

# Chinchilla Glossary of Terms

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## Bedding

Your chinchilla needs about 2" of [bedding](#) in the bottom of his cage. Bedding refers to [Aspen wood shavings](#) or a similar, safe product. Don't use pine and cedar bedding.

## Cage

Your chinchilla will live in a cage, and because they love to climb and jump, you should choose a very [tall cage](#). Wire cages work better than plastic cages because chinchillas like to chew on plastic. Make sure the cage has lots of [platforms](#), shelves, and ladders for climbing.



## Chew toys

[Chew toys](#) are important because chinchillas have teeth that keep growing. Chew toys help to wear down their teeth and keep their mouth healthy.

## Chin

A "chin" is a nickname for a chinchilla.

## Chinchilla proof

Before you let your chinchilla out to play, you should chinchilla proof your room. This means that you make it safe for him to play in. Pay special attention to anything he might chew on that could hurt him, like electrical cords and small plastic items.



## Cord cover

A cord cover is a piece of plastic that you slip on over electrical cords to prevent your chinchilla from chewing on them. A cord cover is used in chinchilla proofing and to help keep him safe.

## Daily diet

A daily diet is the food your chinchilla has to eat every day. Your chinchilla's daily diet includes a [pellet diet](#), [grass hay](#), and fresh water. You can also give him a small amount of fresh fruits or chinchilla treats, but make sure not to give him too much!



## Dust bath

It may sound funny, but chinchillas actually get clean by taking a bath in dust! They roll around in special [chinchilla dust](#), and it cleans oils from their fur to keep them soft and silky. Your chinchilla should take a dust bath about once a day for about 20 minutes.

## Exercise wheel

An [exercise wheel](#) gives your chinchilla exercise while he's in his cage. The younger he is when you first show him an exercise wheel, the more he will use it. Metal wheels are better than plastic wheels since chinchillas like to chew on plastic.



## Food bowl

Your chinchilla will eat his food out of a [bowl](#). Bowls that attach on to the cage are best. If you use a small bowl and put it on the bottom of the cage, your chinchilla might tip it over or go to the bathroom in it. Give your chinchilla his treats in a separate bowl.



### Hay

[Hay](#) provides fiber that your chinchilla needs in his daily diet. It also helps to wear down his teeth. Feed your chinchilla hay such as Timothy Hay and grass hay.

### Nest box

A [nest box](#) gives your chinchilla a place to play, hide, and sleep. It should be made from wood or cardboard.

### Nocturnal

A nocturnal animal is awake and active mostly at night and asleep during the day. Chinchillas are nocturnal, and they should not be disturbed at all during the day. They get very upset when their routine is changed.

### Tame

A tame chinchilla is one that will let you hold her and who will take treats from your hand. It can take a while to tame your chinchilla completely, so be patient!

### Toys

Chinchillas like [toys](#) that they can chew, climb on, and jump on. The toys need to be safe for your chinchilla to chew on, so no plastic toys. Good toys include chew toys, branches, untreated wood toys, exercise wheels, platforms, ladders, blocks and tunnels.

### Treats

Treats should only make up a very small part of your chinchilla's daily diet. Good treats include small pieces of fresh fruit, a single raisin, or chinchilla treats you can buy at a reputable pet supply store.

### Water bottle

Chinchillas drink water out of bottles, and [glass bottles](#) are best. If you use a plastic water bottle, your chinchilla could chew a hole through it. Plastic bottles should be hung outside the cage with the spout pointing inside.