

Cage design 1

You should always have a warm comfortable cage for your guinea pig. The cage below was designed for male and female guinea pigs. In the middle of the cage is a wooden board that can be taken out so the cage becomes one large area, rather than two smaller areas. This is an ideal cage if you want to breed your guinea pigs. If you have one guinea pig in each side you should clean the hutch at least once a week and replace the hay or straw. If you have numerous guinea pigs in a cage like this, you should clean it out at least twice a week. The more animals in one area, the more often it needs cleaning if you want to keep your pets healthy.



This particular cage's design has a lid that opens. The roof actually hinges at the back and opens to allow access. The guinea pig can spend time in the enclosed or in the wired area and enjoy the sunshine. The lid has chains to hold it open but for extra safety measures a rope is used to tie the roof back to a tree as the wind could catch hold of the lid and slam it shut which is rather dangerous if you are leaning into the hutch. Alternatively... a solid length of wood cut to size could be used as a prop to hold up the lid.



Learn about guinea pigs - How to house a guinea pig, chapter 9

As you can see, the guinea pig is quite happy inside his enclosure where he has water and a little dry food as well as warm, fresh straw for bedding. There is a gap underneath the partitioning board to allow the guinea pig to enter the wired area where there is also a small supply of fresh food and water at all times.



Cage design 2

The following hutch is a different design. The door opens from the front, which is ideal for younger children to gain access. It also makes cleaning easier but you will need to be aware that keen guinea pigs tend to want to jump out as soon as you open the door. You will need to be aware of this as your guinea pig can hurt itself, especially if the hutch is a little way off the ground.



The reason for building this hutch off the ground, and also the previous design shown is because it deters mice from going into the hutch. Mice often carry diseases and can cause your guinea pig to become sick and unhealthy. This issue is discussed later.

If you look closely at the photo you can see that the cage is propped up with bricks. On top of the bricks is square heavy-duty plastic cover. Mice can climb up the bricks but they can't get past the plastic and get into your guinea pig cage. This is a very cheap and effective way of preventing mice from entering in the hutch.

The shade net on the side of this cage was tacked on for some extra protection from the sun in summer and the wind and rain in winter.

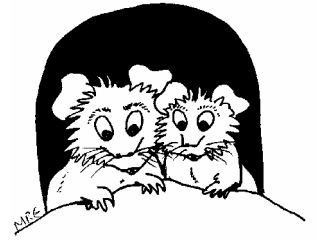


As you can see, there are two doors on this cage. One door opens so that you have easy excess to the wired area and the other to the enclosed area; these two doors make cleaning easy. The guinea pigs living in this cage can go in and out from the enclosed area to the wired area as they like through a small hole cut in the inner wall.

The bigger the cage, the happier your guinea pigs will be. Your guinea pigs need at least one metre by one metre each. Ideally their cage is made up slightly different each time you clean it out. This is discussed in another chapter called... *Beat Boredom!*



Name _____



Diseases and cages!

Name four diseases a guinea pig is susceptible to.

Why is it necessary to clean a guinea pig's cage on a regular basis?

Draw two different types of guinea pig cages.

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Name_____



Writing about guinea pigs!

Choose one of the three topics from the pyramid and write an essay.



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The following outcomes could be achieved by completing the entire guinea pig theme; *beat boredom, breeding, caring for guinea pigs, diseases and disorders, feeding guinea pigs healthy foods, feeding guinea pigs unhealthy foods, general knowledge, holding guinea pigs, housing guinea pigs, males and females, photos, taming guinea pigs.*

English

- reading
- writing
- alphabetical order
- develop further research skills

Science

- learn about guinea pigs in captivity
- breeding, males and females
- familiarize oneself with diseases that affect guinea pigs
- breeding
- feeding habits
- biological data

Mathematics

- problem solving
- learn about data

Health

- personal hygiene when handling animals
- guinea pig health related issues

Technology

- design, cage and feeding utensils
- research using the Internet
- basic computer knowledge
- Use of camera (or digital camera)

Art

- design and layout
- creative playtime planning for pets
- drawing

Cross curricula based learning
