



## Hermit Crab

(coenobita spp)

### Facts:

Average adult size: **2 - 6 inches long (depending on species)**

Average life span: **10+ yrs with proper care**

Diet: **Omnivore**



Hermit crabs are nocturnal scavengers that will eat almost anything. Hermit crabs live in large groups in the wild and do best in groups of three or more.

*Will reach adult size in 2 years, depending on species and under ideal conditions; upgrade habitat size as your hermit crab grows.*

### Feeding & Nutrition:

#### Food

- High-quality Hermit Crab food
- Treats:
  - Non-citrus fruits (such as mangoes, coconut, and papayas); vegetables (such as spinach and romaine lettuce); raw unsalted nuts; and fish food flakes.
  - Insects like mealworms and crickets
- Crush all pelleted foods before feeding; feed at night.
- Hermit crabs appreciate variety in their food.

#### Supplements

- Provide carotene (found in most red, orange or yellow vegetables)
- Calcium supplements (such as cuttlebone)

#### Water

- Keep two shallow dishes of water in the habitat at all times: one with fresh, dechlorinated water and one with salt water.
- The water should not be any deeper than ¼ - ½ inch – any deeper and your hermit crab could drown. A sponge can be placed in the dish to help your crab climb in and out, but change the sponge frequently to avoid bacteria growth.
- May not drink from a bowl but will rely on moisture on plants.

#### Frequency of Food

- Fresh food and water should always be available.
- Limited amounts of vegetables and fruits can be given daily.
- Vegetables and fruits not eaten within 24 hours should be discarded.
- Treats should not exceed 10% of total food intake.

### Housing:

#### Cage

- Appropriately sized habitat to accommodate adult hermit crab and allow for exercise, at least 10 gallons.
- Provide climbing décor and hiding areas; new shells should be a bit bigger than the current shell.
- Maintain 70 to 80% humidity by misting daily as needed (required to keep gills moist,

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# Care Guide



prevent dehydration and ease molting).

- Temperature gradient (80°F for the warm end and 70°F for the cool end); recommend low wattage incandescent bulb (appropriate for the size of the habitat).
- Hermit crabs are nocturnal, so you may provide a low wattage nocturnal bulb for nighttime viewing.
- House hermit crabs in groups of three or more, but do not house different invertebrate species together.

## Substrate

- Sand, mixed with a mulch type substrate such as coconut fiber bedding; can also include sphagnum moss; substrate should be at least 3 inches deep.

## Habitat Maintenance

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect the habitat at least once a week: place hermit crab in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all traces of bleach smell; dry the tank and furnishings completely and add clean substrate.

## Care:

### Grooming & Hygiene

- Place hermit crabs into their saltwater dish daily and allow them to exit at their leisure.

### Health

- Healthy appetite
- Active

### Normal Behavior

- Hermit crabs are social and should be housed in groups of three or more.
- Usually molt once or twice a year; will bury itself in the sand. Don't disturb the process as the crab is very fragile. Protect the molting crab by placing a divider in the tank or moving the other crabs to another tank. Ensure proper humidity.

## Recommended Supplies:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate Size Habitat    | <input type="checkbox"/> Food bowl/Water bottle     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substrate                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hide                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Hermit Crab Food | <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing Decor             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Treats                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Plants                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cuttlebone                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Low wattage nocturnal bulb |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moss                        |   |

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