INSIDE FLAP • KEEPER HABITS

4 Keys to Long-Term Health

Small Daily Habits That Prevent 95% of Vet Visits

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!

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!**

BACK COVER • TAKE THIS TO THE AISLE

Grab-and-Go Setup Checklist

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!)

MY TARANTULA'S INFO & FEEDING LOG

Name / Morph: _____

Gotcha Date & Weight: _____

Current Feeder Size & Day: _____

Critter Cabana & Cascade Pet Supply

Questions about heating, shedding, or a picky eater? Stop by or call our reptile team anytime — we're here for the full 15–30 year commitment (for females)!

CRITTER CABANA & CASCADE PET SUPPLY • CARE GUIDE

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!

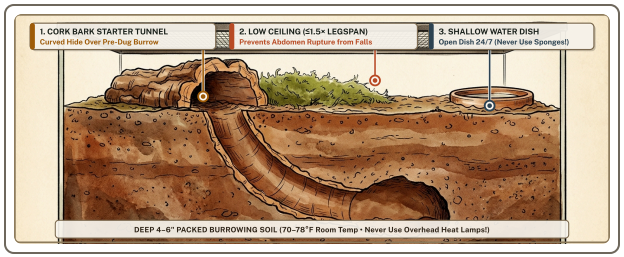
QUICK VITAL STATS AT-A-GLANCE

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

STEP 1 • HABITAT & CLIMATE

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!

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

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.

STEP 3 • DIET & NUTRITION

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

First-Week Rule: Give your new Terrestrial Tarantula **5 to 7 days of peace and quiet** in its new tank before handling or offering its very first meal so it can map out its hides and feel safe!