

## Chinchilla Out-of-Cage Options

### **Tips for chinchilla proofing your home and out-of-cage playtime.**

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A chinchilla wants to leave its cage daily to get exercise and explore its environment. Before you let your chinchilla out of its cage, you must chin-proof. You don't have to chin-proof every room in the house, just the ones that your chinchilla will be in.

When considering what rooms to let your chinchilla play in, think about where in your home your chinchilla can cause the least amount of damage. Chinchillas love to chew and gnaw on everything, so be prepared for damages!

Once you know what rooms will be OK for your chinchilla, start chin-proofing. Look for things that are potentially dangerous like electrical cords. Either remove all electrical cords from the room, or put the cords in a protective casing, such as PVC piping.

Remove everything that you don't want ruined. Lani Ritchey, a founder of California Chins, said, "If you don't want it chewed up, peed on or destroyed, don't leave it out for them." Chinchillas eat books, furniture, remote control buttons, keyboards, computers and anything else that can be chewed.

Chinchillas are natural escape artists, so look around the room for holes and possible hiding places like sofa beds. Cover up the holes and block passages into hard to reach places like furniture. The idea of chin proofing is to give your chinchilla a safe place to play in.

After you've chin-proofed your room, give your chinchilla out-of-cage playtime. These play sessions are a good way to bond with your chinchilla, and they provide essential exercise. Play with your chinchilla every day. "Even a few minutes of head scratching, chin rubbing and petting is good stimulation," Ritchey said, "Put them on your bed for five minutes of romping. Give them a treat and put them back in the cage."

Even though you have thoroughly chin-proofed, constant supervision is a must.