Terrestrial Tarantula

Brachypelma, Grammostola, Aphonopelma & Tliltocatl

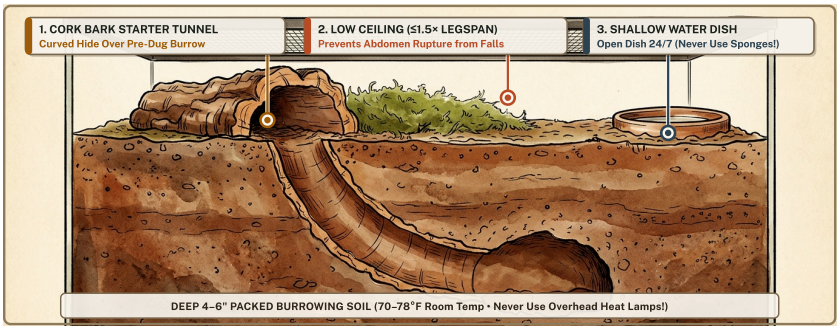
The Quick Version: Once you get past the 8 legs, New World terrestrial tarantulas are honestly as low-maintenance as a houseplant! They don't need heat lamps, they don't smell, they eat just a couple crickets a week, and females can live 20 to 30 years!



LIFESPAN	ADULT LEGSPAN	TEMP RANGE	ADULT TANK	RULE #1
F: 15–30y • M: 4–8y	5–8 Inches	70°–78°F (Room)	3× Legspan Floor	No Heat Lamps!

1. Deep Soil & Low-Ceiling Safety Setup

PACK 4–6" OF SOIL SO THEY CAN'T FALL MORE THAN 1.5× THEIR LEGSPAN!



T-Shirt Rule for Temps
If you're comfortable in a T-shirt, your spider is happy! **70°–78°F**

Big No-No: Heat Lamps
Overhead heat bulbs bake and dehydrate tarantulas fast! **Zero Lamps**

Moisture by Species
Desert: dry top / damp corner • Tropical: damp lower soil **50–75% RH**

Fall Height Limit
Heavy spiders pop like water balloons if they fall from high up! **≤1.5× Legspan**

Open Water Dish 24/7
Even tiny babies need a water dish (a bottlecap works great!) **No Sponges!**

2. Two Ways That Work — Pick What Fits Your Home

SHORT & SWEET: BOTH OPTIONS WORK GREAT

Sizing the Tank: Slings vs. Adults

Putting a fingernail-sized baby ('sling') in a giant 10-gallon tank makes it impossible for them to find dinner:

OPTION A: SPIDERLINGS ('SLINGS' UNDER 1.5")
Keep in a vented sling vial or micro acrylic cube (about 3–4× their legspan wide) with 2" of soil, a piece of moss, and a clean tattoo-ink cap or bottlecap for water.

OPTION B: JUVENILES & ADULTS (2" TO 7"+)
A 5- to 10-gallon glass or acrylic enclosure filled **halfway up** with 4–6" of packed reptile/invertebrate soil and a curved cork bark starter cave.

Ground Burrowers vs. Tree Climbers

Make sure your setup matches where your spider actually lives in nature:

OPTION A: GROUND / BURROWING (CURLY HAIR, RED KNEE, ARIZONA BLONDE)
Wide floor space, deep 4–6" soil for bulldozing, and low ceiling clearance so a clumsy climber can never take a big fall.

OPTION B: TREE-DWELLING (PINKTOES, VERSICOLOR, JUMPING SPIDERS)
Tall enclosure with lots of side-wall air holes (cross-ventilation!) and tall cork bark reaching near the ceiling.

To Handle or Not to Handle?

Real talk from our invert team: tarantulas don't get cuddly from being held — handling is mostly for us:

OPTION A: HANDS-OFF DISPLAY PET (WHAT WE RECOMMEND)
Safest for the spider! Use a soft paintbrush to gently tap their back legs and guide them into a catch-cup whenever you need to clean.

OPTION B: SIT FLAT ON THE FLOOR (CALM DOCILE SPECIES ONLY)
If you do let a calm Curly Hair or Red Knee walk on your open palm, sit on the floor or bed so a sudden bolt can never mean a fatal drop to the floor.

Flip Over for Page 2: Feeding Schedule, Team Tips & Grab-and-Go Checklist →

3. Feeding by 'Booty Size' & The Molting Rule

LOOK AT THEIR ABDOMEN: PLUMP LIKE A GRAPE = FULL • SMALLER THAN CARAPACE = HUNGRY!

Spiderlings — 1–2× Per Week
Pre-Killed Cricket Leg, Pinhead, or Cut Mealworm: Tiny slings are timid scavengers — drop a fresh cricket drumstick right by their burrow and pull leftovers after 24 hrs.

Juveniles — Once a Week
1–2 Crickets or Small Dubia Roaches: If feeding mealworms or superworms, crush the worm's head with tongs first so it doesn't burrow into the dirt and turn into a beetle!

Adults — Every 7–14 Days
2–3 Large Crickets or 1–2 Dubia Roaches: Don't panic if an adult refuses food for weeks (or months!) — they're either full or getting ready to molt.

Best Bugs & Big No-Nos:

- **Dubia Roaches** — Top pick — nutritious and won't bite a spider!
- **Banded Crickets** — Great hunters — MUST remove uneaten crickets after 24h!
- **Hornworms & Mealworms** — Crush worm heads so they can't hide underground
- **Never Feed Yard Bugs** — Wild bugs carry lawn sprays & parasites that kill spiders

READ THIS FIRST — Upside-Down Means MOLTING, Not Dead! Tarantulas flip completely flat on their back on a silk mat to shed their old skin! **NEVER touch or try to flip an upside-down spider, pull any loose crickets out immediately (a cricket will chew on a soft molting spider!), and wait 7–10 days after a molt until their fangs turn from white to jet-black before feeding again!**

4. Tips, Tricks & Big No-Nos from Our Reptile Team

REAL-WORLD HABITS THAT KEEP THEM THRIVING

Watch Out for Wire Mesh
Heavy ground tarantulas have two tiny hooks on each foot that can get snagged in cheap woven window-screen lids. Acrylic lids with drilled air holes are way safer!

Overflow the Water Dish
Tarantulas hate being sprayed in the face with a mister! Instead, just overfill their water dish a little bit once a week so one corner of the soil stays damp.

Itchy Belly Hairs
New World tarantulas kick itchy 'urticating hairs' off their butt when annoyed. Don't rub your eyes after working in the tank, and wash your hands with soap!

Upside-Down vs. Death Curl
Flat on their back = happy molting! Right-side-up with all 8 legs curled tightly *underneath* the belly = dehydrated ('death curl') — put their mouthparts right into a shallow puddle of water!

5. Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

ASK US ON THE FLOOR — WE'LL HELP YOU MATCH EVERYTHING!

ENCLOSURE & DEEP SOIL
- [ ] Cross-Ventilated Acrylic Enclosure or 5–10 Gal Terrarium
- [ ] Reptile / Invertebrate Soil + Coco Fiber (Grab enough for 4–6" depth!)
- [ ] Curved Cork Bark Hide (for a starter burrow) & Sphagnum Moss

WATER DISH & SAFE TOOLS
- [ ] Shallow Resin Water Dish (Skip sponges — spiders can't drink sponges!)
- [ ] 10-Inch Feeding Tongs (for dropping bugs & pulling leftovers)
- [ ] Soft Artist Paintbrush & Clear Catch Cup (for stress-free moving)

LIVE FEEDER BUGS
- [ ] Live Crickets or Dubia Roaches (Sized to the spider's body)
- [ ] Bug Gut-Load Chow (feed the bugs 24 hrs before feeding your spider!)

A Quick Note from Our Team — Keep Learning & Ask Us Anytime!

The quick version: there's more than one right way to set up a great enclosure! As long as your temperatures, humidity, and diet are dialed in, your pet doesn't care whether its cave is fancy resin or a terra-cotta pot. Bringing home this critter is a **15–30 year commitment (for females)** — use these two pages as your home-base cheat sheet, watch what your pet tells you with their daily behavior, find a good local exotic vet, and call or stop by the shop anytime you have questions!

MY TARANTULA'S INFO

Name / Morph: _____

Current Diet: _____

Date Adopted: _____