

OVERVIEW						
<p>The Leopard Gecko (<i>Eublepharis macularius</i>) is a hugely popular reptile pet that is suitable for beginners and comes in a wide range of color morphs. Leopard geckos are long-lived, hardy and easy to keep as long as a clean, dry cage with a belly heat establishing a gradient from a cool end to an 86-90°F hidebox hot spot is provided. Leopard geckos are insectivorous and may be raised from hatchling to adult solely on regular mealworms, although many keepers also offer crickets and other insect fare.</p>						
ENVIRONMENT						
Conditions »	Day Temp	74-90°F	Hidebox Hot Spot Temp	86-90°F	Humidity	40-50%
Heat Source »	Belly heat; thermostat-controlled undertank heat mat at one end of enclosure.					
HOUSING	<p>A pair or harem group of Leopard Geckos can be housed in 20 long aquarium or similarly sized terrarium with a tight-fitting lid. Although adults do not climb well and cannot scale the smooth sides of an enclosure, hatchlings and juveniles have been known to climb glass. Breeders use rack systems with plastic sweater boxes, often with bare floors or newsprint or other paper as the substrate.</p>					
	<p>Young Leopard Geckos should be housed in small escape-proof containers using a paper towel or bare floor for substrate, a shallow portion cup (0.5 oz. Solo cup) for water, a second portion cup as a dish for mealworms, and one or two hiding places including one humid hiding place made from a small margarine or similar container containing damp paper.</p>					
	<p>Undertank heaters are perfect for terrestrial gecko terrariums, and Leopard Gecko enclosures should have a thermal gradient with 86-90°F measured at the warm end where one hidebox is situated. UVB lighting is not necessary for these nocturnal geckos, and the use of heat lamps is inappropriate. These are nocturnal lizards that do not bask. Heat should be provided naturally from beneath.</p>					
DIET	<p>Breeders prefer bare cage bottoms or paper towel or newspaper as a substrate, but artificial turf or pea gravel may also be used. A young or sick gecko might consume sand or other fine-particle substrates and this may lead to intestinal problems. There are some calcium sand reptile substrate products on the market that may be used, but are not necessarily risk-free and should be used with caution, especially with hatchlings.</p>					
	<p>Leopard Geckos are insectivorous. They are unusual in that they can be raised from hatchling to adult on various sizes of the common mealworm (<i>Tenebrio molitor</i>). Mealworms are typically recommended to be used only in moderation, or not at all, for most lizards due to the fear of the hard exoskeleton causing impaction problems. However, leopard geckos have no difficulties digesting mealworms and their use is convenient and economical. A shallow dish containing some calcium powder can be used to contain and serve mealworms to the gecko. Mini or small mealworms are best for hatchlings, juveniles and young adults can be offered regular mealworms, and large breeder size adults can be offered giants and even superworms. Of course, crickets and other insects may be dusted with a quality reptile calcium/mineral supplement and will also be eagerly accepted. Always gut-load all feeder insects for 12 hours or so prior to offering as food by using a commercial gut-load powder, chick mash and some carrot, dark greens and potato. Growing and breeding female leopard geckos require a significant amount of calcium and it is recommended that a small, shallow dish such as a jar lid filled with clean and dry calcium powder be kept in the cage at all times.</p>					