

# Colubrids

*Corn snake, milk snake, king snake, rat snake, etc.*



**Approximate life span:** 10-20 years  
**Estimated adult size:** 3-6 feet long  
**Difficulty Level:** Intermediate  
**Hot side temp range:** 75-80°F  
**Cool side temp range:** 70-75°F  
**Humidity level:** 40-50% (60% in shed)

## RECOMMENDED VETERINARY CARE

- Annual exam
- Common medical conditions: parasites, impaction, dysecdysis, stomatitis, burns, live feeding injuries



A variety of snakes fall into the colubrid family, including corn snakes, milk snakes, and kingsnakes. Colubrids are popular in the pet trade due to their more manageable size, although they are quick and can be less docile than other popular choices.

## HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Housing should be tightly secured and appropriately sized for the length of the snake - generally, the cage should be about  $\frac{2}{3}$  the length of your snake. Locks should be used, as colubrids are master escape artists. Cages should include multiple humid hide boxes for visual security and proper shedding. Substrate should not consist of sand or other small materials that can be ingested, due to the increased risk of impaction. Reptile carpet, tiles, or newspaper are recommended, along with aspen or repti-bark. Decorative touches like artificial plants, rock hides, and caves can also be added. Lighting and temperature are key to healthy reptiles. Snakes should have a hot side and a cool side for maintaining appropriate temperatures as they cannot regulate body temps on their own. They will not require special UV lighting, but any lighting should be on for no more than 12 hours per day, with heat maintained at all times.

## DIETARY NEEDS

Colubrids are carnivores and require a diet of whole prey animals for proper nutrition. It is recommended to feed only frozen/thawed food due to the risk of injury from live prey. Provide food that is about the same girth, or very slightly larger, as the largest part of your snake. Food should be warmed and fed once a week for younger snakes and every 2-4 weeks for adults. Never microwave food as it can heat unevenly and burn your snake. Remove and dispose of uneaten food within 24 hours. Provide a stable water dish with fresh water at all times.