

The Basic Care of the Cavy



Shooting Stars Cavy Project

What are we going to be discussing?

- Feeding Your Cavy
- Cage Fun
- Keeping Clean
- Play Time!
- How to Tell a Cavy is Healthy
- The Body Language of your Cavy

Things to remember:

Feeding Your Cavy

- Before buying a feed, check with any cavy breeder you know to make sure you are buying the right stuff.
- If you have a cavy under 6 months, you need to make sure the feed has extra calcium.
 1. If it doesn't, make sure to find an extra source so that your cavy can stay healthy and strong.
 2. Make sure NOT to give too much calcium to your cavy. After 6 months, the cavy doesn't require the calcium in his/her diet, and could suffer from health issues if too much is given.
 3. Alfalfa hay/pellets are an extremely high source of calcium and are recommended to be fed to young pigs.
- Alongside pellets, you also need to feed hay. It's an extremely good source of fiber and calcium and helps the cavy with its digestive system.
- Don't forget to feed your pig veggies and fruits!



think this is cute? you should see the post-treat piglips.



hay racks come in all sorts of styles, but all serve one purpose: to keep hay dry and off the floor.

Things you'll need in order that your cavy will have a fun time in it's cage.

- Feeder
- Water bottle or water crock
- Shavings; DO NOT USE CEDAR. Certain shavings are extremely poisonous to cavies and should thus be avoided. One particular kind is cedar, which is most often sold in stores. When buying shavings, it's best to either get pine pellets, pine shavings, or aspen shavings.
- Hiding box/hiding hole (any kind of cave-like structure in which the cavy can hide and feel safe)
- Chewing blocks (wooden wheels, sticks, or blocks of wood for the cavy to chew on. Check with your local cavy breeder to make sure the wood you use is safe for the cavy to eat.)
- A buddy for your cavy to play with. Cavies can get bored and lonely, so a buddy can be helpful to keep them happy and healthy.

Cage Fun



Keeping Clean

Some ways to keep your cavy clean:

- If you notice that your cavy has some discoloration from pee/droppings in his/her fur, just get a damp cloth/paper towel and wipe off the particular spot.
- If you own a long-haired cavy (peruvian/satin, texel, coronet, silkie/satin), be sure to comb out their hair daily.
- With texels, don't pet them too often as it can extinguish the curls in the fur and they won't be as proper for exhibition.
- Clean up the bedding in your cavy's pen DAILY. (dont remove all the bedding and then replace it with new, just scoop out the parts that are dirty and replace them with clean bedding)



Play Time!

Don't forget to keep these things in mind when playing with your pig:

- Don't be holding your cavy constantly, as it may not like it and can become extremely grumpy.
- If you play with your cavy in your house, be sure to
 1. Clean up after it.
 2. Don't leave it on the ground for too long.
 3. Keep your eye on it constantly.
- If you don't have time to play with your cavy every day, just give it something to do, such as give it wooden toys, or just something which can help occupy it.



How to Tell if Your Cavy is Healthy

Checking your cavy for signs of health issues or needs is important:

- Always check the underside of your cavy whenever you get it out. If it is unclean down there, make sure to clean it up as soon as possible, or else the cavy might develop health issues that could become fatal.
- If you have a long haired cavy, be sure to check with your nearest cavy breeder about when and how to shear the cavy. It's very important to shear at the right age, and at the right time.
- Make sure to regularly clean the water bottles/dishes and feed dishes so that your cavy is eating/drinking out of clean and sanitary bottles and dishes.
- Keep account of your cavies normal behaviours. If your cavy is sickly, it won't act the same, such as if it loves to play normally but doesn't want to nor wants to be noticed, it might not be feeling all that well. If anything bad does happen, just be sure to either contact your nearest caviary, vet, or one of us in the project, and you'll be able to get the help needed for your piggy.

The Body Language of your Cavy

Taking care of your cavy is important, so is knowing what it means when your cavy makes a certain movement or posture

1. Popcorning: Popcorning is probably the most common cavy body language. It signifies that your cavy is extremely happy and excited. Popcorning is when your cavy jumps up and down and often turn around in mid air.
2. Chugging: Chugging is another important cavy movement. It is when a cavy runs around their cage. It says that your pet is very excited.
3. Aggressive position: This means that your cavy is very angry. It normally is when a cavy points his or her nose up in the air and starts chattering their teeth. If your cavy does this, give them some air and let them cool down.

Thank you for viewing my presentation!



References: <http://animals.mom.me>, 4-H Cavy Handbook, <http://4-h.org/>
<http://thespruce.com> <http://guineapigcages.com> <http://happycavy.com> acbaonline.com