

Parrots



A variety of bird species fall under the umbrella of a parrot, ranging in size from extra small finches to extra large macaws. They are colorful, vocal, and full of personality, but they are not an easy pet to keep. Interaction with birds is different from mammals and reptiles, as cuddling behaviors humans enjoy can create inappropriate bonds and trigger hormonal imbalances. Careful consideration should be given before adopting parrots, as their long lifespan and specialized needs require a strong commitment.

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

A cage's width should be at least 1.5 times the bird's wingspan and twice the height, although bigger is always better. Paired or flocked birds will require additional space. Regular out of cage exercise is also important. Enrichment should be provided and changed regularly to prevent behavior and hormonal issues. Avoid dark hides and nesting materials that could encourage breeding behaviors.

DIETARY NEEDS

Choose a quality pellet without seeds or other blends. Parrots can be choosy, and a pelleted diet will allow them to choose favorite colors or shapes while still getting complete nutrition. Avoid seeds except as an occasional treat; they can lead to obesity and liver disease. Diet transition for small birds is difficult and should be done under veterinary supervision. Most parrots also enjoy a wide variety of healthy people foods and will love eating with their human flock.

Approximate life span: XS (finch, canary): 5-10 years, Small (budgie/parakeet): 7-12 years, Medium (cockatiel, conure, Quaker): 10-25 years, Large (Amazon, African Grey): 25-60 years, XL (cockatoo, macaw): 40-70 years

Estimated adult size: XS: 10-15 grams, Small: 15-35 grams, Medium: 70-120 grams, Large: 150-400 grams, XL: 500-1500 grams

Difficulty Level: Intermediate-Advanced

RECOMMENDED VETERINARY CARE

- Annual exam, fecal, and blood work
- Nail trims
- Common illnesses: hormonal imbalance, liver disease, beak overgrowth, parasites