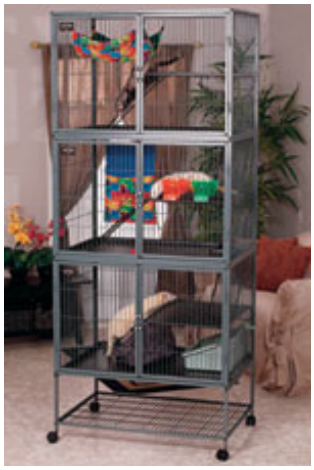
The Importance of a Healthy Ferret Home

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Most ferrets spend a good portion of the day in their cage, but whether your ferrets are free roam or they are caged when you are not home, a clean, dry home is very important to their overall health and well-being.

Your ferret's cage should be spacious and well ventilated; this means no aquariums! Housing your ferret in an aquarium puts her at a higher risk of developing heatstroke and respiratory disease. Ferrets do not get the proper air flow in an aquarium, so their cages must be constructed from a material, such as wire, that allows for proper ventilation. If the cage has a wire floor or wire shelves, cover them with fabric, carpet remnants, or another covering to protect your ferret's sensitive feet.

The cage should be placed somewhere that is not in direct sunlight and away from any drafts. It should be in an area where your ferret will get human interaction, but where it will still be relatively quiet. This means that your kids' playroom isn't the best place for the ferret cage! The cage should also not be placed near other pets' cages, such as dog crates or rabbit hutches. This will cause unnecessary stress for both animals.



There are a number of supplies your ferret needs in her cage, including food food water, litter, toys, and bedding. Ferrets often like to make a mess, so keeping the cage clean and healthy means cleaning up any spilled food, wiping up any spilled water, and removing any torn toys and bedding. If your ferret has an accident outside the litter box, clean it up promptly. Avoid using any wood chips or cedar shavings litter or bedding. These contain harmful phenols that are not healthy for your ferret's delicate respiratory system. Scented litters are also unsafe for ferrets, so avoid them as well.

Keeping your ferret's cage clean and healthy will require effort on your part, and it's best if you come up with a schedule for cleaning to make sure that you don't forget anything. Here is a typical cleaning schedule:

Daily:

- Scoop litter
- Provide fresh water in a clean bowl
- Provide fresh food in a clean bowl
- Clean up any accidents outside the litter pan
- Clean up any spilled food or water
- Check toys and bedding for tears, rips or holes
- Clean up any spilled or tracked litter

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*

Weekly:

- Dump and clean litter box thoroughly
- Wipe down the cage
- Wash all fabric bedding

Depending on the number of ferrets you own, you may need to do some of these tasks more frequently. For example, if you have multiple ferrets, you may need to scoop the litter box twice a day and dump it completely a few times a week. Always tailor your cleaning schedule to your individual ferrets' needs.

It is much easier to clean the cage when your ferrets aren't in it, so consider purchasing a playpen to house them while you are cleaning. This is necessary if you use cleaning products that must be completely rinsed and dried before allowing your ferrets access to their cage.

You play a large part in keeping your ferret's home clean and healthy. Regular cleaning will ensure you and your ferret enjoy many happy years together.

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*