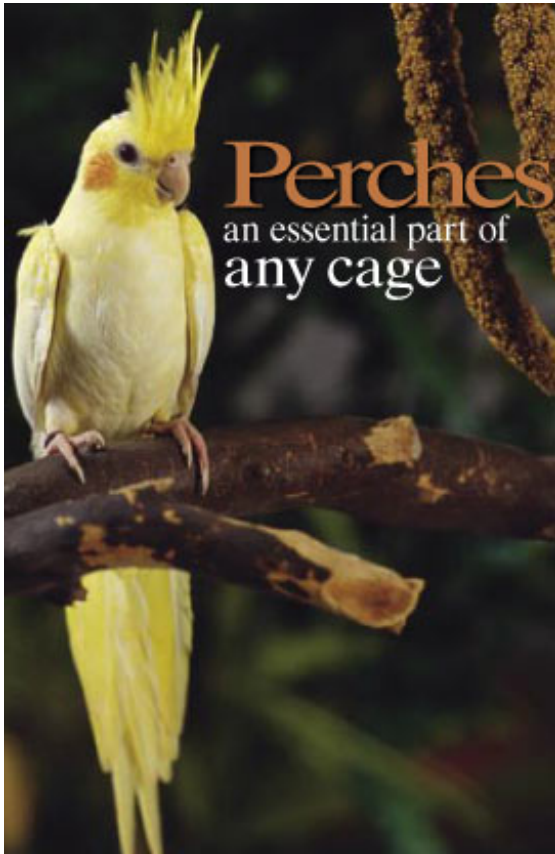


Perch Perfection: Tips on Choosing, Placing, and Maintaining Your Bird's Perch

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Your bird spends the majority of her time on her feet, so safe, comfortable perches are essential. The ideal perch – whether stationary or swinging – is easy on your bird's feet, appropriately textured, fun to use and chew, and easy to clean. Be sure to provide several perches of varying diameter and texture to ensure proper exercise and foot health. The table below details popular perch types.

Perch Placement

Once you've selected the right perches, consider their placement. If food and water dishes do not already include perches, locate perches in front of them to facilitate easy access. (To prevent contamination from droppings, do not place perches above dishes.) Also, place perches so your bird's tail will not touch the side of the cage

when she's sitting on the perch. Vary perch height and location, and make sure your bird can easily move and fly throughout the cage with perches in place.

Perch Diameter

Perch diameter is crucial to the health of your bird. Your bird's foot should wrap around approximately 2/3 of each perch – toes should never meet or overlap. (See chart at right for perch diameter recommendations according to bird species.) If perches are too small, or all have the same diameter and/or texture, your bird may suffer foot irritation and possible injury or infection. Offer perches in several diameters within your species' range.

Keep Those Perches Clean

Perches soiled with debris and droppings are unhealthy for you and your bird alike. Clean dowels with perch scrapers. Spot clean or machine wash natural fiber perches when appropriate, or simply replace. Scour natural branches, cement/mineral perches, and plastic perches with a brush. [Poop-Off](#) dissolves bird droppings for quick and easy cleaning. Avoid scented disinfectants and those containing

Behavior Effect	Can perches affect my bird's behavior?
	Perches don't play much of a part in directing your bird's behavior. They're simply an essential part of any bird cage. However, some perches – natural branch and rope especially – can help relieve



Perch Sizing Chart	
Diameter	Recommended For:
1/2" to 1"	Canary, Finch, Parakeet
3/4" to 1-1/2"	Cockatiel, Lovebird, Conure, Pionus, Lory
1-1/2" to 2 1/2"	Amazon, Cockatoo

pine oils. Natural branches should be cleaned and placed in oven at 250° for 10-20 minutes (watch closely) to kill microorganisms.

especially – can help relieve boredom as your bird chews them apart. Be sure your bird has a variety of perches to use or he may experience foot pain or injury.

2-1/2

Large
2" to 3" Cockatoo,
Macaw

Perch Type	Perch Examples	Perch Advantages	Important Considerations
 Wooden	Dragonwood perches, Manzanita perches, Natural branches (free of insecticides or herbicides)	Economical; perches often double as chew "toys."	Wooden dowels may be too smooth and uniform in diameter. Combine with other, rougher perches with more uneven surfaces.
 Natural Fiber	Sisal Rope , Zig-Zag Rope Perches , Cable Comfy Perches , Untreated cotton rope, Clothesline, Rolled cloth	Soft on feet, great for chewing and shredding.	Materials may be ingested or accidentally wrapped around toes. May require frequent replacement, depending on bird's chewing habits.
 Cement and Minerals	Safety Perch , Manu Mineral Perch , or Cuttlebone Calcium Perch	Perches offer traction and help manicure/trim beak and toenails.	Possible foot irritation if only type of perch used.