

Canary

- Actually a member of the finch family, native to the Canary Islands.
- Male canaries sing better than females, although the canary may not sing as much during a molt.
- Do not require a great deal of attention and are suitable for beginning pet bird owners.
- Canaries are not social birds so will a single pet canary will be happy.
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GETTING STARTED

- Cage
- Spray bottle/bath
- Food dish
- Water dish
- Cage substrate
- Nest or house
- Food pellets or Seed
- Bird gravel & dish
- Vitamins
- Treats
- Cuttlebone
- Mineral block
- Iodine block

Please make sure you set their new cage up before putting them in it.

It's a good idea to do it before you bring home the bird if

you can.

It can be a little stressful going to a new home and environment.

TEMPERAMENT:

Most Canaries are somewhat timid and shy little birds. Unlike larger bird species, they don't usually do well with being handled, although exceptions do exist. Canaries are charming birds nonetheless, and many enjoy watching and interacting with their owners from the comfort of a large flight cage. These birds can be very territorial, so use caution if keeping more than one per cage -- dominant behavior can be hard to control and can lead to an unfortunate situation for a submissive bird.

PET CANARY CAGES:

- Get the largest cage possible, that allows for room for flight (a pet canary should never have his or her wings clipped and should be able to fly in the cage for exercise).
- Remember that a long cage is better than a tall narrow one (the height is not all that important). Try to get a cage at least 24 inches long.
- Watch the spacing between bars - no more than 1/2 inch.
- Wire cages are best, wood or bamboo cages are too difficult to keep clean.
- **Perches:** perches of varied type and diameter work best (3/8 to 3/4 inches). The variety makes the perches more comfortable for the canary's feet. Both concrete perches and sandpaper perch covers will help to keep the nails trimmed.
- **Temperature:** canaries are pretty hardy and can be kept at room temperature. Keep the cage away from drafts, air conditioners and windows that receive direct sunlight (the cage and canary can get overheated). Open windows can cause your canary to get a cold which can be fatal.

- **Light:** cover the cage at night, at the time the sun goes down (unless you live in an area with extremely long nights or days). Canaries need their rest and will do best if given a light/dark cycle that approximates natural changes. Keeping them up late with artificial light is not healthy for them.
- **Toys:** provide toys, but place them in the cage in such a way as they do not obstruct flight space. Your canary might enjoy swings, mirrors, bells, and hanging wooden or acrylic toys.
- Fresh water should be available at all times.
- A shallow dish of water or a special bath bought at the pet store should be provided at least 3-4 times a week for bathing if not daily.

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FEEDING:

The majority of a Canary's diet should consist of high quality pellets specifically designed for Canaries. This diet should be supplemented daily with fresh sprouts, fruits and vegetables, including fresh greens. A good quality seed mixture suitable for canaries can be the mainstay of their diet.

Pelleted diets suitable for a canary can be offered as well - these are not as palatable as seeds but many owners keep a dish of pellets in the cage along with a dish of seeds.

Fresh foods and greens should also be offered. Good choices include apples, bananas, green peppers, canned corn, fresh corn on the cob, cooked broccoli, raw spinach, raw dandelions, raw collard greens, raw Swiss chard, pears, peaches, strawberries, cucumbers, squash, etc. Bits of hard boiled egg can also be offered occasionally.

Just sprouted seeds are an excellent treat for your canary. For tips see "[The Scoop on Sprouts.](#)"

As seeds are eaten the hulls may be left in the dish, so at a quick glance the seed dish may look full when in fact it is just hulls. Blow the hulls off the seed dish at least daily and replenish the seeds as necessary.

Vitamin supplements are strongly recommended to ensure the optimum health of your new bird.

EXERCISE: Canaries require plenty of exercise and should have a large cage that they can fly around in daily. Also make sure to provide plenty of safe toys for these little beauties to play with -- they get bored easily!

CANARIES AS PETS: While Canaries aren't really "hands on" birds like budgies or cockatiels, they can be the perfect pet for someone who would like a smaller feathered friend for a companion. Canaries are either bred for color or song. Each variety has its obvious strong points, but prospective owners should do research into the species to determine which type is right for their household. While the Canary's small stature may make them seem like good pets for kids, please be cautioned -- these birds are very fragile and easily frightened, and may not do well in a home with very young children. If you decide that a Canary is the right bird for you, make sure to buy the largest cage possible for your pet. Canaries must be allowed to fly to maintain their health and happiness, and large flight cage provides the space and security that they need. *Never clip a Canary's wings!*

FAQ'S

How long do Canaries live for?

Females live up to 5/6 years, males live longer. If properly cared for they can live up to 10 years.

How often should my Canary's nails be clipped?

Clip the nails as often as necessary, every few months is a good rule of thumb. The more frequently their nails are clipped, the better, as Canaries can grasp the perches and hard surfaces a lot better. Be very careful trimming the nails, as they are a small bird and they can get very nervous and a vein could be hit causing bleeding. It's a good idea to have blood stopper on hand if this occurs. If you are a little nervous doing nails, you can always bring your animal down to Paradise Pet Centre and we will do it for you for a small fee.

Do canaries like cooler weather?

The whole canary family is very sensitive to cooler weather. As well as cold drafts in the house. You need to make sure the temperature in your house is regulated and to place the cage where there are no drafts of cold air. This includes air conditioning vents and windows/doors in the winter.

How do you bath a canary?

Most Canaries love to bath. You can place a bath with tepid water inside the cage or at the doorway daily and leave it in there for about half an hour before removing it. If your bird doesn't like this you can use a spray bottle with tepid de-chlorinated water set on a fine mist; spray the bird from about a foot away until you see that the wings are wet. This can be quite an enjoyable thing for you and your bird.

HISTORY

The Canary is a domesticated form of the wild canary (*Serinus canaria*) a small song bird in the finch family originating from Madeira and the Canary Islands. Canaries were first bred in captivity in the 1600s. They were brought over by Spanish sailors to Europe. Monks started breeding them and only sold the males (which sing). This kept the birds in short supply and drove the price up. Eventually Italians obtained hens and were able to breed the birds themselves.



This made them very popular and resulted in many breeds arising and the birds being bred all over Europe. The same occurred in England. First the birds were only owned by the rich but eventually the local citizens started to breed them and, again, they became very popular. While the first color to pop into your head may be yellow, there are many different varieties of Canary in just as many different colors. With selective breeding, many new color mutations pop up everyday, such as bronze, white, and red.

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