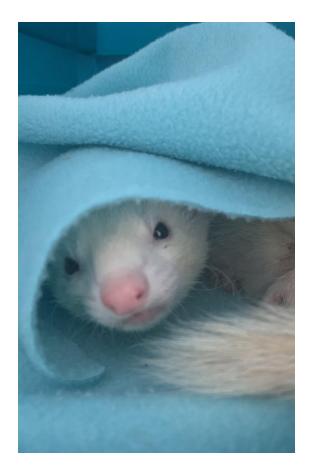
Ferrets

Mustela putorius furo



Approximate life span: 7-10 years Estimated adult size: 700-1000 grams Difficulty Level: Intermediate



Ferrets, related to weasels, are domesticated polecats. They are popular pets due to their excited, playful nature. They can sleep 18+ hours per day but are incredibly playful and friendly when awake. Ferrets are highly regulated and even illegal in some areas, both because feral colonies can wreak havoc on native fauna and because they are potential rabies carriers.

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Ferrets are highly social and should be housed in groups whenever possible. Cages should be well-ventilated and provide at least 3 cubic feet of space per ferret, with multiple levels preferred. A variety of sleeping bags, hammocks, and shelves to climb and hide should be offered. Cages and shelves should have a solid bottom as wire flooring can lead to foot problems. Ferrets can be litter box trained. Use paper-based litter and change daily. They require daily out of cage time for exercise, with supervision and ferret-proofed spaces.

DIETARY NEEDS

Pellets: Ferrets are obligate carnivores. A quality, meat-based ferret food should be low in carbohydrates, free of vegetable proteins with protein content of at least 35%. This should be available at all times for small, frequent meals throughout the day. **Treats:** Cooked meats may be offered as part of a healthy diet. Baby food meats may also be used to provide soupy treats.

RECOMMENDED VETERINARY CARE

- Annual exams
- Vaccines rabies & distemper
- Spay/neuter
- Parasite prevention
- Common illnesses: adrenal disease, insulinoma, heart disease, parasites, foreign body obstruction