

### COCKATIEL

Cockatiels are very docile, friendly birds ideal for children and adults. They like attention, climbing, stretching their wings and playing. A member of the parrot family and originally from Australia, all cockatiels in the US are now captive bred, often hand-fed, with many color variations: grey, pied, lutino, pearl, cinnamon, silver, white-face. A relatively hardy bird, they can live as long as 25 years (typically 15-20), can learn to whistle, say short phrases and even do tricks.

#### Diet

A main diet of fortified cockatiel seed mix or pellets can be supplemented with small amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables: apple, cooked broccoli, beans, cooked kale, dandelion, orange, shredded carrot, peppers, grapes, squash, banana and others. Cockatiels need fresh water at all times, a vitamin supplement, grit, charcoal and a cuttle bone or mineral block to provide calcium and help keep the beak trim.

#### Housing

Provide a roomy cage with space to spread their wings, climb and play; a minimum of 18"W 24"L 18"H with horizontal bars for climbing. Place in a well traveled draft-free area; do not place in the kitchen as smoke, odors and fumes may be harmful to your bird. Several perches of varied diameters and textures will help keep their feet healthy. Equip the cage with a variety of toys such as seed treats, swings, ladders, bells, branches. Do not crowd the cage with toys but rotate toys frequently to keep your bird interested. Your cockatiel will also enjoy a playpen outside the cage equipped with ladders, perches, swings and hanging toys. Cover the cage at night to prevent drafts.

#### Care

Basic cage care includes daily cleaning of the water and food dishes. Change paper bottoms daily and litter coverings every 2-3 days. Clean and disinfect the cage weekly. Wash and completely dry the perches and toys whenever they become soiled.

#### Grooming

Though cockatiels are masters of keeping their feathers looking clean they need a warm water birdbath or misting shower 2-3 times a week to keep their dander down. Clip their wings as needed to keep them from flying away. Long toenails may get caught on fabrics and affect their walking and should be trimmed regularly.

#### Health

Signs of illness to be aware of are if a bird is sitting at the bottom of the cage, shows a lack of activity, the feathers are ruffled, nasal discharge/sneezing, reduced appetite or if it shows any signs of weight loss (weight loss can be quick and fatal). Consult an avian veterinarian if any of these signs are noticed.

Some common illnesses and injuries are: broken wings or legs, cuts and open wounds, overgrown beaks and nails, lameness or sore feet, feather picking, heat stroke, shock, concussions, egg binding, indigestion, eye disease, mites, watery eyes, colds, tumors, Psittacosis, coccidiosis, French molt, goiter, E. coli, Aspergillosis, conjunctivitis, constipation, diarrhea and arthritis.



#### COCKATIEL CHECKLIST

- Cockatiel Cage
- Cage Stand, Cover, Skirt
- Cage liners or bedding
- Water Dish or Bottle
- Food Dish
- Perches, Swing
- Cockatiel Diet
- Treats; Treat clips
- Toys
- Play Pen, T-Stand
- Cuttle bone/Mineral block
- Birdbath or Spray
- Supplements
- Cage Cleaner
- Cockatiel Book