gauge | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-toxic plants, branches | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat source |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book about geckos | <input type="checkbox"/> Incandescent light or ceramic heater | <input type="checkbox"/> Mist bottle |

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Normal Behavior and Interaction House geckos are fast moving, making handling difficult; their tail can detach easily, so use extreme care when feeding
They are nocturnal and hide during the day

Habitat Maintenance Change water and remove feces daily; mist several times a day to maintain humidity
Thoroughly clean the tank at least once a week: set tropical gecko aside in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings 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 gecko or habitat contents to help prevent *Salmonella* and other infectious diseases
Geckos regularly shed their skin; ensure humidity of habitat to allow proper shedding

Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Active and alert
- 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	If untreated, can lead to a disorder characterized by deformities and softened bones. Swollen limbs and lethargy.	Consult your exotic animal veterinarian.
	Respiratory Disease	Labored breathing, runny nose, swollen eyes. Can be caused by temperatures that are too cold.	Ensure that the habitat is appropriately warm. Consult your exotic animal veterinarian.

Red Flags

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

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

Sources *Geckoes: Biology, Husbandry, and Reproduction* by Friedrich-Wilhelm Henkel
The Gecko Owner's Guide to a Happy Healthy Pet by Audrey Pavia

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.