

## Advice From The Answer Ferret For October 2011

**Socks being withheld, beverages being hoarded, stinky hammocks and the dangers of ferrets underfoot are some of the concerns tackled by The Answer Ferret in this installment of the tongue-in-cheek column Advice From The Answer Ferret.**

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Ferret Patches/Courtesy Jamie Grabiec  
Most ferrets are forced to find socks in drawers.

Ferret Denied Socks!

Dear Answer Ferret: My hoomins have been withholding their socks and it's driving me crazy! Don't they understand that I need to organize them properly? By smell? By texture? They are holding them hostage in sterile bureau drawers, and I am at my wit's end! I have tried digging the drawers open, but it's beyond me. I chipped a fang trying to grab at the metal drawer pull. What should I do?

— Very Frustrated Ferret in Colorado

Dear Frustrated Ferret: I think that most ferrets, if not all, have been in your position at one time or another. A sock is a powerful thing, and obviously a degree of due care must be exercised over them. For reasons that I cannot begin to fathom hoomins are completely blind to the inherent power of socks and treat them casually, even negligently. I wonder if this is partially due to their appallingly poor sense of smell. Yes, as amazing as it may seem to ferretkind, hoomins can barely smell the most pungent aromas such as the ones that socks hold in their fabric.

As obvious as it is to us that socks should be sorted and stored by smell, humans rely instead upon visual cues such as color and pattern. I know that this seems laughable, but it is absolutely true. Further, their primate sense of order requires that socks be stored in pairs, regardless of scent. I know, I know, it seems so random. Obviously a sock with a full, rich aroma is perfect just as it is and it should be appreciated as a stand-alone item. Regardless, hoomins insist upon keeping socks together in pairs. They can't seem to help themselves. It's sad, but it's a reality.

I suggest that you give up on the socks and focus instead on shoes. Shoes have their own appealing odors and it is an interesting challenge to steal and store them in parts of the home that are inaccessible to hoomins. Beneath furniture is good, so is deep in the back of closets where all is dark and still. Shoes take a lot of wear and tear and can often be dismantled, bit by bit. It is particularly enjoyable to separate the fragrant rubber soles from the main body of the shoe, which is my personal favorite! Give it a try.

— The Answer Ferret

The Answer Ferret Glossary

Hoomin = Human

Hammie = Hammock

Ferret Craves Beverage Puddles

Dear Answer Ferret: My hoomins insist on storing beverages in containers, and become frustrated with me when I knock them over to drink from the puddle. What's up with that?

— Deeply Puzzled Ferret in Maryland

Dear Puzzled Ferret: Yes, I personally run into this in my own home all of the time! I have considered the matter, and I think that the answer lies in hoomin anatomy. It is physically difficult and awkward for a hoomin to get down on all fours and drink from a puddle; it is simply easier for them to carry what amounts to a drink puddle inside a walled vessel of some sort. With those remarkably clever hands of theirs they simply bring the puddle to themselves, instead of bringing themselves to the puddle as we do. Don't take it personally!

If I may inject a personal peeve of my own here, it is that hoomins are so reluctant to share their great abundance of material wealth us, their ferret companions. After all, how hard would it be for them to simply pour us a small puddle of whatever they are drinking directly onto the floor, so that we might enjoy it too?

— The Answer Ferret

Ferret Repulsed By Stinky Hammock

Dear Answer Ferret: My hoomins recently replaced my hammie with one that simply won't do at all! It is not soft, and it smells of acrylic. How do I make it clear that I want my old hammie back? I have tried glaring at them pointedly, but they seem oblivious.

— Disgusted Ferret in Texas

Dear Disgusted Ferret: I am very sorry, but I expect that your old hammie is gone forever. While you cannot bring about its return, you can insure that your current unacceptable hammie is replaced. It's a gamble, but I think it is worth taking in your case. Given how much time ferrets spend sleeping, a good hammie is a must.

I suggest that you take a good hard look at your current hammie. Are the hanging straps some sort of hoomin-made synthetic? Most likely they are. With patience you can chew right through one or more of them. True, it will taste awful but it is doable. The odds are good that your hoomin will simply replace the hammie rather than try to repair it. Take care not to ingest any of the material, lest you risk an intestinal blockage. Just spit it out onto the bottom of the cage. You may find that the new hammie is no great improvement. Well, you can always sever another strap or two!

— The Answer Ferret

**Safety Issues With Ferret Running Under Feet**

Dear Answer Ferret: My ferret Rumpus is always trying to run under my feet when I'm walking around. I am really afraid that I am going to step on him and hurt him! What should I do?

— A Worried Hoomin in Colorado

Dear Worried Hoomin: Could it be that your ferret Rumpus wants you to stop what you are doing and pay some attention to him? This is one of the most common reasons that we ferretkind run alongside hoomins. I suggest that you stop, bend down and pick Rumpus up. Pet him nicely, and speak to him in a quiet voice. Rub his ears, stroke his back. Make eye contact. He may begin to struggle after a short while. Just gently put him back down on the floor. Remember, although we ferretkind have many, many tasks to perform every day, such as digging in potted plants and upsetting wastebaskets (just to name a few), we do love you. Sometimes it can be hard to make our needs for attention and affection known. Don't forget to feed our souls, not just our bellies. I hope this helps!

— The Answer Ferret

Do you have a question for The Answer Ferret? The Inbox is always open! Send your question to [ferrets@bowtieinc.com](mailto:ferrets@bowtieinc.com) (mark the subject line: The Answer Ferret).