

*Full of advice
on caring for
your pet*

Your guide to
**Parrots,
Budgerigars and
Cockatiels**



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best for you and your pets*



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Are you ready?



The parrot family consists of Parakeets, African Greys and Amazons. Budgerigars are another member of the parrot family originating from Australia, as do cockatiels. All of these birds are natural acrobats and mimics. If you are lucky and persist with your bird then they may start to repeat simple words and phrases. They are also great whistlers.

Budgerigars are very bright and cheerful birds, making great companions. They come in a variety of attractive colours. Cockatiels are very intelligent birds and are normally grey, though can also come in white, cinnamon, silver or pale yellow variations.

Budgerigars are friendly and easy to tame

These birds like companions, so if you are planning on keeping any of these birds on their own then you must compensate for their lack of companionship by providing plenty of attention and toys to reduce boredom. All of these birds make great pets; with their lively personalities and bright colours, they will keep the whole family entertained for hours.

Parrots can live up to 50 years and are a long-term commitment. Cockatiels have an average life span of 12 to 14 years. Budgerigars have a shorter life span of 7 to 8 years. Although these birds are relatively easy pets to look after, they are still a big commitment, so ensure that you have the time to devote to them before you choose one.



What to look for?

When selecting your bird, make sure they look bright and alert and are moving around the cage easily. Your bird should have a clean vent area and its feathers should be flush to its body and not fluffed up. Also look out for signs of breathing problems and discharge from the eyes or nostrils.

At home with your Parrot, Budgerigar or Cockatiel

Parrots - Short tailed parrots will be happy in an indoor flight or a standard parrot cage. Long tailed varieties will need to be homed in an outside aviary or indoor flight.

Budgerigars - Can be housed either alone or in pairs in a cage that is large enough to allow your budgie to stretch its wings and fly from perch to perch.

Cockatiels - Will need a large cage to allow sufficient room for them to stretch their wings and fly from perch to perch. Budgerigars and cockatiels can be kept in flocks in aviaries and will mix well with each other. They will also mix well with some small parrots, but they should not be mixed with larger parrots.

Cages - It is important to get the largest cage possible to allow room for flight and to ensure exercise. Your cage should be positioned away from draughts and direct sunlight and avoid damp and humid areas. The bottom of the cage should be lined with sand sheets or bird sand to catch the droppings. A removable tray will make cleaning easier. To keep your bird amused, provide plenty of bird toys and perches. Be sure to cover the cage at night if the room temperature is likely to fall. This will also keep the birds quiet at night. Thoroughly clean the cage with a pet-safe disinfectant once a week.

Outside aviaries - Outside aviaries need to have a sheltered area protected from wind, rain and strong sunlight. Position perches high up in this area together with the food and nest boxes. Depending on the species of bird you have chosen, you may need to heat the aviary as some will not survive the very low temperatures. Cockatiels, parrots and budgies all enjoy climbing so pick an aviary with plenty of horizontal bars at different levels to climb on. To add further interest to your bird's surroundings, put some non-poisonous wood branches of different widths into the aviary. These will also help keep your bird's beak short.

Buy as large a cage as possible

Bringing your bird home - Take your bird home in a carry box or a covered cage to reduce stress. Fill the food and water pots in the cage and sprinkle extra seed on the floor so they will have plenty to eat until they discover their seed pots. Ensure that all windows and doors are shut and that there is no access through a chimney. Gently open the carry box and allow your bird to enter their new home at their own pace. If they seem anxious then partially cover the cage with a cloth, which can be removed once they settle in.

Diet

Parrots - Your parrot will need a variety of cereals, fruit, vegetables and supplements. Your local Jollyes has a variety of cereal mixtures for parrots. You can feed your parrot apples, bananas, oranges, grapes, pears, cherries, celery, carrots, beetroot, lettuce and cabbage. Make sure fruit and veg is thoroughly washed before putting them in the cage.



Budgerigars & Cockatiels - Your local Jollyes will be able to supply you with a good quality budgie and cockatiel mixture. This can be supplemented with carefully washed green food such as lettuce and dandelion, though these should be given in small quantities. Provide grit in the cage to help your birds' digestion.

General - Vitamin drops can be added to water to supplement their diet. A mineral block containing essential minerals and cuttlefish (which is rich in calcium) will help to keep the beak worn down. As an occasional treat you can provide your bird with millet seed, honey bells and seed bars. Provide fresh clean water on a daily basis. Clean seed and food dishes regularly.

Health

Your parrot, budgerigar and cockatiel should live a healthy and happy life if you look after them properly. The main signs of illness would be:

- Loose droppings.
- Discharge from the nostrils.
- Laboured breathing.
- Feathers raised to give a puffed up appearance.



Feathers - Spray your birds feathers occasionally with a mist spray so that they do not become too dry. Most birds enjoy a birdbath so one should be provided.

Give your birds plenty of toys to play with

Colds - If your bird gets too chilled it can catch a cold. The symptoms would be a lack of energy, wheezing and fluffing up of feathers. Keep him warm and dry, remove any birdbath and contact your local vet.

Diarrhoea - Too much green food, mouldy food or a change in diet can cause this. If your bird has loose droppings then keep them warm, ensure they have plenty of fresh water and contact your local vet if it persists.

Mites - Red mite is the most common bird parasite, which feeds on bird's blood, causing irritation and weight loss. This can easily be dealt with by spraying your bird with mite treatment, which you can purchase from your local Jollyes.

Beaks & nails - It is important that your bird's beak and nails do not become overgrown. Check this regularly and if they do then contact your local vet.

Feather plucking - Can be caused by a poor diet, lack of exercise and stimulation. As mentioned previously, birds that are housed on their own will require a lot of attention and toys to keep them entertained. If you notice that they have started to pluck their feathers out, this is a sign of boredom and frustration. Give your bird attention and provide them with a wide variety of toys. If the problem persists then consult your local vet as soon as possible. Birds naturally shed feathers but this should only be the odd feather at the bottom of the cage. It is advisable to provide your bird with a companion if they are going to be left on their own for long periods during the day.



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Shopping Checklist

We recommend the following items for your parrots, budgerigars or cockatiels.

Parrot, Budgerigar and Cockatiel Checklist

- Cage and cage stand
- Sand/ sand sheets
- Perches
- Cuttlefish
- Water and seed pots
- Bird safe disinfectant
- Suitable food
- Grit (cockatiels and budgies)
- Toys
- A book specific to your birds care
- Mineral block and vitamin drops
- Bath

It is now time to enjoy your birds and watch them grow into important members of the family.

For further information contact:

Jollyes Petfood Superstores
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