

# Looking after a hamster

Set 7 Story 4

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## Vocabulary check

Discuss the meaning (as used in the text) after the children have read each word.

ginger

definition:

pale orange colour

sentence/phrase:

Hamsters are cute little animals with ginger fur.

animal shelter

place where animals are given good homes

You can get one from a pet shop or an animal shelter.

litter

a group of babies

A girl hamster can have a litter of pups when she is 10 weeks old.

peat

soil

Put a layer of peat on the floor.

scamper

run

Hamsters like to scamper about.

Punctuation to note in this text:

1. Capital letters to start sentences and full stop to end sentences
2. Capital letters for names

## Looking after a hamster

Hamsters are cute little animals,  
with ginger fur and long whiskers.



If you are an animal lover,  
you may want to become the proud owner of a hamster.  
You can get one from a pet shop or an animal shelter.

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## Choosing a hamster

A girl hamster can have a litter of pups  
when she is 10 weeks old.

Your hamster must be at least 4-8 weeks old  
before it leaves its mother.



Remember! Choose a hamster  
with clean fur and bright eyes.



## A home for your hamster

First, you will need a proper hamster cage - the bigger the better.

Put a layer of peat on the floor, and scatter wood shavings or shredded paper on top. When it is sleepy, your hamster will curl up in a corner and cover itself up.

**Remember! Never keep hamsters together in the same cage - they will fight!**



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## Hamster toys

Hamsters like to scamper about, discovering things to play with.

Get your hamster a hamster wheel.

Other toys can be made at home:

- tunnels made from loo roll tubes
- ladders made from bits of wood (hamsters are good climbers)
- little houses made from boxes.



Your hamster will also like to come out of its cage to play.  
Scoop it up in both hands and hold it gently but firmly  
next to your body.

Don't squeeze it -  
it may bite your finger!

Pick it up each day -  
it will soon get used to you.



Remember! Never leave a hamster alone in a room out of its cage.  
It might get lost or hurt, or it might chew a bit of electric flex.

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## Feeding your hamster

Give your hamster:

- pellets (from the pet shop)
- bits of cornflake and bread
- currants, nuts and bits of cheese (for a treat)
- fresh, clean water (hamsters get thirsty, too!).



You will need a bowl to put the food in. It must be heavy so the hamster can't turn it over. A sipper tube is best for the water.  
Your hamster may stuff the food in its cheek pouches to eat later.

Remember! Take out stale food and dirt each day.  
Clean the cage and change the bedding each week.

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## Keeping your hamster fit

Check your hamster each day.



Has it got a cold?

Is its bottom dirty?

Are its teeth or claws getting too long?

Is it getting thinner?

Is it bad-tempered?

**Remember! Never let an animal suffer.**

**Take it to the vet if it is ill, so that he or she can make it better.**