

A Friend For A Hamster

Can different hamster species live together?

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Q: I've had a Campbell's hamster for about six months. Should I get another friend for him to help keep him entertained? Should I get another Campbell's hamster or can I get another hamster species?

A: Typically dwarf hamsters that do well together have been together since they were very young. Adding another hamster to the cage after your current hamster has been on its own for several months will likely create stress rather than entertainment or companionship. That stress will result in fighting, sometimes to the death of one or both hamsters.

Only dwarf hamsters are able to live together, not the larger Syrian hamsters, and it's only certain pairs of the same dwarf species. Many dwarf hamster siblings must be separated when they reach sexual maturity. All Syrian hamsters must live in cages by themselves; attempting to pair these normally solitary creatures will result in severe injuries and often death.