

Dwarf hamster

Roborovski's (Desert) Dwarf Hamster

Phodopus roborovskii

Adult Size	1 inch	Life Span	3 – 3.5 Years
Male/Female Differences	Sexing is done by observing distance between anus and genitals – it's slightly greater in males, although sexing these small animals can be difficult.		
Compatibility	Dwarf hamsters are most compatible when they are from the same litter. Females live well together, but males can fight.		
Origin	Gobi Desert, throughout Mongolia's desert steppe and parts of northern China.		
Climate	Most home environments suit dwarf hamsters well.		
Day Cycle	No cycle, play and sleep 24/7		
Temperature	60 – 70 degrees.		
Lighting	Most household lighting is suitable for dwarf hamsters; as these animals usually spend a great deal of time underground, they have sensitive eyes, so bright lights should be avoided.		
Humidity	Drier is preferred, but they are comfortable in the average household humidity.		
Habitat/Territory	In the wild dwarf hamsters live in burrows in the arid steppes. Plastic hamster tubes can recreate these burrows in their cages, and dwarf hamsters will also burrow into their substrate.		
Substrate/Bedding	Supply a safe and soft bedding. The less dusty the bedding the better. Cedar bedding can be toxic and pine is too dusty. Good litters are shredded or pelleted aspen or		

	recycled paper litters. Supply nesting materials and dry hays.
Hiding Place/Den	Hiding places provide comfort and security. Wooden tubes with holes also provide surfaces to chew upon. Dwarf hamsters like to sleep together, so any hiding place needs to be just large enough to house all your animals.
Cage Type	Regular hamster habitats should not be used to house dwarf hamsters, as they are often small enough to squeeze between the bars. Aquariums make great homes – safe, secure, and easy to clean. They can have limited ventilation, so care must be taken to allow adequate air flow. Plastic cages with tubes meet their instinct for burrowing.
Diet	A few critter cubes and 1-2 tablespoons of high quality hamster seed mix is given as a staple. Supply a variety of leafy greens and vegetables in small quantities. Avoid spoilage. Fruits should be given sparingly to avoid diarrhea. Timothy hay should be given at all times to aid in digestion. Try not to focus on one thing, give a good variety. A tiny bit of yoghurt is good for intestinal health.
Supplements	Vitamins in water help supply nutrients missing from captive diets. Dwarf hamsters are natural insect eaters. Offer occasional mealworms, crickets, and/or cat and dog kibble, or small dog biscuits. Bland proteins like boiled egg are good.
Diet Precautions	Do not give chocolate, candy, or anything with caffeine. Keep it bland and healthy. Giving too much greens can cause impaction or intestinal disorders.
Feeding	Placing food in a bowl will help over feeding. Dwarf hamsters will move most of their food into their nest and bury it for later.
Water Source	Water bottles are best. Wash the bottle in between refills. Supply fresh filtered, non-chlorinated water at all times.
Grooming	Offer chinchilla dust to dwarf hamsters for them to bathe themselves. They use this fine powder to remove excess oils from their coats. Minimal grooming is necessary.
Oral and Foot Care	Dwarf hamsters have incisors that they need to constantly down. Keep soft wood chews, pumice stones, and treat sticks in the cage. Rotate different types to keep them interested. Use safe ramps and running wheels that will prevent leg injury.

Proper Handling	Dwarf hamsters are sweet tempered animals that rarely bite. They do need to be handled very regularly to keep them social. When first getting to know each other, a bathtub makes a safe and secure place to hold them, as they can be easily startled and quick.
Habitat Maintenance	Dwarf hamsters tend to eliminate in the same area of the cage. Spot clean the cage daily, and change litter once per week and wash cage thoroughly with warm soapy water.
Health Concerns	Diarrhea due to poor diet, stress, or unclean cages. Respiratory distress can be due to poor ventilation, drafts, noxious odors, and/or dusty litter. Over grown teeth can be due to poor chewing stimulation. Congenital cancers can also occur. Maintain healthy environment and diet to help prevent disease.
