

# Think Outside the Cage: Practical Ways to Safely Exercise Your Bird

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Most bird owners dream of creating a large activity aviary for their feathered friend. They aspire to dedicate an entire room to fashion a jungle of natural wood perches, exotic rope swings, and comfortable nests, all mingled amongst a bevy of bird toys. Within this forest of fun their bird could flit between branches, climb and chew, and even forage for scattered and hidden treats. As in the wild, play, exercise, and instinct would combine to prevent bird boredom and promote happiness and health.

But practicality, not to mention cost, often keeps this well-intended dream from becoming a reality. However, with a little creativity – inspired by your bird’s curiosity and resourcefulness – you can easily create an inexpensive, safe bird playground without relinquishing your living room.

## **bring the inside out**

Your bird’s time outside the cage is just as important as the time she spends inside his home. However, where most cage interiors are accessorized with a variety of often-rotated [swings](#), [perches](#), [ladders](#), and [toys](#), most areas outside of the cage are void of such playthings. Too often, time outside of the cage is solely thought of as a bird's vacation from his life inside the cage. But your bird carries her curiosity and playfulness with her wherever she goes. And her time outside of the cage should be used to expand and enhance her life and health through encouraged exercise, play, and interaction.

Almost any swing, ladder, or toy can be brought outside the cage to foster play. Ladders can be hung on cage sides to promote climbing and the aerobic exercise they encourage. This is especially useful in larger cages where the bars are vertically orientated and more difficult to climb. [Mirrors](#), [activity toys](#),



and [perches](#) can also be mounted on the exterior of your bird's cage. Not only will they entice exploration, but they also offer your bird a safe haven for rest during fun play. Just be sure to remove any exterior-mounted toy and its interior-located mounting hardware once playtime is over to prevent injury.



### temporary transformations

Having a dedicated aviary for your bird doesn't have to be a dream. In fact, any bird-proofed room within your home is already a sanctuary for your bird. Now you just have to spice it up with fun. But doing so doesn't mean you need to lose the room's original function. Instead, try these simple temporary transformations of space to encourage exercise. Best of all, since none are permanent, you can continually change the accessories to keep it fresh and exciting for your bird.

- Hang a [sisal rope perch](#), [wooden activity center](#), hanging play toy, or climbing chain in the room near her cage or play area. To keep your bird safe, suspend all perches at chest level.
- Tie [cotton](#) or [sisal](#) rope snugly between two chairs to create a tightrope. To add to the fun, suspend a toy or two from the rope to combine chewing, preening, and climbing fun into one toy.
- Include a [playstand](#) to encourage play. Most playstands feature toy hooks from which you can suspend your bird's favorite toys. Also, stand a [Treat Puzzler](#) or scatter suitable foot toys on the playstand base to increase the fun.
- Hide any number of the [build-your-own bird toy components](#) or a variety of [treats](#) throughout the room for your bird to find.



### engaged interactions

No matter how you encourage activity and exercise, the most beneficial aspect of your bird's time outside the cage remains her opportunity to interact with you. For some birds this includes playing fetch with a paper ball. Other birds like to find [foot toys](#) stuffed full of tasty treats you've hidden around the room. Still others enjoy being trained with educational toys such as the [Teach Box & Bank](#), [Colored Cubes](#), or [Rings Game](#). The important thing is to keep each interaction spirited, focused, and memorable. Doing so will ensure your bird remains active, engaged, and happy.

## WE RECOMMEND



Perches help relieve cage stress, boredom and related feather picking.



Playstands provide an acrobatic outlet for birds and allow them a place to play outside the cage.



Educational Toys encourage learning while exercising beaks and bodies.