



komodo[®]

CARE GUIDE

CORN SNAKE



CONGRATULATIONS! Corn Snakes make great pets and we're sure you'll enjoy each other's company for many years to come. Choosing the correct enclosure and equipment is an important first step. Komodo reptile products are designed to ensure your new reptile pet gets off to a great start.

ABOUT CORN SNAKES

Corn Snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus guttatus*) get their name because they are often found near grain stores, attracted to the presence of mice and rats that eat the harvested corn. They are native to south eastern and central parts of North America and have become one of the most popular reptile pets in the world. They're friendly, relatively small, easy to keep and available in a vast array of colours, making them an ideal beginners' snake. Corns can grow to be around 2 metres (6ft) long and can live for over 20 years.

ENCLOSURES

Enclosures can range from W40xD30xH35cm for snakes up to 120cm (4ft) long, and W70xD40xH50cm for adult Corn Snakes. Hatchling snakes will benefit from being kept in a smaller container inside this enclosure until they are approximately 30cm (12in) long. Enclosure this size are also suitable for many other types of colubrid snake, such as King Snakes, Milk Snakes, Rat Snakes and Garter Snakes.

SUBSTRATE

Your snake will enjoy burrowing and hiding so adding a deep layer of bedding is recommended. Add the Komodo Aspen bedding to about 5cm (2ins) thick. Remove any soiled substrate as soon as it is noticed and replace the substrate completely every few weeks. Be sure to clean and disinfect the enclosure before adding new bedding.

HEATING

Snakes regulate their body temperature by moving between cooler and warmer areas. By installing the heat mat at one end of the enclosure on the side or back wall, your snake can choose the temperature and location that suits them best. An ideal temperature range would be between 35°C (95°F) at the hot end to 21°C (70°F) at the cool end. **NEVER INSTALL HEAT MATS ON THE FLOOR OF THE ENCLOSURE AND THEN COVER, AND WITH SUBSTRATE.**

CONTROL AND MONITORING

Check temperatures using the thermometer on the dual gauge. Komodo Advanced Heat Mats must be used with a suitable thermostat, such as the Komodo On/Off Thermostat. Best practice recommends placing a thermometer at both the hot end and the cool end to regularly monitor the temperatures at each end of the enclosure. ***Remember that Heat Mats emit infrared heat and thermometers must be in contact with the mat to register the temperature.***

SHELTER

Although Leopard Geckos like dry habitats they spend much of their time in burrows where humidity is higher. These humidity shelters can provide a selection of hides at both the cool and warm end. Your snake should be able to hide away and still have access its preferred part of the thermal gradient.

WATER BOWL

Place the water bowl in the cool end of the enclosure. Only half fill the bowl with water as this makes spills less likely.

LIGHTING

Corn Snakes will not usually need additional lighting inside their cage, being comfortable with the natural light cycle in a typical home. If you use a spotlight bulb as a heat source, be sure to always switch it off at night.

ENRICHMENT

Add plenty of plants and shelters. These can be natural or artificial, whichever you like best. Snakes feel more secure when they are able to conceal themselves in tight fitting spaces.

FEEDING

Offer young snakes food every 7 days. Most Corns and other colubrid snakes will eat defrosted rodents. Do not use a microwave to defrost rodents. Instead, use a glass of tepid (not hot) water. Feed rodents that are the same approximate size as the girth of your snake. Older snakes will usually feed weekly or fortnightly. Remember that your snake will probably not feed when it is about to shed its skin.



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HANDLING

After setting up your new enclosure, leave your snake to settle in before attempting to handle it. Once your snake has eaten a few meals in succession, then it is time to start handling. Never handle your snake straight after a feed as it could regurgitate its meal. Leave at least 48 hours after feeding before handling. As with all animal care, thoroughly wash hands after handling or cleaning your snake's enclosure. Take great care when handling hatchlings as they can be bruised easily if squeezed.

IN CONCLUSION, Corn Snakes are very interesting and beautiful animals. They are mesmerizing to watch and you may be easily intrigued by your snake's movements, habits and behaviour. Watching a Corn Snake constrict and eat its prey, climb upon branches and go through the shedding process is all quite fascinating.

To the right are some timely reminders on Corn Snake care in the handy format of a checklist:



Corn Snake Checklist

DAILY

- Clean and refresh water bowl
- Check correct temperatures are being maintained
- Check correct humidity is being maintained
- Spot clean any waste
- Remove any skin shed
- Visually inspect Snake
- Wash hands after servicing habitat or handling Snake

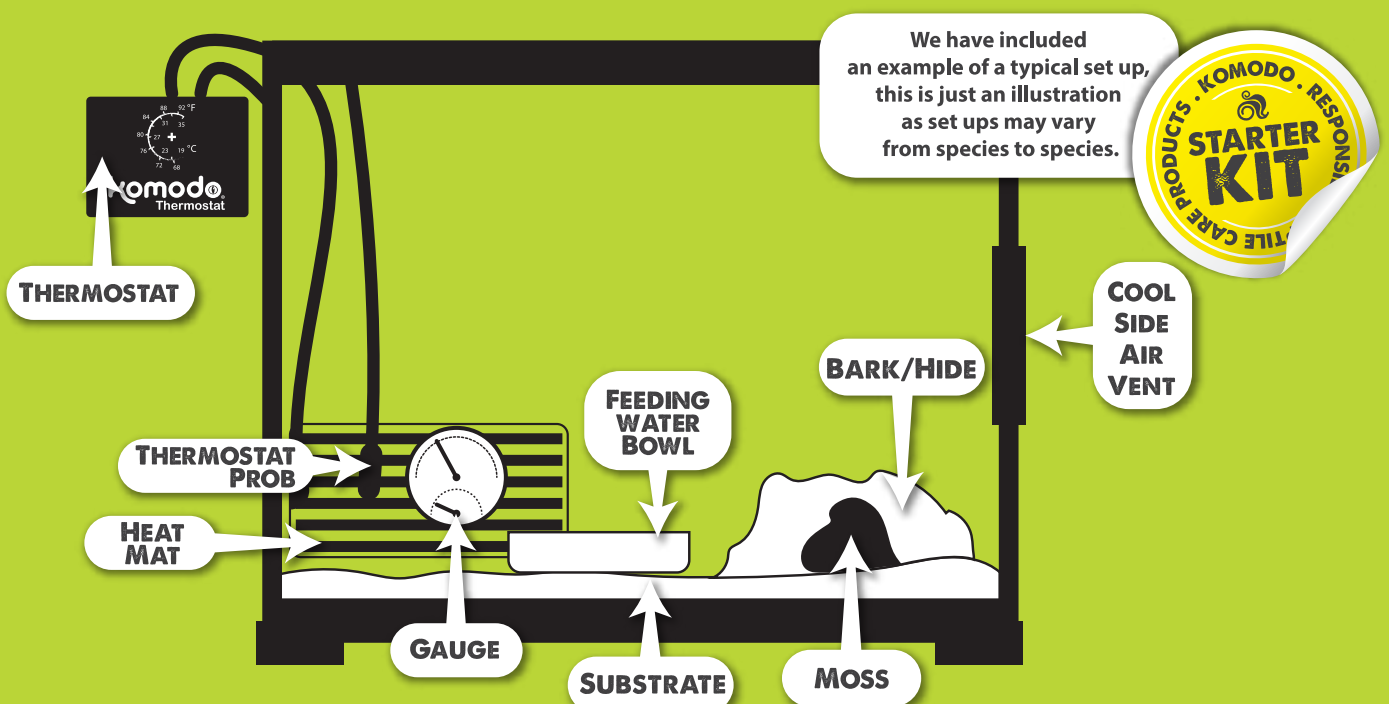
WEEKLY

- Feed Snake
- Clean glass
- Top up substrate
- Clean any decorative wood, plants etc
- Physically inspect Snake
- Weigh Snake and record data

MONTHLY

- Remove and replace all substrate

NOTE: This basic wellbeing guide will help to get you started. It highlights the most important information that every keeper needs to know, but new keepers should research the husbandry needs of their animal in detail.



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