

# Leopard Gecko



**Common Name:** Leopard Gecko, **Latin name:** *Eublepharis macularius*

**Native to:** Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India

**Size:** 8 to 9 inches

**Life span:** Up to 18 years.

**General appearance:** Leopard geckos are yellow background color with adults having brown spots. They have obvious ears and possess eyelids. They have no adhesive toe pads like other types of geckos, but do have claws on their toes. There are many different color morphs.

## Housing requirements

**Enclosure:** A 20-gallon long aquarium will be adequate for 3 - 4 leopard geckos (only 1 male per enclosure — they are territorial). Rocks and logs will provide climbing areas and hiding places. Each leopard gecko must have its own hiding place.

**Temperature:** Daytime high should be 82°F on one end of tank to 90°F under a spot light (choose wattage appropriate for providing the correct temperature. Night temperature should be 70° - 72° F. A small part of the substrate should be heated to 92°F using an under tank heat pad.

**Heat/Light:** No special UV lighting is needed as leopard geckos are nocturnal. A spotlight with the appropriate wattage bulb should be used for maintaining daytime heat/light.

**Substrate:** Anything from newspaper to sand may be used, but sand produces the most natural setup. Do **NOT** use cedar.

**Environment:** Dry, arid type climate. However, the area under the hide box should be kept moist to aid shedding and simulate the leopard gecko's natural burrows. A shallow water dish should be available at all times.

You can create a semi-permanent moist area using a disposable food container filled with moist paper-towels or moist Perlite or Vermiculite. Cut a hole in the lid large enough for the gecko to crawl through (make sure to use a lighter to melt the edges to keep them from cutting your lizard). Add about 1 inch of moistened Perlite. Check weekly to maintain moistness.

**Diet:** Crickets, mealworms, wax worms for adult leopard geckos. Hatchlings and juveniles should be fed small, appropriately sized crickets only. Adult leopard geckos will also eat an occasional pinkie mouse. Crickets should be dusted with calcium/D3 powder and vitamin supplements at every feeding for hatchlings and juveniles, and every other feeding for adults. Avoid wild caught insects!

**Maintenance:** Keep substrate free of waste products. Water dish must be washed and refilled daily to prevent bacterial growth. Change substrate regularly.

Remember that in many places it is illegal to take wildlife out of the wild without the proper permits from local, state, or federal authorities. Please do not release any captive reptiles or amphibians into the wild as this will disrupt the natural order of our environment.

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