INSIDE FLAP • KEEPER HABITS

4 Keys to Long-Term Health

Small Daily Habits That Prevent 95% of Vet Visits

Let Sleeping Hamsters Sleep

Syrians sleep deeply all day and wake up around dusk. Waking a sleeping hamster startles them and is the #1 cause of defensive nips — wait until they're up and exploring in the evening!

Spot-Clean, Don't Strip-Clean!

Replacing 100% of the bedding at once erases all their scent marks and stresses them out! Spot-clean the pee corner and sand bath every few days, and only replace 1/3 of the deep bedding per month.

Skip Exercise Balls & Cotton Fluff

Plastic run-about balls have poor ventilation, trap toes in air slits, and blind a hamster's whiskers. Also skip 'fluffy cotton' nesting material, which tangles around legs and pouches.

Check for Cold Torpor

If an Oregon winter night drops their room below 60°F, a hamster can slip into cold torpor — looking limp and barely breathing. Warm them slowly in your hands and keep the room 65°–75°F.

Watch Out for 'Wet Tail' in First-Week Babies: Moving to a new home is exciting, so give your new Syrian hamster **3–5 days of quiet** before handling. If a young hamster ever develops a wet, soiled bottom, hunched posture, or diarrhea ('Wet Tail'), see an exotic vet that same day — early antibiotics save lives!

BACK COVER • TAKE THIS TO THE AISLE

Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

40B TANK & DEEP BEDDING

- [ ] 40-Gallon Breeder Glass Tank (36"×18") + Locking Mesh Lid
- [ ] 2 Large Bags of Carefresh or Kaytee Clean & Cozy Paper Bedding
- [ ] 1 Bag of Dust-Extracted Aspen Shavings (for tunnel stability)
- [ ] Multi-Chamber Wooden Hideout + Cork or Birch Tunnels

10–12" WHEEL, SAND BATH & CHEWS

- [ ] 10–12" Solid-Surface Upright Exercise Wheel (Never Wire Mesh!)
- [ ] Ceramic Dish + Chinchilla Bath Sand (Never Water Baths!)
- [ ] Applewood Twigs, Whimzees / Wooden Chews & Millet/Oat Sprays

FOOD & HYDRATION

- [ ] Fortified Hamster Lab Blocks + Natural Seed/Grain Foraging Mix
- [ ] Freeze-Dried Mealworms (Protein Treat)
- [ ] Lixit Glass/Plastic Water Bottle with Stand (or Heavy Ceramic Water Bowl)
- [ ] Digital Room Thermometer

MY SYRIAN HAMSTER'S INFO & FEEDING LOG

Name / Morph: _____

Gotcha Date & Weight: _____

Current Diet & Daily Routine: _____

Critter Cabana & Cascade Pet Supply

Questions about habitat setup, nutrition, or bonding? Stop by or call our animal care team anytime — we're here for the full 2–3 year commitment!

CRITTER CABANA & CASCADE PET SUPPLY • CARE GUIDE

Syrian Hamster

Mesocricetus auratus



The Quick Version: Also known as 'Teddy Bear' or 'Golden' hamsters, Syrians are the largest, slowest-moving, and easiest-to-hold hamsters! In the wild they excavate 3-foot-deep desert burrows and run up to 5 miles every night — so **strictly 1 hamster per cage**, **6–10" of deep burrowing bedding**, and a **10–12" solid-surface wheel** prevent bar-biting and stress.

QUICK VITAL STATS AT-A-GLANCE

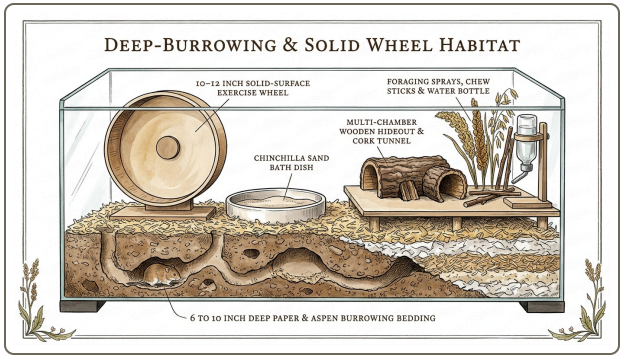
LIFESPAN **2–3 Years**	ADULT SIZE **6–8 Inches**
SOCIAL RULE **Strictly Solitary (1 Only!)**	MIN ENCLOSURE **40B Tank (650–900+ Sq In)**
WHEEL SIZE **10–12" Solid Surface**	

OPEN FOR TANK SETUP, TEMPS, FEEDING & SHOPPING LIST →

STEP 1 • HABITAT & CLIMATE

Deep-Burrowing Terrarium & 10–12" Solid Wheel Setup

650–900+ Sq In Unbroken Floor Space + 6–10" Deep Bedding + 10–12" Solid Wheel!



Ideal Room Temp
Steady indoor room temperature day & night
65°–75°F

Torpor Danger (<60°F)
Below 60°F triggers dangerous 'false hibernation'!
Never <62°F

Bedding Depth
Pack 6–10" deep so tunnels hold their shape
6–10" Deep

Wheel Diameter
Back must stay completely flat while running!
10–12" Solid

Active Hours
Strictly nocturnal — never wake a sleeping hamster
Evening / Night

Thermostat & Gauge Rule: Stick-on dial gauges can be off by 10°F+! Use a digital probe thermometer/hygrometer and always plug heating mats and heat emitters into a **digital thermostat**.

STEP 2 • STOCKED STORE OPTIONS

Two Ways That Work

Pick Option A or Option B Based on Your Home Setup

Enclosure: 40-Gallon Breeder Glass Tank vs. Modular Plastic Tube Cages

Skip tiny colorful tube cages! They only offer ~250 sq in, cannot hold deep bedding, and cause hamsters to chew bars all night:

OPTION A: 40-GALLON BREEDER TANK (36×18") + LOCKING SCREEN LID (OUR TOP PICK!)
Gives 648+ sq in of unbroken floor space, holds 8–10 inches of deep burrowing bedding without kicking it onto your floor, and fits a 12" wheel easily!

OPTION B: LARGE DEEP-BASE FRONT-OPENING TERRARIUM (800+ SQ IN)
Zero wire bars to chew (preventing broken teeth and nose rubs) with crystal-clear viewing of their underground tunnel system.

Burrowing Bedding Mix & Chinchilla Sand Bath

Never bathe a hamster in water! Water strips their protective coat oils and causes fatal hypothermia:

OPTION A: 70% CAREFRESH / CLEAN & COZY PAPER + 30% ASPEN SHAVINGS + ORCHARD HAY
Layering soft paper bedding with dust-extracted aspen and a handful of soft hay acts like 'rebar' so their underground bedrooms never collapse!

OPTION B: PERMANENT CERAMIC CHINCHILLA SAND BATH DISH
Fill a heavy ceramic dish with **Reptisand or Chinchilla Bath Sand** (use sand, not fine airborne dust!). They roll in it nightly to stay clean and often use it as a litter box!

The 10–12" Solid Wheel & Solitary Housing Law

Syrian hamsters are fiercely territorial desert loners:

OPTION A: 10–12" SOLID-SURFACE UPRIGHT WHEEL (SILENT SPINNER / NITEANGEL STYLE)
A 6–8" wheel forces an adult Syrian to arch its spine into a painful 'U' shape. Always pick a **10" to 12" solid-surface upright wheel** (never wire mesh!).

OPTION B: STRICTLY ONE HAMSTER PER ENCLOSURE
Once Syrian hamsters hit 6–8 weeks old, housing two together will result in fatal fights — even littermates. One hamster per tank is the golden rule.

STEP 3 • DIET & NUTRITION

Omnivore Foraging Diet & Hoard Management

Lab Block Base + Diverse Seed/Grain Foraging Mix + Tiny Protein Boosts!

Daily Base
1–2 Tbsp / Day
Oxbow / Mazuri Lab Blocks + Quality Seed & Grain Mix: Lab blocks guarantee complete nutrition while a varied seed/grain mix satisfies their natural hoarding instinct.

Protein Boost
2–3x Per Week
Dried Mealworms, Cricket, or Tiny Piece of Cooked Egg: Hamsters are omnivores! Young growing hamsters especially love a few dried mealworms.

Fresh Greens
Every 2–3 Days
Thumbnail-Sized Veggie Piece: Broccoli floret, cucumber, romaine, or carrot shaving. Avoid overfeeding watery veggies, which cause diarrhea.

Scatter-Feeding & Cheek Pouch Rules:

- **Scatter Feed Half!:** Sprinkle seeds across the bedding so they forage for hours
- **Don't Empty the Hoard:** Stashing food in their bed is normal! Only remove wet/spoiled fresh food
- **Foraging Sprays:** Tuck millet, oat, and flax sprays into the bedding
- **Never Feed:** Citrus, onion, garlic, chocolate, almonds, or sticky sugary treats

First-Week Rule: Give your new Syrian Hamster **5 to 7 days of peace and quiet** with fresh food, hay, and water right away! Speak softly by the cage and offer hand-fed treats so they quickly learn your hands mean good things.