

How to Choose Your Ferret

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Where to Get Your Ferret

Once you've done all of your research and are prepared for ferret ownership, it's time to go and pick out your ferret! Whether you adopt a ferret from a shelter or purchase one from a pet store or a breeder, there are things you need to consider when making this big decision.

There are four main places where you can find ferrets:

- Pet store
- Ferret shelter
- Private breeder
- Classified ads in newspapers and online (such as www.petfinder.com)

Where you get your ferret from depends on what you are looking for in a ferret. If you are a first time ferret owner, you may want to consider adopting an older ferret from a shelter. Kits (baby ferrets) can be a real challenge for an owner not prepared for their energy and enthusiasm! Kits are very active and they need substantial training and socializing. Older ferrets typically have more training and they are calmer than younger ferrets.

Another benefit of adopting a ferret from a shelter is that you are more likely to end up with a ferret that fits well into your life and household. Shelter operators are much more familiar with the ferrets in their care than a pet store employee would be, so they can make a better match. This is because a shelter operator spends more time interacting with his or her ferrets, but also because a kit's personality and activity levels are going to change drastically in the first year of his life. Therefore, a pet store employee really can't know how your ferret is going to be in three months or even three weeks.



Picking a Healthy Ferret

When you choose your ferret, especially if you're purchasing a kit from a pet store, look for a ferret with the following signs of health:

- Glossy, soft coat
- Bright, clear eyes
- Clean ears
- Clean teeth
- Trimmed nails
- Healthy skin
- Active, curious attitude
- Alert to surroundings



Avoid ferrets that have obvious issues, such as runny ears or nose, or ferrets that are living in filthy cages. While the situations that these ferrets are living in can be heartbreaking, a dirty cage is a breeding ground for parasites, and you could end up bringing diseases home that could affect your other ferrets or pets if you try to save them. If you see bad conditions, it is better to notify the proper authorities that the animals in the store are being neglected than it is to bring them home.

Make a Decision Based on Personality

When choosing a ferret, don't choose based on coat color or gender. Coat colors change throughout a ferret's life, sometimes several times, so just because a ferret is one color as a kit doesn't mean that he will stay that color.

Gender is also not a factor unless your ferrets are not neutered or spayed, and most ferrets are. The only real difference between a male and a female is that the male is generally significantly larger than the female.

Instead of coat color or gender, make your final decision based on personality. Every ferret has his or her own distinct personality, behavior, and quirks. Find the ferret that fits with you.

Take Your Time

The ferret you choose will be with you for at least five years, and some ferrets live to be ten or twelve. When you make your choice, don't let a pushy sales associate or anyone else rush your decision. Which ferret you bring home is a very important decision, one that cannot be taken lightly. Take your time picking out your new companion. Find a ferret that you can bond with, and you two will have a great time together for years to come!

