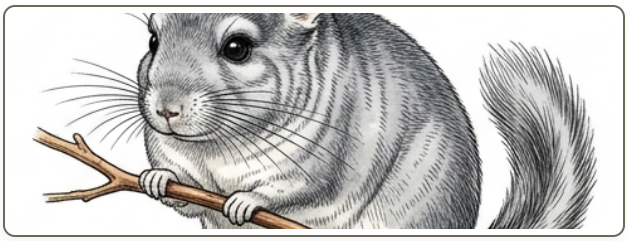
Chinchilla

Chinchilla lanigera

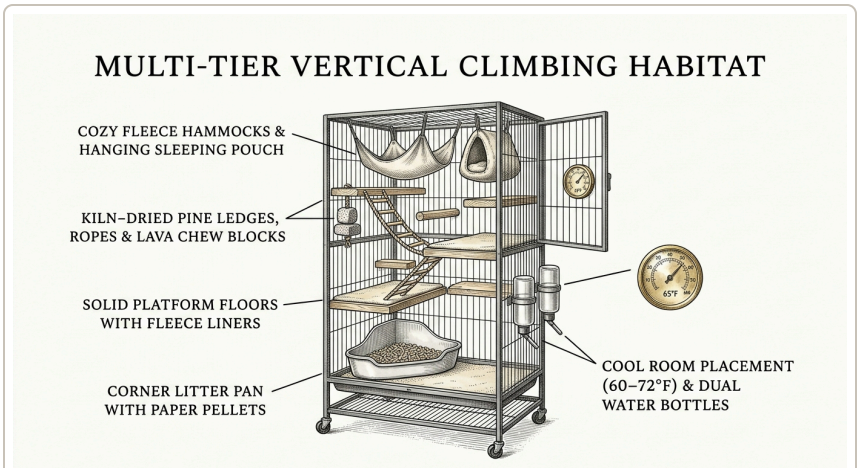


The Quick Version: Chinchillas have the softest, densest fur of any land animal on Earth (up to 60–80 hairs per follicle!) and can live **15–20 years**! Because they evolved high in the chilly, bone-dry Andes Mountains, three rules are life-or-death: **keep their room strictly below 72°F (air conditioning in summer is mandatory!)**, give **volcanic dust baths (never water!)**, and feed **strictly hay + plain pellets (zero fruit, veggies, or seeds!)**.

LIFESPAN	ADULT SIZE	HEAT LIMIT	MIN CAGE SIZE	BATH RULE
15–20 Years!	10–14" (500–800g)	60°–70°F (NEVER >74°F!)	24×24×48"+ Tall Metal Cage	Volcanic Dust (Never Water!)

1. Tall Multi-Level All-Metal Cage, Wood Ledges & Cool Room

MANDATORY AIR CONDITIONING IN SUMMER (KEEP ROOM 60°–70°F) • ZERO EXPOSED PLASTIC INSIDE CAGE!



Ideal Room Temp
Cool indoor room — chinchillas wear a winter parka 24/7! **60°–70°F**

FATAL HEAT (>75°F!)
Temp + Humidity rule: keep Temp (°F) + RH (%) under 130! **Never >74°F**

Low Humidity
Dry air (<50% RH) prevents fur fungus & overheating **30–50% RH**

Jumping Ledges
Staggered kiln-dried pine & pumice lava ledges **Wood & Lava**

Active Hours
Crepuscular / Nocturnal — parkour zoomies at dusk! **Dusk & Night**

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

SHORT & SWEET: BOTH OPTIONS WORK GREAT

Enclosure: Tall All-Metal Cage + Kiln-Dried Pine Ledges

Chinchillas are vertical mountain jumpers — and they will eat plastic pans or ramps, causing fatal gut blockages:

OPTION A: DOUBLE MIDWEST FERRET/CRITTER NATION CAGE + FLEECE/METAL PANS (OUR TOP PICK!)
Remove wire ramps and install staggered **kiln-dried white pine ledges** and **pumice lava ledges** around the walls so they can ricochet from shelf to shelf!

OPTION B: OVERLAP LEDGES TO PREVENT LONG VERTICAL DROPS
Although chinchillas jump high, a straight 4-foot fall onto a hard floor can break a leg or rib. Stagger shelves or hang a fleece hammock in the middle as a safety net.

Volcanic Dust Baths (2–3x/Week) & Cooling Tiles

NEVER get a chinchilla wet! Their fur is so dense it cannot air-dry and will trap fungus and rot against the skin:

OPTION A: CHINCHILLA DUST BATH HOUSE (15 MINUTES, 2–3X PER WEEK)
Put 1–2" of **Oxbow Poof! or Exotic Nutrition Blue Cloud Volcanic Chinchilla Dust** in a bath house for 15 minutes 2–3x a week (don't leave it in 24/7, or it dries their eyes and gets peed in!).

OPTION B: GRANITE 'CHIN-CHILLER' COOLING SLABS
Keep 1–2 polished granite or marble tiles in the cage (and a spare in the fridge on warm Oregon summer days) so your chinchilla always has a cool rock to pancake on!

Gentle Handling (Preventing 'Fur Slip' & Broken Ribs)

Chinchillas have floating, toothpick-thin ribs and a defense reflex called 'fur slip':

OPTION A: LET THEM HOP ONTO YOUR HANDS & SUPPORT THE BASE OF THE TAIL
Never grab a chinchilla tightly around the middle or chase them — they will drop a big patch of fur ('fur slip') to escape! Scoop gently from underneath and let them perch on your arm.

OPTION B: 15"–16" ALL-METAL SOLID WHEEL (ONLY!)
Standard 10–12" wheels are way too small for a chinchilla's spine. If you add a wheel, it must be a **15"–16" heavy-duty all-metal solid wheel**.

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

3. Strict Dry Mountain Diet (Zero Fruit, Zero Veggies, Zero Seeds!)

80%+ UNLIMITED TIMOTHY HAY + PLAIN CHINCHILLA PELLETS ONLY — FRESH PRODUCE & RAISINS CAUSE FATAL BLOAT!

85% of Diet 24/7 Unlimited	**Oxbow Western Timothy Hay (+ Orchard/Oat/Botanical Hay Variety):** High-altitude dry grass fiber keeps their sensitive hindgut moving and grinds down all 20 continuously growing teeth.
Plain Pellets 1–2 Tbsp / Day	**Oxbow Essentials Chinchilla Deluxe or Mazuri Chinchilla Pellets:** Uniform plain pellets only! Never buy mixes containing raisins, corn, seeds, or dried fruit.
Safe Treats 2–3x Per Week	**Dried Rosehips, Hibiscus Petals, Rolled Oats (Pinch), or Applewood Twigs:** Skip raisins, bananas, carrots, and fresh lettuce — sugar and wet greens ferment in a chinchilla's gut!

Safe Chinchilla Chews & Treats vs. Dangerous Foods:

- **Best Safe Treats** — Whole dried rosehips (rich in Vit C!), dried hibiscus, applewood sticks
- **Tooth Care Chews** — Pumice lava blocks, kiln-dried pine blocks, willow balls, timothy cubes
- **NEVER Feed Wet Greens** — No lettuce, carrots, celery, or fresh veggies (causes bloat & diarrhea)
- **NEVER Feed Sugar/Fat** — No raisins, fruit, nuts, sunflower seeds, corn, or yogurt drops!

Check Red Ears for Overheating: A chinchilla's large ears act like radiators. If your chinchilla's ears turn bright red with swollen veins and they lie flat on their side panting, move them to an air-conditioned room (60°–68°F) with a cool tile immediately and call an exotic vet!

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

REAL-WORLD HABITS THAT KEEP THEM THRIVING

Air Conditioning Is Mandatory

Even in Oregon, a single 85°F summer afternoon in a room without AC can cause fatal heatstroke in a chinchilla. Keep a digital thermometer/hygrometer right on the cage!

Zero Plastic in the Cage

Use only kiln-dried white pine, applewood, metal, ceramic, and non-pill fleece (with seams hidden). If they chew plastic pans, wrap pans in thick anti-pill fleece.

Watch for Drooling ('Slobbers')

If your chinchilla ever has wet fur under its chin, drops pellets, or prefers soft crumbs over hay, have an exotic vet check its back molars for tooth spurs.

Chinchilla-Proof Playtime

Let them out for evening playtime in a cool, enclosed hallway or bathroom (with toilet lid closed and all cords/baseboards covered) and put out their dust bath to call them back in!

5. Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

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

TALL METAL CAGE & COOLING

- [ ] Multi-Level All-Metal Cage (Midwest Critter/Ferret Nation Style)
- [ ] Kiln-Dried Pine Jumping Ledges, Wooden Hideout & Fleece Hammock
- [ ] Granite 'Chin-Chiller' Cooling Stone + Digital Temp/Humidity Gauge
- [ ] Kiln-Dried Aspen or Paper Bedding (or Fleece Pan Covers)

VOLCANIC DUST BATH & CHEWS

- [ ] Oxbow Poof! or Blue Cloud Volcanic Chinchilla Bath Dust (Not Sand!)
- [ ] Ceramic or Metal Chinchilla Dust Bath House
- [ ] Pumice Lava Ledges, Applewood Chew Bundles & Willow Balls

HAY, PLAIN PELLETS & GLASS BOTTLE

- [ ] Large Bag of Oxbow Western Timothy Hay + Botanical Hay
- [ ] Oxbow Essentials Chinchilla Pellets (Plain — Zero Raisins/Seeds!)
- [ ] Lixit Chew-Proof Glass Water Bottle + Heavy Ceramic Bowl

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 hide is a fancy wooden arch or a cozy fleece tunnel. Bringing home this critter is a **15–20 year commitment** — 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 CHINCHILLA'S INFO

Name / Morph: _____

Current Diet: _____

Date Adopted: _____