Cleaning Requirements

Snakes and lizards are very susceptible to microorganisms and parasites when kept in captivity. Daily cleaning of water and bowls is important. The terrarium itself should be cleaned once a week and faeces removed as soon as possible.

It is important to use specific reptile cleaning products (not regular household cleaners). Rinse thoroughly with fresh water after disinfecting.

Anytime you introduce new cage décor such as logs, rocks, sand etc. it should be sterilised with bleach or a slow heating oven at 120 - 150 degrees.

tip: Check the temperature in your terrarium daily. If you remove your pet from its enclosure, ensure the surroundings are safe from cats and dogs and keep doors and windows closed. Enjoy your reptile as they truly make wonderful and fascinating pets.

A Final Word

Research which particular reptile will fit your lifestyle and how interactive you would like to be with your pet i.e. is your reptile able to be handled, or not?
Are you prepared to deal with the feeding and cleaning requirements?

You should monitor your reptile daily and get to know normal versus abnormal activity.

tip: Check with your local wildlife agency or council as to what permits are required for owning a reptile.



reptile checklist

- [ ] Appropriate license
- [ ] Terrarium
- [ ] Cage décor
- [ ] Plants
- [ ] Heat device
- [ ] Incandescent or fluorescent lighting
- [ ] Substrate eg. sand, carpet etc.
- [ ] Thermometer
- [ ] Thermostat
- [ ] Specific food
- [ ] Reptile friendly disinfectant
- [ ] Water & food bowls
- [ ] Care book specific to your reptile

This brochure contains general information only.
Please consult your vet for specific pet health advice.

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your reptile care guide



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Snakes and lizards make up the majority of reptiles housed domestically in Australia. Reptiles are increasing in popularity largely because of reduced space requirements and they are relatively inexpensive to keep (although initial purchase costs can be high).

Housing - The Terrarium

Reptile houses are called terrariums. In general they should be well ventilated, escape proof and have appropriate lighting. Terrariums can be tall and narrow to accommodate tree dwelling reptiles (e.g. like dragons and monitors) or low and wide, suitable for most lizards and ground dwelling snakes.

tip: Get a terrarium that is suitable for the type of reptile you've decided to keep. Petstock have a great range available.

Outfitting Your Terrarium

Covering the floor of your terrarium is important and there is a variety of coverings to choose from. While sand and shredded bark are options and provide a great visual appearance, special reptile carpet is another alternative. It is also important to provide your reptile with the security of hides and shelters and opportunities to camouflage themselves. Standard décor items may include rocks, basking limbs, plants and logs.

Environmental Conditions of your Terrarium

Heating

It is essential to provide a thermal gradient in your terrarium, i.e. warmer at one end and cooler at the other. Several ways of heating your enclosure include: basking bulbs, ceramic heaters, heat mats, central heating for the building or space heaters in the room where the reptile's enclosure is kept.

A thermometer should be placed in the terrarium (preferably two, one at each end) and a thermostat is also a good idea to help regulate temperatures.

Lighting

This can be provided in two ways:

A full spectrum incandescent lamp provides both heat and light and is best used as a basking bulb hanging above the enclosure at one end.

A full spectrum fluorescent UVA/UVB tube lamp provides a sunlight replacement for those reptiles that need it. This lamp usually does not provide enough heat withouta separate heating source.

tip: Hot rocks should not be used as they can burn your reptile. Natural, unfiltered sunlight is the best type of full spectrum lighting.

The needs of each reptile vary greatly dependent on their species. Speak to a Petstock Team Member about your reptile's specific needs.

Feeding Requirements

Your reptile's diet will vary depending on their specific needs and you should consult specific care sheets for advice. However, each animal is primarily one of three types:

Herbivore

A plant eater. They need large amounts and a good variety of food. Commercially prepared diets are available for some reptiles; otherwise feed fresh food with vitamin and mineral supplements. Parsley, dandelion leaves, lettuce, cress and fresh fruit are a few options.

Carnivore

A meat or protein eater. These are predominantly snakes which love rats, mice and pinkies (baby mice). Lizards often eat insects and invertebrates. Crickets and mealworms are great food sources for lizards, although mealworms should be fed sparingly as they are high in fat.

Omnivore

Eat both plant and meat or protein.

Along with providing quality food, it's also a good idea to supplement your reptile's diet with additional calcium, vitamins and minerals. It is important to find out the requirements for your particular reptile.

tip: Ensure you provide your reptile with fresh water everyday.

