




Dr. Drew's Hamster Care Quiz

Dr. Melissa Drew is a GREAT-GREAT-GREAT veterinarian who knows lots about taking care of hamsters. See if you'd make a good hamster vet, too, by answering these True-False Questions.

- ___ 1. If your hamster bites you, you should punish it.
- ___ 2. Hamsters are vegetarians and don't like meat.
- ___ 3. Hamsters don't like to be petted.
- ___ 4. Hamsters don't really like to be around other hamsters.
- ___ 5. It's important to bathe your hamster frequently.
- ___ 6. The best way to pick up a hamster is by the back of his neck.
- ___ 7. A hamster lies on his back when he wants you to pet him.
- ___ 8. Hamster cages should not be put in direct sunlight.
- ___ 9. You should cut your hamster's food into tiny pieces.
- ___ 10. The reason hamsters groom themselves so much is to keep their fur in good shape.
- ___ 11. Hamsters like to eat mealworms.
- ___ 12. There is nothing hamsters can't eat.

Dr. Drew's Tips on How to Hold a Hamster

-  Hold the hamster in one hand and place your other hand above it, to create a comfy pocket. This makes hamsters feel secure.
-  Make sure your grip isn't so strong that you squeeze the hamster. And yet, your grip should be firm enough that the hamster feels secure.
-  Especially for beginners: when you pick up a hamster, do it over a table or soft surface. If you drop it, the hamster will be safe. (Many hamsters have been seriously harmed by being dropped to the floor.) You don't want this to happen.

Answers According to Humphrey



1. *False.* NO-NO-NO! Hamsters often bite when threatened. If your hamster bites you, perhaps you picked it up awkwardly, squeezed it too tightly or moved too quickly. Punishment would do no good and would make the animal even more excited, so please be kind. Especially to me!
2. *False.* We hamsters love – and need – a wide variety of yummy things to eat – including a little lean raw meat (preferably ground beef) once or twice a week.
3. *False.* Are you kidding? Of course we loved to be petted! But *not* all the time. It's best to pet us when we're wide awake, usually in the evening. (It's not a good idea to wake up a hamster – even during a spelling test!) And as much as we like a little petting, we're not toys to be carried around all the time. Hey, I need my rest so I can help my friends!
4. *True.* Hamsters are loners when it comes to other hamsters, although I did enjoy getting to know Winky! But NEVER-NEVER-NEVER put two hamsters in the same cage. Never.
5. *False.* Don't bathe your hamster. Water is bad for us! Besides, we're extremely good at keeping ourselves clean with our intricate grooming routines. And it's fun to watch us groom.
6. *False.* EEEK! These questions are making me jittery! Do not pick up a hamster by the back of his neck unless you want an unpleasant surprise. (See Dr. Drew's tips on the right way to do it.)
7. *False.* WRONG-WRONG-WRONG. When a hamster lies on his back, he's trying to tell you he's scared and if you approach him, he might bite you. When you think someone is about to hurt you, what do you do?
8. *True.* Hamsters don't do well in sunlight. We like shady, leafy places.
9. *False.* Don't bother. We're so good at chewing and breaking down food, we can eat things that are almost as big as we are. (And don't forget, we like to save food in our cheek pouches or in hidden places in our cages.)
10. *True.* No wonder we're so handsome!
11. *True.* Yummers. I don't know why humans think they're yucky. I bet they've never tried them.
12. *False.* On the one paw, hamsters can eat a wide range of foods, including fruits, veggies, yogurt, cheese and meat ... and we *like* a lot of variety, too. But raw beans, potato eyes, canned or frozen food are not for us. Neither are pickles, alcohol and toffee!