

# Types of play & exercise for ferrets



**J**ust like you, your ferret can benefit from an exercise routine. Regular play improves muscle tone, flexibility, digestion, and cardiovascular fitness. And an active lifestyle helps prevent obesity, which can lead to numerous health problems in pets.

Ferrets also need mental calisthenics to occupy their inquisitive minds, but if your friend starts to snooze, don't assume she's bored. Ferrets take long naps between short bursts of exercise. Follow these tips to give your pet a mental and physical workout:

## Walking

Ferrets enjoy walks outside, but be warned: Some crafty critters can slip out of their harnesses and escape. If you want to take your wiggly pet on a stroll, purchase a high-quality harness and leash you can adjust for a snug fit.

## Supervised play periods

Ferrets prefer to run and jump freely without leashes or restraints. Letting your ferret frolic around the house is great exercise—just remember to supervise her. Your ferret will chew or shred anything she can't climb in, under, or over, so ferret-proof your home before you give your pet free rein.

If your ferret's cage is small, she needs several hours of playtime outside of it every day. Ferrets love to play with people, pets, and other ferrets.

## Multilevel cages

A large multilevel cage provides room for sleeping and exercise. Many of these cages offer tunnels and platforms

for running, burrowing, and jumping. If your ferret can't run free during playtime, these cages are a good option.

## Toys

Ferrets love to play with toys, but these pets are notorious for chewing and swallowing objects they shouldn't—especially rubber, the most common foreign substance found in ferrets. So avoid toys with small or loose parts, and keep rubber out of reach.

You don't need to spend a lot of money on toys—there are plenty of playthings around your house. Knotted socks, fabric baby or cat toys, or knotted-rope dog toys can provide hours of fun. Your ferret also will love burrowing through plastic or cardboard tubes and rustling through paper bag caves. If your ferret loves to climb, you can cut holes in a plastic milk jug for a challenge or buy a large plastic ball with holes for climbing in and out of.

Use your ferret's exercise session to connect with your furry friend—and remember, at the same time you're safeguarding her health. She'll not only release pent-up energy, she'll look and feel great!