

## Amazing Ferret Abodes!

**Four ferret owners share their secrets to crafting creative habitats for their pet ferrets.**

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Courtesy of Krista

Carpeted shelves add to the play area of Krista's ferrets.

"I live with my five fuzzy kids. They let me share their little room with them. One day, I was trying to figure out where to put shelves. I needed some space to keep things away from the kiddies.

Well, I then thought, why not cover them in carpet so the ferrets can have extra room? So my dad and I put up mounts and stapled some scraps of leftover carpet onto some boards that we had sized up. There are two different sizes so they can hop onto the higher or lower boards easily, but they still need to work those muscles! It's part of their physical enrichment. Just a few days ago I installed some hooks, very easy, and hung up a hammock. They love it!"

— Krista, New Mexico [Click images to enlarge](#)

Two cages and lots of tunnels form the basis of this "Ferret Hilton" created by Crystal and her father for their ferrets. [Click images to enlarge](#)

Photos Courtesy Crystal Johnston

This is the inside of the ferrets' "potty of doom," a specially made litter box.

"This is our cage, which our friends call the Ferret Hilton. My dad and I have been working on this cage for two years, adding on as time passes.

The cage is two Super Pet cages connected by lots of tunnels. The smaller cage contains the food bowl, water bowl and water bottle. The bigger cage is full of hammies, blankets, a cuddle cube and Rascal's stash of "babies" (his stuffed animals).

The litter box is in a plastic container between the two cages that is spray-painted blue to be dark. We call it "The Potty of Doom." This is the only litter box and (amazingly) they have a 100 percent hit rate! It is connected to each of the two cages and has a third door on the side that shuts when they have to stay in their cage.

The clear tubing you see is connected to the cage's "den" — made from a pair of my mom's old pants that are soft and cuddly, inside of a section of a shoe rack lined with cardboard. The pants legs act as tubes leading to and from the den. It is dark in there and they love it."

— Crystal Johnston, Georgia [Click images to enlarge](#)

Todd LaFaille modified the shelving in his ferrets's cage and also connected it to a system of exercise tunnels.

Photos Courtesy Todd LaFaille

The ferrets really enjoy the tube run that Todd LaFaille created for them.

"I made this ferret run last spring. We bought our first house in January and I was looking for a better, safer way to let our three ferrets — Usame, Autumn and Snickers — get some exercise and fun while we were at work during the day. I've always had tubes for them to play around in and I was just waiting for the opportunity to expand on some ideas I've had over the last few years.

First let's start with their cage. I have the Super Pet Ferret Kingdom cage, which I like because it's big and has easy-to-clean plastic shelves.

I felt I had to improve on the cage shelving, so I bought some extra shelves and divided the cage into three sections, a sleeping area on top, an eating area in the middle and a potty area on the bottom tray. I then removed all of the plastic cage connectors that the ferrets liked to chew and I zip-tied all of the sides together. I also zip-tied the shelves to the sides and to each other.

Now I had a sturdy cage and just needed a better way for them to reach each level. This is where being a trim carpenter gave me an idea. In our woodshop we have dust collectors with flexible plastic 4-inch tubing. It's more expensive than the tubing found at home improvement stores, but it's more flexible and softer. I bought a 20-foot roll of JET brand tubing

which had a clear and black stripe. A pure clear tubing is available, but it's costly and a bit too flexible. The striped tubing I chose lets me see the ferrets while still giving them the darker tube they enjoy.

I then cut two lengths and zip-tied them to the cage walls as I spiraled them up and zip-tied them to the holes in the shelves. The cage was done and the ferrets loved it!

With the cage done, I could finally work on the dream ferret run I had always imagined to go with it.

I wanted the tube run to be attached to the cage so they could use it at their leisure while still not taking up floor space or getting in the way of their bottom potty level, which I clean out twice a week. I decided to attach the tubes to the ceiling of the room. My wife looked at me strangely as I told her my idea.

The ferrets live in my office, which is a 10 by 12 foot room with a sloped ceiling going from 5.5 feet to 12 feet. The slope worked out perfectly, giving the ferrets an 11-foot sloped tube going up the main 5.5 by 12 foot tube run. A steeper slope would have been too slippery for the ferrets to climb easily.

My materials consisted of:

- 3 20-foot sections of JET 4-inch dust hose (\$30 each)
- 5 Pioneer 4-inch plastic 90 degree elbows and 1 "Y" (\$9 each)
- 28 Pioneer 4-inch hose clamps (\$2 each)
- 1 JET 6.25 by 6.25 inch Universal Dust Hood (\$13)

The costs added up quickly but, like any ferret owner, I believe the joy they bring into our lives is priceless.

I cut out enough wire from the top level of the cage to slide the dust hood through from the inside and zip-tie it so that the cut metal was on the outside of the cage away from little paws. I then screwed all of the elbows into the corners of the room and drilled a hole in each of the 4-inch hose clamps so I could screw them to the ceiling and walls to hold up and support the hose sections, using threaded drywall anchors where there was no framing.

I then measured and cut all of the hose sections and clamped them to the elbows and put the "Y" into one section for the sloped tube. The sloped tube was then attached to another elbow near the cage, which has a short tube going to the hood attached to the cage. After hooking up all of the clamps that I had screwed to the wall to the tube sections, I drilled a few small air holes in each plastic elbow. The run was done!

The ferrets love their tube run more than anything. Each day I wake up and go to sleep hearing little paws running and dooking sounds in the tubes.

The funniest part of the tube run ended up being the 11-foot slope. Every time the ferrets finish in the run and decide to go back down to their cage, they enter the top of the sloped tube and flip over onto their backs to slide all the way down the tube, gaining quite a bit of speed in the process.

When friends and family see the tube run, some think it's great and others just look at me strangely. To the latter, I just smile and tell them, "It's a ferret owner thing."

— Todd LaFaille, Connecticut [Click image to enlarge](#)

Courtesy Karen McArdle

Karen McArdle and her father created a homemade cage that would hold seven ferrets comfortably.

"I built my ferrets' cage because my old one wasn't working for my growing fuzzy family. It's also next to impossible to find a big enough cage at a reasonable price to hold seven ferrets comfortably.

My dad and I took apart the old cages and took a trip to our local home improvement store where we bought white plastic picket fencing and a large sheet of plastic. We used the wire mesh from the old cages as the walls, ceiling and doors. It has two shelves with two ramps leading up to them, three litter boxes, an eating section, hammocks, and tons of T-shirts to cuddle in. They love it because it gives them so much more room, they're getting older so there's less ramps, and I love it because it's much easier to clean."

— Karen McArdle, Illinois

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