

## The Exciting World Of Chinchilla Cages

### A guide to finding the perfect cage for your chinchilla.

*By Jessica Cordia*

Whether you are buying your chinchilla cage or making it yourself, consider these tips.

#### Size & Material

When it comes to chinchilla cages, bigger is better. Chinchillas need lots of room to run, jump, roll and play. You can have a single-level, multi-level, or tiered cage. Drew Carter, a chinchilla owner from York, Pa., said that he started off with a single-level cage, and added more rooms throughout the years.

The cage needs to be made out of thick wood or metal because chinchillas are notorious chewers. Some chin owners build a cage out of wood, and then cover the wood in a metal mesh material. If you use wood, make sure it is a safe wood like apple or willow.

The bottom of the cage needs to have a solid surface. If the cage has a wire bottom surface, then your chinchilla's feet will get very sore. Imagine trying to balance on wires for your entire life! If you choose a wire-bottomed cage, provide ledges or a surface your chinchilla can sit to rest.

#### Ventilation

Chinchilla cages must be well-ventilated. Find a cage that allows air to circulate in and out. Always check the air in your chin's cage. Chinchillas are prone to respiratory infections, so check to see if the air is stuffy. The cage needs to be well-ventilated, but not drafty. You shouldn't have wind blowing directly on your chinchilla.

#### Accessories

What good is a house without furniture? Once you have the cage ready, you need to fill it with these chinchilla essentials:

**Water Bottle:** This should be made out of glass or plastic. If the bottle is plastic, it needs to be hung outside of the cage. Otherwise, your chinchilla will chew it, leaving a watery mess.

**Wheel:** This is important for chinchilla exercise. Wheels should be a least 15 inches in diameter. The surface should be solid, so your chinchilla's feet won't get caught between the spokes.

**Hay rack:** This gives you a specific place to put your chinchilla's hay. Hay racks are usually hung on the side of the cage at a low height for easy access.

**Bedding:** This covers the entire surface of the cage. Bedding should be clean and absorbent to minimize odor.

**Toys:** Put toys in your chins cage to help wear-down its teeth and provide entertainment.

#### Safety

Chinchillas are much smaller than they look, making them excellent escape artists. Make sure that no space is big enough for your chinchilla to escape. Examine your cage and look for places where your chinchilla can get trapped. If your chinchilla does escape, put out a dust bath and wait.

Chinchilla cages make a fun and safe home for your chinchilla. The possibilities are endless. "You are only limited by your imagination and budget," Carter said.