

Ways To Bond With Hedgehogs

Follow these tips to bond with a new pet hedgehog.

By Audrey Pavia

To get the most out of your relationship with your hedgehog, you need to bond with your small pet. You can begin the bonding process by first letting your small pet get used to its new surroundings. Give your hedgehog about a week to feel comfortable in its new home before you start interacting with it. In the meantime, talk to it when you reach into the cage to give food and water, letting it know that you are friend and not foe.

Begin the bonding process by offering your hedgehog a small treat with your fingers. (Unseasoned chicken or tuna are particular hedgehog favorites.) Let your hedgehog take the treat from your hand. If it won't take it from your hand, put it down in the cage and let the hedgehog eat it as you watch. Try getting your small pet to take it from your hand the next day.

Once the hedgehog is comfortably taking the treat from your hand, try placing the treat on the palm of your open hand. Your hedgehog will have to touch you in order to get to the treat. Because it will be the one making the contact (instead of you just grabbing it), the hedgehog will learn that approaching you and touching you reaps yummy rewards.

Once your hedgehog is regularly crawling into your hand, go to the next step — picking it up. If the hedgehog becomes frightened when you do this, it's not ready. Go back to placing a treat on the palm of your hand and allowing it to make contact on its own terms.