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## 8. Ferret proof your home!!!

Keep your ferret away from shoes, soft rubber items, foam rubber, styrofoam, pencil erasers, rubber bands, nuts, candy, chocolate, soda, chips, gum, cleaning supplies, soap, etc. Be aware that ferrets like these things and will do anything they can to get them. All of these items are potentially lethal to your ferret. Block off openings around the dishwasher, stove, refrigerator, freezer, and under cabinets. Keep your ferret away from the laundry room. Also be aware that ferrets can climb into reclining chairs, hide-a-beds, sofas, and beds to fall asleep. Ferrets may be injured or killed by getting caught in furniture. Know where your ferret is at all times; never let your ferret run around the house unsupervised. Ferrets can open cabinets and climb into bath tubs, washers and dryers, and drawers. Try to have a ferret safe room for your ferret to play in.

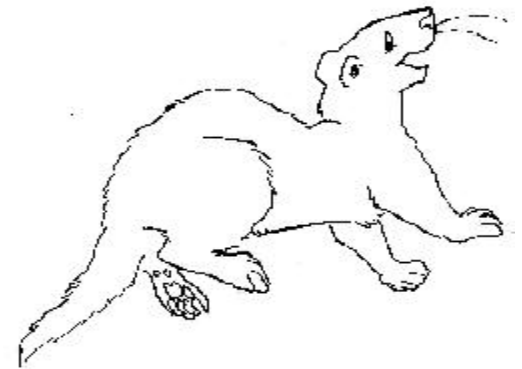
## 9. Have money set aside for medical emergencies.

Ferret medical care can be very expensive. Be sure to have enough money set aside for emergency surgeries and vet visits. You may want to try setting aside a certain amount of money every month for your ferret's medical care. Just one surgery can run as much as \$800.00. Have at least \$1000.00 available at all times for medical care. As ferrets get older, they tend to get illnesses that require surgery.

## 10. Keep your ferret up to date on vaccinations.

Ferrets need to be vaccinated against rabies and canine distemper annually. Both diseases are lethal to your ferret. If you live in an area with mosquitos, check with your veterinarian to find out if your ferret needs to be on a monthly heart worm prevention medication. Take your ferret in for a check-up and vaccinations annually. Never wait to take your ferret to the vet if you suspect a problem. Prompt attention will save its life.

# Ten Tips to a Healthy and Happy Ferret



**For more information about ferrets,  
contact:**

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## 1. Feed your ferret right.

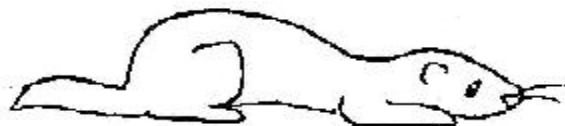
Feed your ferret premium ferret or premium cat food. Make sure the food contains at least 34% protein and less than 2% fiber and that meat is the first ingredient listed on the bag. Avoid any ferret foods that contain dried fruits and vegetables. Remember, ferrets are strict carnivores! Suggestions: Totally Ferret, Zupreem, Iams Kitten or Cat, Eukanuba Kitten or Cat.

## 2. Give your ferret appropriate treats.

Give only meat-based treats or fatty acid supplements as treats. Cooked chicken, chicken or turkey baby food, chicken livers, cooked egg, and chicken or turkey flavored cat or ferret treats are acceptable. Avoid giving your ferret fruits and raw vegetables as treats. A couple of raisins a day won't hurt your ferret, however they provide no nutrients and contain sugar. Raw vegetables can cause intestinal blockages in ferrets because ferrets cannot digest vegetable matter.

## 3. Groom your ferret.

Trim your ferret's nails easily by putting a little Ferratone or Nutrical on the ferret's stomach then pointing the nose toward the treat; this will keep the ferret busy long enough for you to get the job done. Clean your ferret's ears whenever you see wax building up; ear cleaning may be a two person job where one person scruffs the ferret and the other cleans ears. Keep your ferret free of fleas by using Frontline, Advantage, or Program all of which



can be obtained from your veterinarian. Never use a flea collar or a flea dip on a ferret. Brush your ferret's teeth at least once a month with cat toothpaste. Get annual dental checkups for your ferret. Brush your ferret's coat regularly, especially during shedding seasons (spring and fall). In shedding seasons, give your ferret a one inch ribbon of hairball remedy daily; during non-shedding seasons, give a one-half inch ribbon a few times a week. Don't give your ferret hairball remedy right before a meal; wait at least one hour after they eat. Hairballs can cause stomach and intestinal blockages because ferrets can't cough up hairballs in the same way cats do.

## 4. Play with your ferret.

Give your ferret at least three hours of supervised play time outside of the cage each day. Invent creative games to play with your ferret and provide lots of interactive toys. Ferrets are very intelligent animals; they can get depressed and stressed if caged for too long which can lead to illnesses such as ulcers and other gastrointestinal problems. Hold your ferret often and give it lots of affection. Ferrets are social animals and need interaction with others for good mental and physical health.

## 5. Buy a comfortable home for your ferret.

One ferret requires a cage that is at least three feet wide, two feet deep, and three feet high. If you have more than one ferret, you need a much bigger cage. Choose a ferret cage that has multiple levels. Fill the inside of the cage with tubes, tunnels, hammocks, sleep sacks, dangle toys, a litter box, food bowls, water bottles and lots of soft fabric bedding. **Never use a fish aquarium as a ferret home.**



## 6. Keep your ferret cool

Ferrets cannot sweat or cool themselves down in any way. They are at risk of heat stroke at temperatures above 85 degrees. Make sure your ferret is not exposed to direct sunlight during the hot months of the year. If you have no way of keeping the temperature below 85 degrees, try putting bottles of ice or cold water in the cage, or have fans or misters, or anything else you can do to keep your ferret cool.

## 7. Use the right litter in your ferret's litter boxes.

Ferrets use a litter box for a latrine similar to a cat. They do not use litter for bedding like mice, gerbils, or hamsters do. Do not use clumping litter since it can cause an intestinal blockage if ingested that may require surgery. There are many litters available made from things like recycled newspaper or compressed plant fibers that are low in dust. Do not use cedar or pine chips as litter or as bedding. These products will cause respiratory problems in ferrets.

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