

🦎 Leopard Gecko Care Guide 🦎

(*Eublepharis macularius*)

Hi everyone, as per request from you all, I have created this care guide to expand your assets in leopard gecko care. For those who don't know, leopard geckos were the first reptile I have ever owned. I have had them for 10 years now! However, in those 10 years, came many different and new care standards. Listed below is the most up to date care standard, as of 2025. This guide focuses not just on survival, but on creating an environment where leopard geckos can truly thrive. I will be modifying this if anything changes or enhances! Thank you!! :)

Tank Requirement Size:

- Minimum for Healthy Adults: 40/50 Gallon (measuring: 36" x 18" x 18")
- Minimum for baby-juvenile-quarantine: 20 Gallon (measuring: 20" x 12" x 12")

Importance: Having the correct minimum size for your leopard gecko is key to both their health and welfare. It's important we provide them with the correct tank size so they can utilize and display their natural behavior as well as live in comfort. Providing below this minimum is not ideal and directly impacts their physical health, physiological wellbeing, and ability to thrive long term. For quarantine, juveniles, and baby leopard gecko, this requirement may be less to ensure they feel secure, easily locate their resources, and monitor them as they progress. You may go above the recommended minimum for adults, just ensure you are also increasing their hide count as well as other enriching components to make them feel safe and thrive in their enclosures.

Heating Requirements:

● Basking:

- Target: 94-98°F
- Safe Range: 92-99°F

Importance: Creating the ideal basking temp helps ensure your leopard gecko is obtaining proper digestion, maintaining strong immune function, passing healthy bowel movements, and preserving adequate energy levels.

● Warm Side:

- 80-86°F

Importance: Maintaining the correct temperatures throughout the warm side of your tank helps your leopard gecko thermoregulate, increase activity levels, as well as healthy digestion and metabolism. Temps falling below this will slow down digestion and slow down activity levels, in some cases causing lethargism and illness. Leopard geckos need 12-13 hours a day of consistent lighting and heat to ensure they are regulating their day/night cycle. Halogen heat lamps or basking bulbs should be used to reach desired temperatures. Colored bulbs should never be used as they disrupt circadian rhythm and natural light perception. All heat sources should be regulated with a thermostat to prevent burns and overheating. This can be monitored most accurately through digital thermostats. Provide one on the warm side and the other on the cool to regulate ambient temps.

- **Cool Side:**

- 70-75°F

Importance: Having a cool side of your gecko's tank, ensures they have somewhere to go when they need to cool down. Without a proper cool side, your gecko will not be able to escape the heat nor practice thermoregulation which may lead to chronic stress, dehydration, and immune suppression.

UVB Lighting:

- 7% Arcadia Shade Dweller
- Zoo Med ReptiSun 5.0 T5 HO

Importance: UVB plays a significant role in supporting optimal health. UVB enables D3 production, calcium absorption, supports the immune system, and improves overall function. UVB should be linear, not coil, and placed alongside your heat source to ensure when basking, they are also absorbing UVB. Without proper calcium absorption and D3, Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD), may develop causing curved spine, softened bones, fractures, and a weakened skeletal system. Providing UVB also encourages appetite + digestion, promotes natural behavior, and supports longevity in their health.

Hide Count:

- Warm side: 1x minimum
- Cool Side: 1x minimum
- Center: 1x minimum
- Humid Hide: 1x minimum (also placed in center)

Importance: Providing hides in your leopard geckos enclosure ensures security, enables thermoregulation, limits stress, and promotes natural behaviors. Its essential to provide hides throughout the tank to help your gecko thermoregulate and give them many options as they would have in the wild. Providing a humid hide ensures they have a place containing localized moisture, aiding in sheds. This is an area they have access to, where boosted humidity occurs. Leopard geckos only need around 30-40% humidity in their enclosure, however humid hides should range between 70-90% humidity. This can be obtained by lightly misting/moistening the bedding within it. Sphagnum moss or paper towell may be used as both help trap humidity. Ensure your hide is not sopping wet, and replace bedding as needed to ensure mold does not build up.

Substrate:

- 70% organic topsoil, 30% washed play sand ratio (healthy adults)
- 40% organic top soil + 40% washed play sand + 20% excavator clay (healthy adults)
- Paper towel (quarantine-disabled-juvenile-baby)

Importance: Loose substrate provides your gecko with a bedding that allows them to express natural behaviors such as digging. It mimics natural terrain while being easy on their joints as they age. Leopard geckos need a minimum of 3-4 inches to display these natural behaviors. Calcium or colored sand should never be used as these lead to potential impaction risks.

Enrichments:

- Fake or live plants
- Real or fake wood
- Slate and large rocks

Importance: Proper enrichment promotes natural behaviors, provides security throughout the entire tank, and encourages activity levels. This may consist of plants (real or fake), climbing sticks (real or fake), as well as other climbing and hiding opportunities. If you have bare spots in your tank, fill them. As I always tell my beloved reptile community, “A cluttered tank, is a happy tank”. Empty tanks cause stressed and unstimulated geckos. Your gecko should have a tank that mimics their natural environment as closely as possible. Geckos also feel safest when there is plants and other coverage. They do not enjoy being out in the open, as they are prey animals and are easily spooked. Providing these components are not just aesthetically pleasing to the eye but really do create a safe tank your gecko can thrive in.

Vitamins + Calcium Intake:

- Multivitamins
- Calcium without D3

- Calcium with D3

Importance: Ensuring your gecko is maintaining the correct amount of calcium and multivitamins and calcium ensures overall structure health and biological function. A small dish of calcium NOT containing D3 should be placed in your gecko's tank 24/7. They will self-regulate their calcium needs. It's important we don't fill this dish with calcium containing D3 because they are already obtaining that through their linear UVB, which could lead to an overdose of D3. Calcium (without D3), should also be dusted onto feeder insects 1-2 times a week to ensure they are consuming adequate amounts. Multivitamins should be dusted onto insects during feeding once a week for juveniles and every 7-10 days for adults. Calcium with D3 may be used no more than one time a month in dustings of insects to ensure they are not overdosing. All three play a crucial role in maintaining a happy and functioning gecko.

Water + Feeding:

- 1x water dish → freshened daily
- Babies: fed daily 5-7 insects (high protein necessity)
- Juveniles: fed every other day 6-10 insects (still growing)
- Adults: 2-3x a week 5-10 insects (this will vary by adult for their specific needs)

Importance: Proper nutrition and hydration are crucial for gecko health! Fresh water should be provided in a dish large enough for your gecko to fit their entire body, while ensuring it is shallow to avoid drowning. This should be replaced daily to ensure your gecko is drinking clean water. Nutrition is vital in the longevity of a gecko's life. Over or underfeeding leads to various health conditions such as emaciation and obesity, negatively impacting your gecko's wellbeing. Feeding can be done through either tong feeding or by placing insects directly into a feeding dish. You'll also want to rotate feeders out as variation in their diets are key! Insects should be gut-loaded 24-48 hours before feeding to maximize nutritional value. This can be done through various veggie and green scraps.

List of feeders you may provide to your leopard gecko:

- Dubia Roaches (staple)
- Crickets (staple)
- Mealworm (occasional staple)
- Black Soldier Larvae (occasional staple)
- Hornworm (occasional treat)
- Superworms (occasional treat)
- Waxworms (limited treat)

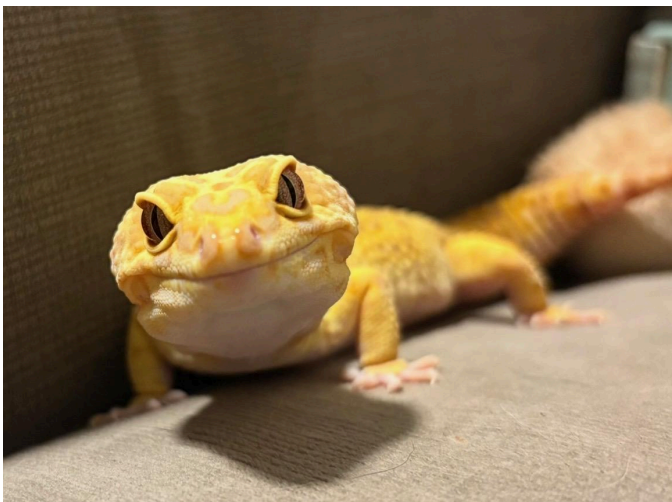
My Leopard Geckos:

As many of you that follow my page know we love leopard geckos over here. We currently have 4! I created this care guide to ensure other leopard geckos are receiving proper care too! The leopard geckos I have all had a challenging start to their lives, however are now thriving with proper care! Here they are below:



Issac↑

Issac is a 10 year old leopard gecko who was actually my first ever reptile. She is extremely social, easily handable, and a fantastic eater!



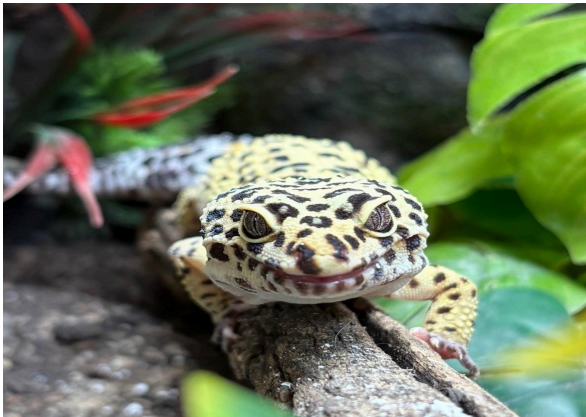
Winston↑

Winston is expected to be around ~5-7 years of age. I got Winston from a local reptile store/rescue. He is outgoing, curious, and an enthusiastic eater.



Hazel Mae↑

Hazel Mae is the oldest among my current reptiles at 12 years old. Despite being blind, she is the sweetest gecko you'll ever meet with so much spunk!



Cleo↑

Cleo is a 10 year old gecko who belonged to my brother before I took over her care. She has a heart of gold and an appetite that never runs low!

We hope you enjoyed this care guide based upon most up-to-date research. When heating, lighting, nutrition, and enrichment are properly provided, leopard geckos don't just survive, they thrive! For further questions please refer back to my page. Always happy to help!

🦎 *"From Forgotten to Forever"* 🦎

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