

ADVICE SHEET



Notes to remember.

When you bring your pet bird to its new home for the first time, don't let it fly from its cage for the first week or so, let it get used to its new environment and surroundings. It may be a little timid at first and scared easily and may fly into walls or windows, so keep windows and doors closed when letting your cockatiel out from its cage. Always ensure bird cages are not left in hot sunny conditions!

Food

Please buy quality **Cockatiel/ Parakeet** mix seed from a reputable pet shop. They also like mashed hard-boiled egg, sweetcorn, peas and other vegetables and fruit. Birds also like millet and the odd treat! An alternative to seed is pellets, but if trying for the first time, mix with seed and check the bird is curious and taking pellets, before withdrawing it from seed altogether. Follow instructions from manufacturer for further advice.

Foods not to feed your bird include Avocado, chocolate, salt, apple pips, fat, chips, alcohol, etc.

Please give fresh water every-day for your bird, regardless of how full the water fountain is. If using a food dish for water, ensure this is cleaned daily, paying particular attention to bird droppings and food which may contaminate the dish.

Determining the sex of your bird

Cockatiels & Ringnecks are dimorphic and can be sexed visually.

In **Cockatiels** determining the sex of male and females are easy in that the female usually resembles young and have grey to the head and spots under wings and tail feathers, whilst the males have brighter orange cheek patches and a yellow head. The tail and underneath their wings in males also lack barring patterns. In mutation colours, it is usually harder to determine the sex of the birds. Lutino (yellow) mutations can be checked by looking at the spots under wings and tail feathers in mature birds.

Ringnecks males mature in 2-3 years and start showing a black and rose band around their neck, hence their name.

Hygiene

A daily cleaning of the cage floor and bowls helps to prevent problems with food spoilage and permits the owner to inspect the cage floor. Blood on the floor or unusual condition of droppings can alert the owner to potential signs of illness. A weekly thorough cleaning of the cage is suggested.

Toys

Toys are useful as mental diversions and tend to encourage physical exercise and beak wear; however, they must be selected with safety of the bird in mind.

Many enhancements can be provided to occupy the bird's attention. Some birds like to tear paper and enjoy a cardboard roller from toilet paper. A piece of corn on the cob or pomegranate is entertaining for birds. Even branches with leaves placed on or against the outside of the cage for the bird to pull through the wires is "occupational therapy."