

Tarantula Care Sheet



Tarantulas are fascinating creatures found in diverse habitats around the globe! Each species has unique needs, so it's essential to replicate their natural environment and diet for them to thrive. Creating a space that mirrors their wild home will help your tarantula flourish. Also, remember that tarantulas are naturally solitary and should be housed alone to ensure their well-being. We've got two fascinating types of tarantulas: New World and Old World! Their classification depends on their habitat and unique defence mechanisms.

Enclosure

Choosing the perfect terrarium for your tarantula is an exciting journey! The type of enclosure you select depends on your friend's species. For tree-dwelling tarantulas, a taller terrarium is ideal, as it provides them with the vertical space they love to explore. If you have a burrowing tarantula, look for an enclosure that allows a nice, thick layer of substrate for digging. A helpful rule of thumb is that your terrarium should be 1.5 times bigger than your tarantula's leg span. So, if your spider spans 10cm, aim for a lovely enclosure around 25cm long. There are great choices available, such as plastic, acrylic, or glass terrariums—pick one that matches your style! Remember to prioritise good ventilation and ensure the lid or door is secure, so your little adventurer doesn't escape. With the correct setup, you'll create a cosy and safe home for your eight-legged companion!

Get to know

Building a bond with your tarantula is essential! These fascinating creatures can be a bit unpredictable but are also quite delicate. For beginners, consider a curly-haired tarantula, known for its gentle temperament. It's important to observe your tarantula's behaviour to understand when it feels threatened or uneasy. Give your new friend a few days to settle in before offering food. When you're ready to interact, remember to move slowly and gently; this helps create a safe environment for both of you. Remember, not all tarantulas enjoy being handled, so it's best to respect their comfort. This approach ensures a positive experience for both you.

Temperature

Tarantulas hail from warm climates across the globe, so it's essential to create a suitable environment for them in their enclosure. Generally, they thrive at temperatures between 22°C and 28°C, but it's always best to research the specific needs of your species. A heat mat is a fantastic way to provide warmth; ensure it's placed on the outside of the enclosure and accompanied by a thermostat to maintain the ideal temperature. Remember to only heat half of the enclosure, allowing your tarantula a cooler area to retreat to when needed. Since tarantulas prefer softer lighting, avoid using bright heat bulbs, as they can be quite discomforting. Additionally, humidity plays a crucial role in their well-being. If your tarantula is from a rainforest habitat, you'll need to maintain higher humidity levels to replicate its natural environment.

LIFESPAN

Up to 30 years in captivity

SIZE

Depending on species

TEMPERATURE

Hot end: 24 °C - 28 °C
Cold end: 20 °C - 22 °C

HUMIDITY

60% - 80%

Environment

Substrate: For tarantulas, coco fibre is fantastic! It maintains ideal humidity levels in its enclosure. Be sure to provide a substrate depth of 3-4 inches, especially for burrowing species, so that they can dig their homes comfortably. For African species, adding a small amount of sand is beneficial in replicating their natural environment.

Décor: Creating a stunning environment for your tarantula is so exciting! The hide is essential for their comfort and security, allowing them to retreat and feel at ease. Cork bark pieces and tubes make fantastic hideouts for your little friend! Plus, adding artificial plants not only enhances the natural aesthetic but also encourages web-building, making their home even more inviting.

Cleaning: Maintaining a clean enclosure is crucial for your tarantula's well-being and overall health. While their web can make cleaning a bit challenging, a complete substrate change is rarely necessary. Regular spot cleaning will keep their home tidy and comfortable, ensuring your furry friend thrives in a safe and clean environment.



Diet

Feeding: Tarantulas are fascinating creatures that thrive on live insects, with a particular fondness for lively meals! An adult tarantula typically enjoys about four large crickets each week, which can be offered all at once or spread out during the week. It's a great idea to "gut-load" these insects beforehand, as this enhances the nutritional value for your tarantula. Remember, these resilient spiders can go for weeks or even months without a meal, so there's no need to be concerned if they skip a feeding. Variety is key when offering different insects, but always avoid feeding them wild-caught bugs to ensure their health and safety.

Water: Tarantulas can undoubtedly benefit from misting and moist substrate for hydration, but having a shallow water dish is essential for their safety. This helps prevent any risk of drowning. Remember to refresh the water daily to keep it clean and inviting for your furry friend!

Tarantula's weight

Observing a tarantula's body can provide valuable insights into its health! The abdomen size is a key indicator of weight. If the abdomen appears much larger than the carapace, it might be a sign of overfeeding. Conversely, if the abdomen looks shrivelled, wrinkled, or noticeably smaller than the carapace, your tarantula may be underweight. Keeping an eye on these features is essential to ensure your furry friend stays happy and healthy.

Tarantula's weight and shape



Overweight



Underweight



Health & Welfare

A vibrant, healthy tarantula is an impressive sight! It will be alert, responsive, and have a rounded, well-hydrated abdomen, showing it's well-nourished. Look for clean, healthy hair coverage; bald spots can be perfectly normal and complete, clean moults. Keep an eye on its behaviour: it should move smoothly, support itself on all legs, and eagerly respond to food. If you have any concerns about its health, don't hesitate to visit an exotic vet—they can provide invaluable insights and reassurance to keep your tarantula thriving!

Moulting

Tarantulas undergo a remarkable process called moulting, where they shed their exoskeleton to grow. This fascinating transformation is crucial for their development and requires considerable energy and time. After moulting, you'll be amazed at how much larger your tarantula has become! Younger tarantulas will moult more frequently, but as they mature, this process will slow down. One sign that your tarantula is getting ready to moult is when it stops eating, which can occur weeks or even months in advance—no need to worry! During moulting, tarantulas will lie on their backs, which can appear alarming, but it's perfectly normal.

It's vital to give them the space they need during this delicate time; disturbing a moulting tarantula can lead to serious complications, so it's best to observe from a distance. Embracing these moments gives you a deeper appreciation for these incredible creatures and their growth journey!



Diseases and Concerns

Tarantulas are fascinating creatures that combine strength with a delicate nature! While they are incredible pets, there are certain aspects to consider. One important consideration is their vulnerability to injuries; falls or improper moulting can sometimes lead to broken limbs or even more serious issues. To help prevent accidents, ensure that their habitat is free of hard surfaces that could cause them to fall.

Another thing to be aware of is the potential for parasites and mites. While this is less common in captive-bred tarantulas, it's always wise to keep an eye out for any signs.

If you're considering welcoming a tarantula into your home, it's essential to learn about its health needs. Daily monitoring is a great way to ensure they're thriving! If you ever notice any health concerns, don't hesitate to contact an exotic veterinarian. With a bit of love and attention, tarantulas can truly bring immense joy and intrigue into your life! Happy tarantula keeping!

Transport

When you travel with your animals, it's essential to prioritise their safety and comfort. Ensure their travel box has sufficient space for your tarantula to sit comfortably without being jostled around. If they're new to travelling, covering the box with a cloth to create a calming darkness can help ease their nerves. Remember to ensure the box is well-ventilated yet secure to prevent escape. Keeping your pet warm is crucial, so pack a battery heat pack or a hot water bottle to maintain a cosy environment.

Tarantula 