

Introductory Course for Commercial Dealers of Guinea Pigs, Hamsters or Rabbits

Part 6: Housing



Learning Objectives

By the end of this presentation, you should be able to, as appropriate for guinea pigs, hamsters or rabbits:

1. Define the different types of facilities (indoor, outdoor)
2. Describe the general structural and maintenance requirements for all facilities
3. Define and describe primary enclosures suitable for each species
4. Describe maintenance, climate and other requirements for primary enclosures

Learning Objectives: Videos

- Please view these short videos to see appropriate facilities with appropriate housing and husbandry facilities for:
 - Rabbits
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mC7o73VeCEg&feature=youtu.be>
 - Guinea Pigs
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAY_QcrCWbo&feature=youtu.be

Types of Facilities

Types of Facilities

- Type of facility:
 - Indoor facilities
 - Outdoor facilities
 - Allowed for rabbits
 - Variance required for guinea pigs
 - Not allowed for hamsters



General Requirements: All Facilities

Basic Requirements

- Housing for guinea pigs, hamsters and rabbits must:
 - Be structurally sound
 - Be kept in good repair
 - Protect animals from injury
 - Contain animals securely
 - Restrict other animals from entering

Electrical Supply

- Housing facilities must have enough reliable electric power to provide for:
 - Heating
 - Cooling
 - Ventilation systems
 - Lighting
 - Carrying out husbandry practices

Water Supply

- Housing facilities must have sufficient running potable water to meet animals' needs. For example:
 - Drinking (by guinea pigs, hamsters, rabbits, people, other animals)
 - Cleaning
 - Carrying out other husbandry practices



Storage

Food and Bedding

- Store food and bedding supplies in a manner which prevents:
 - Spoilage
 - Deterioration of food
 - Vermin infestation or contamination from:
 - Rodents
 - Insects
 - Refrigeration is required to keep supplies of perishable food, including Vitamin C-rich food required for guinea pigs

Open Supplies

- For guinea pigs and hamsters only:
 - Store open food in containers with tightly fitting lids

Food Storage



Waste Disposal

- Regular and frequent collection, removal and disposal:
 - Animal and food wastes
 - Bedding
 - Dead animals
 - Debris
- In a manner that minimizes vermin infestation, odors and disease hazards

Waste Disposal (cont'd)

Manual removal of waste



Collects waste under cages and carries to outside for disposal



Washrooms and Sinks

- Washing facilities such as:
 - Washrooms
 - Basins
 - Sinks
- Must be provided to maintain cleanliness among animal caretakers





Indoor Facilities

Indoor Housing Facility

- A building intended to house animals must have environmental controls and meet these criteria:
 - Temperature and humidity
 - (Within the limits set forth for the species of animal)
 - Odors
 - (must be rapidly eliminated)
- Is an enclosed space:
 - Roof and walls are continuously connected
 - Windows are covered by transparent glass or hard plastic
 - At least one door that can be opened and closed



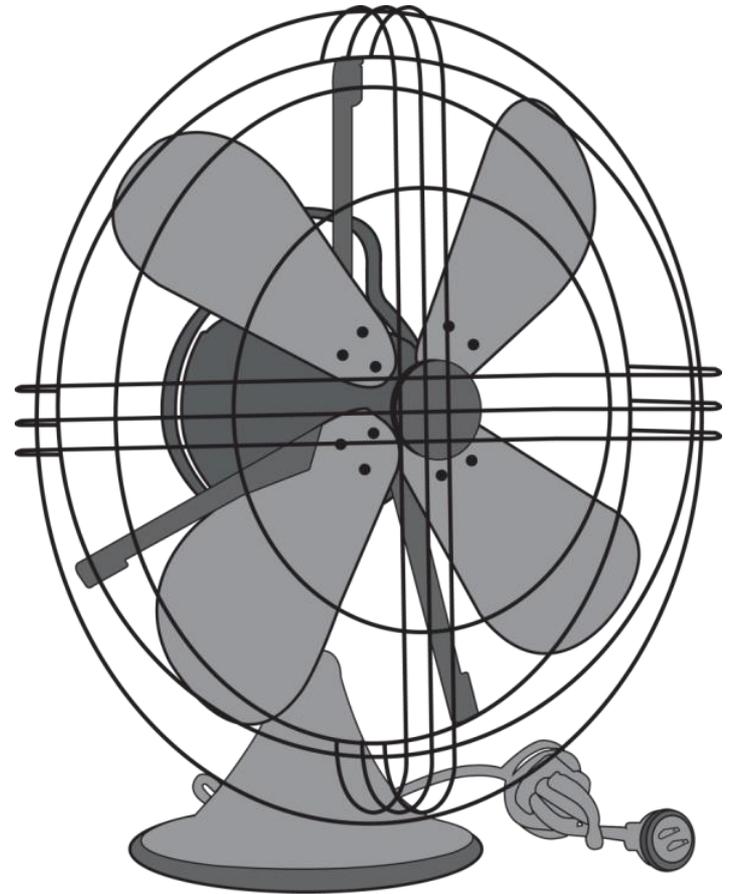
Minimum and Maximum Temperatures for Indoor Housing

- **Guinea Pigs and Hamsters:**
 - Not below 60°F
 - Not to exceed 85°F
- **Rabbits:**
 - For temperature 85°F or higher, auxiliary ventilation is required



Ventilation

- **Sufficient ventilation at all times**
 - Minimize odors, drafts, ammonia, condensation
 - Windows, vents, fans, air conditioning
- **Above 85° F**
 - Guinea Pigs and Hamsters:
 - Temp must be kept at 85° F or below
 - Rabbits:
 - Use Auxiliary ventilation including fans, blowers, air conditioning



Lighting

- Sufficient light for inspection, cleaning and observation of animals
- Natural or artificial
- Uniform lighting
- Protect animals from excessive light



Interior Surfaces

- The interior building surfaces of indoor housing facilities shall be constructed and maintained to be:
 - Substantially impervious to moisture
 - Readily sanitized



Outdoor Housing Facility

- Definition: Any structure, building, land or premises which houses animals or is intended to house animals which:
 - Does not meet the definition of any other type of housing as provided in the regulations AND
 - In which the temperature cannot be controlled within set limits
- Allowable for rabbits (and guinea pigs with approval of Deputy Administrator)
- Hamsters may never be housed in an outdoor facility

Outdoor Housing Facility

- **Must have:**

- Shelter from sunlight for rabbits when temp is above 90°F
 - Artificial cooling by sprinkler or other means is required
- Shelter from cold weather must be provided for rabbits when temp falls below 40°F
- Shelter from rain or snow
- Protection from predators
- Proper drainage

Primary Enclosures

Definition

- **Primary Enclosure:**
 - Any structure or device used to restrict an animal to a limited amount of space.
 - For example:
 - Room
 - Pen
 - Run
 - Cage
 - Hutch





Minimum Requirements: Primary Enclosures

General Requirements for Each Species

Guinea Pigs & Hamsters

- Enclosures and racks, shelving and other accessories must be made of smooth material substantially impervious to liquids and moisture

Rabbits

- Primary enclosures must contain rabbits and keep predators out
- Enclosures must keep rabbits clean and dry

Flooring Requirements for Guinea Pigs, Hamsters, Rabbits

Guinea Pigs & Hamsters

- Enclosures with a solid floor must have clean bedding
- Must protect all animals' feet and legs from injury

Rabbits

- Enclosures with a solid floor must have litter
- For nursing females with litters less than one month of age, a suitable nest box with clean nest material must be provided
- Must protect all animals' feet and legs from injury

Space Requirements: Guinea Pigs, Hamsters, Rabbits

- Primary enclosures shall be constructed and maintained to provide for space for each animal:
 - To make normal postural adjustments
 - To allow adequate freedom of movement

Space Requirements for Guinea Pigs and Hamsters

- For primary enclosures acquired after Aug. 15, 1990:
 - (Refer to AWA Regulations and Standards for primary enclosures acquired before the above date)

Space Requirements: Guinea Pigs

(After Aug 15, 1990)

Weight or Stage of Maturity	Minimum Space per Guinea Pig	Minimum Interior Height
Weaning to 350 grams	60 sq in 387.12 sq cm	7 in 17.78 sq cm
350 grams or more	101 sq in 651.65 sq cm	7 in 17.78 sq cm
Nursing females with litters	101 sq in 651.65sq cm	7 in 17.78 sq cm

Space Requirements: Guinea Pigs (After Aug 15, 1990)

- Example:
 - Harem breeding primary enclosure
 - Floor space exceeds the minimum requirements for guinea pigs and females with litters
 - Open enclosure has walls high enough to contain animals



Space Requirements: Hamsters

(After Aug 15, 1990)

Weight or Stage of Maturity	Minimum Space per Hamster	Minimum Interior Height
< 60 grams or 2.1 oz	10 sq in 64.52 sq cm	6 in 15.24 sq cm
60-80 grams or 2.1-2.8 oz	13 sq in 83.88 sq cm	6 in 15.24 sq cm
80-100 grams or 2.8-3.5 oz	16 sq in 103.23 sq cm	6 in 15.24 sq cm
>100 grams or 3.5 oz	19 sq in 122.59 sq cm	6 in 15.24 sq cm

Space Requirements: Nursing Female Hamsters

(After Aug 15, 1990)

Type of Hamster	Minimum Space per Litter (No other Hamsters Allowed in enclosure)	Minimum Interior Height
Hamster	121 sq in 781 sq cm	6 in 15.24 cm
Dwarf Hamster	25 sq in 161 sq cm	6 in 15.24 cm

Space Requirements: Rabbits

- Minimum floor space in all of the following tables does not include the space taken up by food and water receptacles
- For primary enclosures acquired prior to Aug. 15, 1990, refer to AWA regulations and standards

Space Requirements: Rabbits

(After Aug 15, 1990)

Each Weaned Rabbit by Weight	Minimum Space per Rabbit	Minimum Interior Height
< 4.4 lbs Or <2 kg	1.5 sq ft .14 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm
4.4-8.8 lbs or 2-4 kg	3 sq ft .28 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm
8.8-11.9 lbs or 4-5.4 kg	4 sq ft .37 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm
>11.9 lbs or > 5.4 kg	5 sq ft .46 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm

Space Requirements: Rabbits

(After Aug 15, 1990)



Space Requirements: Nursing Female Rabbits

(After Aug 15, 1990)

Weight of Female	Minimum Space per Female/Litter	Minimum Interior Height
< 4.4 lbs Or <2 kg	4 sq ft .37 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm
4.4-8.8 lbs or 2-4 kg	5 sq ft .46 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm
8.8-11.9 lbs or 4-5.4 kg	6 sq ft .56 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm
>11.9 lbs or > 5.4 kg	7.5 sq ft .70 sq meters	14 in 35.56 cm

Space Requirements: Nursing Female Rabbits

(After Aug 15, 1990)



Innovative Primary Enclosures

- For guinea pigs, hamsters or rabbits
- Enclosures that do not precisely meet space requirements, but that do provide sufficient space and the opportunity to express species-typical behavior may be approved by:
 - Dealers and Exhibitors – Animal Care Administrator
 - Research Facilities – Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

Conclusion

You should now be able, as appropriate for guinea pigs, hamsters or rabbits:

1. Define the different types of facilities (indoor, outdoor)
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Questions?

Acknowledgments

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