

East Bay Vivarium

1827-C 5th Street
Berkeley, Ca 94710
(510) 841-1400

<http://www.eastbayvivarium.com>



Iguanas come from the tropical jungles of Central and South America. This is the type of environment you should aim to create. In captivity they can be expected to live 10-20 years and mature to their full size (5-6 feet) in 3-5 years. Iguanas do not make the best pet for everyone.

Habitat:

Temperature: Establish a range of temperature from 95-100°F (hot end) to 75-80°F (cool end). It is important to offer your animal a choice of conditions.

Water: Mist your iguana and its cage twice daily. Additionally, fresh water should be available at all times.

Bedding: Screened pine, newspaper, or a moisture holding substrate such as peat moss, coco fiber or orchid bark work best.

Cage Decorations: Provide your iguana with a hide box (a warm dark place for your iguana to sleep), a basking rock and branch beneath the heat source to help with digestion.

Tank Size: Baby iguanas should be kept in a 15-30 gallon tank. Adults should be kept in tanks a minimum of a 4' x 4' x 2' cage. For adults, the bigger the cage, the better.

Special Lighting: It is essential to provide your iguana with a UVB light source. These lights simulate natural sunlight and aid dragons metabolize key vitamins and minerals. UVB lighting is essential for preventing calcium deficiencies.

Feeding:

Feed Daily: Offer baby iguanas food once per day. Vegetable plates should include leafy greens, such as romaine lettuce, dandelion greens, bok choy, kale, and collard greens. About 25% of the diet should consist of fruits such as banana, papaya, mango and melons. A small source of protein such a primate diet should also be offered. Adults can be fed every other day.

Vitamins: Lightly dust all foods with a 50/50 mixture of calcium supplements and vitamin supplements. These items are an essential part of your iguanas' diet. Without them, iguanas may develop vitamin and calcium deficiencies, which are ultimately fatal.

Maintenance:

Shedding: It is important that your iguana shed its skin completely, especially the skin on the fingers and toes. Incomplete sheds over a period of time can lead to the loss of digits. We recommend soaking your iguana once a week in a shallow bath of tepid water for 20 minutes, and then peel any unshed skin by hand.

Cleaning: Spot clean individual messes and replace with fresh substrate daily. Clean the entire cage bimonthly or when needed.

Clipping: You should clip your iguana's toenails every few weeks. Cut just the tip off with a pair of fingernail clippers.

Handling: Frequent handling is the best way to allow your iguana to feel comfortable under human care. However, do not handle your animal for the first week you own it. Make sure it is eating and well-adjusted to its new home.

Problems: The first sign of an unhealthy iguana is a lack of appetite. First check the cage temperatures and make sure that they are correct. If the environment is set-up properly and problems persist, please call the East Bay Vivarium for assistance.

Further Reading:

