



All About the **Ferret**

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The Ferret

About the Ferret

Ferrets are a member of the weasel family, and are very fun, loving, and entertaining animals. Before domesticated, they were working animals that kept barns free of mice and other rodents.

Ferret Characteristics

Ferrets are very amusing little animals, with some strange behaviors that can be entertaining to watch. They roll around on the floor, love to play chase, and can dance back and forth, making chirping noises. Ferrets can possess a musky odor that is usually lessened once the animal is spayed or neutered. Ferrets have short, fuzzy hair that can be brushed. They do have a season of shedding, and will need to be fed a hairball solution to aid in digestion.

Selecting Your Ferret

A Few Words about Breeders

Working directly with a breeder can definitely be a plus if you are wanting to learn more about the breed and need to understand better the care and commitment required for Ferrets. Ferrets are pretty easy-going animals, yet they do require a bit of work and have some special needs. A breeder would be able to help you understand these needs and requirements before you make a final decision. Another positive is that a breeder has spent a considerable amount of time around the kits (babies) and the older Ferrets, making them quite socialized and comfortable around humans. These Ferrets will adjust to their new homes quite well.

A Few Words about Pet Stores

While Ferrets are available in most pet stores, careful inspection and consideration needs to be taken before purchase. Oftentimes, these animals have been taken from their mothers way too early and have not yet become socialized with humans. New owners will have a very difficult time with their new Ferret, trying to adjust them to a new environment and be comfortable enough to even hold them.

Another great option would be adopting your Ferret from an animal shelter. There are several great Ferrets that are just waiting for the right person to take them home. These animals have usually been turned in my families that found they just didn't have as much time as they thought to spend with their Ferret.



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How to Choose your Ferret

New Ferret owners will probably do best selecting an adult Ferret, since Kits can be quite a handful for the inexperienced. A Ferret that is around 2 years of age will be just perfect to get you started. A healthy Ferret is the most important thing to look for. Good signs of health to watch for are:

- Bright, clean eyes
- Clean ears (look for mites)
- Clean teeth (no major tartar build-up, or swollen gums)
- Long, shiny whiskers

The coat should be soft and smooth, and free of red, dry or itchy patches. Colors are normally sable colors; there are also albinos. They come in a variety of patterns and markings. Observe the Ferret while they walk to ensure there is no limping. Check the feet for any cracking or infection.

Through The Years

The Ferret Kit

A normal litter usually consists of 7-9 kits. The babies are born blind, and have very little hair. After about 20 days, the kit will have all of its hair, and the eyes should be open. Ferrets tend to mature very quickly, and will look just like their parents by four months. Kits should be sold around 8 weeks of age. Any sooner than this, and there could be medical issues, or difficulties bonding with the owner. Kits should be fed a diet of specialty food for their breed. It is often suggested to new owners that feeding them cat food will be just as good. This is not necessarily true, and should be avoided. Ferrets, especially kits, need a higher fat diet and plenty of protein to help them develop properly and fight off diseases.

The Ferret Adult

It will be necessary to have your Ferret adult spayed or neutered to help with their musky odor, and also prevent females from dying of anemia. Males that are not neutered tend to spray or "mark" their territory in your home. Ferrets also have scent glands that they will spray if they are extremely distressed or in danger. There is often debate over whether it is necessary (or even humane) to have the scent glands removed. If you chose to do so, the procedure should not be done on Ferrets that are less than 8 weeks of age.



You'll need these basics before your Ferret comes home. Click the items below to go to CheapPetStore.com to find the best prices for online pet supplies.

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The Ferret Senior

Most Ferrets are considered “seniors” by the age of 7. Dry, crunchy food may become difficult for your Ferret to chew, yet it is important to ensure they have clean teeth, which dry food often accomplishes. Be sure to spend as much time as you can with your Ferret. Older ones have a harder time entertaining themselves and need a lot more mental stimulation and physical exercise. The average lifespan of a Ferret is 7-8 years of age, while there are some that have lived for 11 years or more.

Medical Considerations

Boston Terriers have an overall good health record. While regular exercise is important for any pet, too much physical activity for a Boston can cause extreme difficulty breathing and heat exhaustion. Short walks and staying indoors on hot summer days and cold winters are required. As they age, skin and heart tumors can become a concern. Because of the predominance of the Boston's eyes, it is necessary to keep them clean and watch for irritations. They are prone to cataracts (where the lens of the eye becomes cloudy). With regular visits to your veterinarian, these conditions can be identified and treated early on.

Necessary Items

Purchase a wire cage that is at least 18 inches long, 18 inches deep, and 30 inches wide. Ferrets enjoy hammocks in their cages where they can nap during the day and at night. Ferrets can be trained to use a litter box. Purchase a pellet litter, as the clumping brands irritate their eyes. Many pet stores and other retailers sell specialty Ferret food, which is highly recommended.

Popular Products for your Ferret

[Ferret HiBack Litter Pan](#)

[Bi-Odor Ferret Deodorizer](#)

[Corner Litter Scoop, Ferret](#)

[Ferret Dry Shampoo](#)

[Clip & Trim, Ferret](#)

[Ferret Bites](#)

[Ferretone](#)

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