

iguana

care sheet



Iguanas can grow up to six feet in total length. Some young iguanas are bright green, which helps camouflage their bodies in the green leaves of the rainforest. Iguanas come in different color variations such as red or blue.

facts

- average adult size: 4 to 6 feet long, depending on species
- average life span: 15+ years with proper care
- diet: herbivore

Will reach adult size in 2 to 3 years, under ideal conditions; upgrade habitat size as your reptile grows.



Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, refer to the Sources section or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.

Developed with and approved by a qualified veterinarian.

iguana

includes red, green and blue iguanas

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diet

A well-balanced iguana diet consists of:

- 70% dark leafy greens such as collard greens and spinach; 20% bulk vegetables such as cabbage, carrots and broccoli; 10% fruit such as mangoes, bananas and strawberries.
- Iguanas benefit from being fed a commercial iguana diet.

feeding

Things to remember when feeding your iguana:

- Fresh, clean, chlorine-free water should be available at all times.
- If your iguana does not naturally take to a pelleted commercial diet, moisten it with water or mix it with vegetable- or fruit-flavored baby food.
- Feed once a day.
- Remember, iguanas do not chew their food, they swallow it whole; food should be chopped, shredded or grated into small edible pieces.
- Sprinkle food with calcium supplement daily and a multi-vitamin supplement once or twice a week.

- Vegetables and fruits not eaten within 24 hours should be discarded.

housing

- Size - Appropriately sized and shaped habitat with secure cover; as the iguana grows, a larger habitat will be required. The iguana should be able to freely turn and move around in the habitat.
- Habitat - Provide a hiding area; branches for basking. Maintain 70 to 90% humidity by misting as needed every day.
- Substrate - Use a mulch type such as coconut fiber.
- Temperature - Temperature gradient (100°F for the warm end and 80°F for the cool end). Use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as primary heat source.
- Lighting - UVB rays with full spectrum lighting for 10 to 12 hours a day is required. An incandescent day bulb can be used for basking area during daylight hours only; can use a ceramic heater or nocturnal or red incandescent at all hours.
- House adult male iguanas separately and do **not**

house different reptile species together.

normal behavior

- May become tame with daily handling.
- Bob their head as a means of communication.
- Males may become territorial.
- Healthy iguanas sneeze to rid their bodies of excess salt.

habitat maintenance

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect the habitat at least once a week: place iguana in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all traces of bleach smell; dry the tank and furnishings completely and add clean substrate.

grooming and hygiene

- Iguanas regularly shed their skin; ensure humidity of habitat is at appropriate level to allow proper shedding. To facilitate shedding, bathe in a large container that allows the iguana to immerse its

entire body or provide a shed box, a hide box with sphagnum moss, that will aid in the shedding process.

- Trim an iguana's nails as needed.

signs of a healthy animal

- Active, alert and interested in humans
- Clear eyes
- Body and tail are filled out
- Healthy skin
- Clean vent
- Nose is free of discharge, aside from their salt excretion
- Eats regularly

red flags

- Weight loss or decreased appetite
- Mucus in mouth or nose
- Swelling
- Lethargy
- Bumps, sores or abrasions on skin
- Labored breathing
- Paralysis of limbs
- Abnormal feces

If you notice any of these signs, contact your veterinarian.

common health issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Kidney disease	Weight loss, lethargy, swollen abdomen, neck or eyes, and frequent drinking or urinating. Main cause is dehydration.	Seek immediate veterinary attention.
Metabolic bone/vitamin deficiency	Inability to absorb calcium due to insufficient UVB light or improper calcium/vitamin D. If untreated, can lead to a disorder characterized by deformities and softened bones. Swollen limbs and lethargy.	Consult your veterinarian and provide ample UVB lighting and proper calcium and vitamin supplements.
Respiratory disease	Labored breathing and mucus in the mouth or nose. Can be caused by a habitat that is too cold or damp..	Consult your veterinarian and ensure habitat is the proper temperature.

shopping list for needed supplies

- Appropriately sized habitat
- Commercial iguana food
- Substrate
- Moss
- Nail clippers
- Styptic powder
- Food and water dishes
- Climbing décor
- Plants
- Heat light
- Heat fixture
- Under-tank heater (optional)
- UVB lighting and fixture
- Vitamin supplement
- Calcium supplement
- Thermometer
- Humidity gauge
- Book about iguanas

sources

Ask a store partner about Petco's selection of books on iguanas and the variety of private brand products available for the care and happiness of your new pet. All private brand products carry a 100% money-back guarantee.

Because all reptiles are potential carriers of infectious diseases, such as *Salmonella*, always wash your hands before and after handling your reptile or habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of disease.

Pregnant women, children under the age of 5, senior citizens and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing or caring for reptiles and should consider not having a reptile as a pet.

Go to cdc.gov/healthypets and petco.com/caresheet for more information about small animals and disease.

This Care Sheet can cover the care needs of other species. Go to petco.com for more information.

