

ADOPTING A SMALL ANIMAL

rock'n sports centres for pint-sized pets



Our small animals require their daily dose of fun and excitement in and outside of their cages to help keep them healthy and happy. When exercised outside of their cage, be sure to supervise at all times, and ensure it's within a safely enclosed and pet-proofed area. Rodent teeth grow continually so it's important to provide appropriate chew-safe toys and to put loose electrical wires or dangerous items out of reach. Below are some tips on creating fun and fabulous sports centres for your pint-sized pets.

Guinea pigs are gentle, social creatures who love to play.

Good guinea games offer tunnels for chewing and playing in, such as paper towel and toilet paper rolls (slit up the side so they can't get stuck inside) or "chubes" (often made of vegetable parchment). Plastic balls designed for small animals provide additional entertainment, as well as non-toxic wooden toys, plastic spoons and small stuffed animals. Let your guinea run around in a room in your house for extra exercise every day. An excited guinea makes a chorus of loud, happy whistles! Guinea pigs do best with another guinea pig playmate.

Nocturnal by nature, hamsters love their evening workouts.

Exercise wheels provide a great source of activity, combined with hammy chew toys, such as pieces of dog biscuit, or pesticide-free twigs from beech trees, maples, willows, hazelnut bushes, or fruit trees.

Cardboard boxes, toilet and paper towel rolls are also safe for hamsters to burrow in, chew on, and play with. Wooden ladders and branches fastened securely to the inside of the cage can help hamsters show off their climbing agility. Scattering food pellets into the cage is an easy source of stimulation.

Rats and mice enjoy tons of toys.

Cardboard paper towel tubes make great tunnels; cardboard egg cartons are perfect for climbing and chewing; wooden blocks satisfy a rodent's need to gnaw; and plastic or solid metal exercise wheels provide hours of fun (avoid wire versions). For a special rat hammock, tie a thick rope across the cage or use an old dish rag! Ladders and branches are also great toys, and don't forget small balls (but no rubber ones). Make a mouse maze with paper towel tubes and boxes with entrance holes cut out. For a tempting treat, place a brown paper bag, open and on its side!

Cool gerbil toys add spice to life.

Great gerbil toys include overturned flower pots, boxes and cardboard tubes for exploring, and rocks and ladders for climbing and crawling. Keep in mind that gerbils can't see very well, so watch your pet carefully so he doesn't have accidents when outside of his cage. Make sure he has a piece of log or wood that hasn't been painted or treated with chemicals for his chewing pleasure.

Romping rabbits enjoy active fun.

Rabbits enjoy things they can toss, roll, chew on and bat. Inexpensive toys can include paper towel or toilet paper rolls, wicker, hard plastic baby keys, cat toys that are solid balls, a log (that hasn't been sprayed with paint or chemicals), or a fallen branch from an apple tree. Rabbit cages should offer some tempting diversions including wooden boxes or rocks they can get up on or go under. When the weather is nice you can let your supervised rabbit play in your fenced backyard (make sure that pesticides and fertilizers have not been applied to the grass).

