

Bringing Home Baby



Taking care of a bird is a big responsibility. Its life will depend on you. Many birds are purchased on an "impulse buy". It is hard to resist those cute, cuddly guys, when visiting your local pet stores. Unfortunately, many birds are purchased with little information on their care and with less than adequate housing. It would be wise to do some studying on the different species, their needs, if a male or female of that particular species would be a better choice and breeder versus broker (pet stores). The internet and your local library is a good place to start. Magazines are also readily available. Talk to your avian veterinarian and friends who have birds.

Thought should be given to the noise frequency and level; amount of space the bird, its toys, food, cage, etc..., will take up, and daily care requirements as well as the amount of time you have to spend with your new feathered friend. Birds live in flocks and you actually become the flock when you adopt a bird. Who will babysit when you go out of town?

When you have made your choice, try talking to others who own that specific bird. One way to do so is to join your local bird clubs. There you will meet people who own birds or know breeders who raise them. After purchasing your bird, a general checkup by an [avian veterinarian](#) is recommended. You may be surprised to know that not all veterinarians treat birds. Beak, wing and nail trims will be necessary for parrot type species and can be discussed on your initial visit.

Buy the largest cage you can afford and make sure it is small enough to fit through doorways. Be sure to wash the new cage thoroughly upon arrival. Thought should be given where the cage will be placed. Kitchens should be avoided as Teflon pans when heated to a high temperatures exude a gas that can be deadly to birds. Scented candles also carry the same threat. Change the paper daily.

A good diet is paramount. A commercially prepared "pellet" diet is recommended as well as fresh fruits and vegetables. A good quality seed mix is allowable in very small quantities. Do not feed your bird something you yourself would not eat. Junk food is to be avoided as well as alcohol and tobacco fumes. Avocado, fruit seeds (like apples and oranges) and chocolate can be toxic to birds. Wash fresh food thoroughly. Supplemental vitamins are essential. Safe, non toxic toys, made for birds are necessary for the psychological development of your pet.

Bird ownership gives countless rewards. With a bit of research, lots of love and attention and a few minor adjustments to living quarters, "bringing home baby" can be a happy and rewarding experience for both you and your new avian friend.

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