

DISTRICT PYTHONS

BALL PYTHON CARE SHEET | Python regius

Ball Pythons are known for their manageable size, generally calm temperament, and incredible variety of colors and patterns. With proper husbandry, they can thrive for decades, making them a long-term commitment. This guide covers the fundamentals for keeping your Ball Python healthy and comfortable.

ENCLOSURE

Provide a secure, escape-proof enclosure that allows your Ball Python to fully stretch out and move comfortably. For most adults, a **4 ft x 2 ft x 2 ft enclosure** is a strong minimum target. Provide at least two snug hides - one on the warm side and one on the cool side - plus a sturdy water bowl, appropriate substrate, secure ventilation, and plenty of cover such as cork bark, branches, or plants.

TEMPERATURE

Create a thermal gradient so the snake can regulate its body temperature. Aim for a **warm hide/surface of about 88-92°F** and a **cool side of about 76-80°F**. Heat sources should be controlled by an appropriate thermostat, and temperatures should be checked with reliable digital thermometers.

HUMIDITY

Aim for approximately **60-80% relative humidity**, with adequate ventilation and access to humid microclimates. Humidity may need extra attention during shedding. Consistently incomplete sheds can indicate that humidity, hydration, temperatures, or other husbandry conditions need adjustment.

SUBSTRATE

Suitable options include coconut husk, cypress mulch, coconut fiber, and reptile-safe soil mixtures. These can help retain moisture while creating a natural environment. Avoid aromatic woods such as **cedar and pine**. Spot-clean waste promptly and replace contaminated substrate as needed.

FEEDING

Offer appropriately sized prey based on the snake's age, size, and body condition. Younger Ball Pythons generally eat more frequently than adults; as they grow, meals usually become larger and less frequent. **Frozen/thawed prey is generally preferred** because live rodents can injure snakes. Fresh water should always be available.

HANDLING

Give a newly acquired Ball Python time to settle in before frequent handling, ideally until it is feeding reliably. Support the snake's body, keep handling calm, avoid unnecessary restraint, and avoid handling immediately after feeding. Wash your hands before and after handling reptiles or enclosure equipment.

BALL PYTHON CARE - CONTINUED

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SHEDDING

Before shedding, colors may appear dull and the eyes may become cloudy or bluish. Maintain appropriate humidity and fresh water while minimizing unnecessary disturbance. After the shed, check that skin has come off completely, especially around the eyes and tail tip.

CLEANING & HYGIENE

Remove feces, urates, and heavily soiled substrate promptly. Clean and refill the water bowl regularly and perform deeper enclosure cleaning as necessary. Wash hands thoroughly after handling reptiles, substrate, waste, or enclosure equipment.

HEALTH

Regularly observe body condition, breathing, mouth, skin and scales, eyes, feeding behavior, waste, and activity. Wheezing, discharge or bubbles around the mouth or nose, persistent abnormal breathing, significant unexplained weight loss, injuries, unusual swelling, or other concerning changes should be evaluated by a **qualified reptile/exotics veterinarian**.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

Ball Pythons can live **20-30+ years** with proper care. Before purchasing one, be prepared for the long-term responsibility, enclosure requirements, feeding costs, and potential veterinary care associated with keeping a reptile.

THE DISTRICT PYTHONS STANDARD

Proper husbandry is the foundation of a healthy animal.

This care sheet provides general husbandry guidance and is not a substitute for veterinary advice. Individual animals may have different needs depending on age, size, health, and environment.