

What Type of Animal Fits?

What Type of Animal Fits?	Dog	Cat	Rabbit	Gerbils, Guinea Pigs, Hamsters	Mice, Rats
Original Cost	\$0 – \$1500+	\$0 – \$1500	\$0 – \$80	\$0 - \$20	\$0 - \$20
Set-up \$'s Equipment, shots, spaying or neutering (does not include cost, if any, of pet deposit).	\$200 - \$500 Bed, toys, food/water bowl, leash, collar, license, I.D. tag, crate, brush, nail clippers, vaccinations, spay or neuter.	\$200 - \$400 Bed, toys, food/water bowl, leash, collar, license, I.D. tag, litter pan, litter, pet carrier, scratching post, vaccinations, nail clippers, comb, spay or neuter.	\$200 - \$400 Cage, food/water bowls, litter pan, toys, brush, clippers, spay or neuter.	\$80 - \$150 Cage, water bottle, food dish, bedding, toys, gnaw treats, exercise wheel, salt lick, ladder, mazes, tunnels. Can spay or neuter guinea pig.	\$80 - \$150 Cage, water bottle, food dish, bedding, toys & climbing items, gnaw treats, exercise wheel, ladder, mazes, tunnels. Can spay or neuter rat.
Maintenance \$'s Food, grooming, yearly vet bills, boarding. Does not include medical emergencies.	Annual cost \$300 - \$1000	Annual cost \$350 - \$700+	Annual Cost \$100 - \$200	Annual Cost \$80 - \$100	Annual Cost \$80 - \$100 (Mice) \$100 - \$240 (Rat)
Space	Requires outdoor space some of the time. Preferably fenced yard or large kennel run. No chaining. Should be indoors with family as much as possible.	Best if kept indoors. If outside, should be in at night. Can live happily in small apartments to large houses.	Best if kept indoors. If outdoors, enclosure must have sunken fences and covered tops. Either method requires additional safe, exercise space. Requires cage when left alone.	Needs small indoor space. Hamsters and gerbils love to climb and burrow. Guinea pigs don't climb, they need floor space, free from drafts. Bigger the wire mesh cage, the better.	Bigger the cage the better. Wire mesh cage with slide out bottom, minimum 20"x14"x12." Need things to burrow in. Safe from drafts and other pets.
Exercise	Depends on breed. Requires some daily exercise. Good run 3-4x/week. Many behavior problems due to lack of proper exercise.	Get enough inside. Have toys and play games to augment.	Needs lots! Have cage large enough to move around freely. Allow several hours daily for free-running (in-house or secure outdoor enclosure).	Guinea Pigs need daily exercise; prone to obesity. Safe outdoor enclosure nice treat for them. Hamsters & gerbils need area to climb and dig.	Rats/mice love to climb, dig, burrow. Exercise wheel good, but give them other toys to climb on, and play with. Rats need regular exercise.
Grooming	Brush/comb 1-7x/week depending on breed. Baths 2-3x/year or as needed. Fleas, mud, other parasites can be a problem. Some breeds require professional grooming.	Brush/comb 1-7x/week depending on breed. Rarely need baths. Fleas, other parasites can create a need for additional grooming.	Frequent brushing to prevent hair-balls. Nails and anal sacs require regular attention. Shed heavily twice yearly.	Brush Guinea Pigs regularly; they shed. Short-haired hamsters clean themselves. Long-haired hamsters may need help.	Mice/rats clean themselves. Rats are odorless.
Attention Required	High maintenance. Can't be left for extended periods. Pack animal. Needs social structure of being part of family.	Medium maintenance. Considered more independent, but still need daily companionship.	Medium to high maintenance. The more socializing and handling, the friendlier the rabbit. Some will seek out affection.	Low to medium maintenance. Hamsters and gerbils nocturnal. Gerbils normally don't like to be held; hamsters and guinea pigs should enjoy it.	Mice—low; rats—medium. Both social with people if socialized early. Rats are highly intelligent and affectionate, need regular mental stimulation.
Life Expectancy (Average)	7 - 15 years (Unneutered males can be less if allowed to roam.)	12 - 18 years (Cats that are allowed outside can be less due to dangers found outdoors.)	Indoors: 8 - 10 years	Hamsters: 2 - 4 years Guinea Pigs: 4 - 8 years Gerbils: 2 - 3 years	Mice: 2 - 3 years Rats: 2 - 4 years
Veterinary Care (Emergency care for all species, if needed)	3-4 visits first year. Yearly until 7-8 yrs. Twice a year during senior years. Annual vaccinations required.	3-4 visits first year. Yearly until 7-8 yrs. Twice a year during senior years. Annual vaccinations required.	Minimum 1/year for preventative care. Don't require vaccinations. Find vet who has experience with rabbits. Can be costly.	Difficult to find experienced vet care. Expect to pay much more than you paid for animal. Guinea Pig should go to vet 1-2x/year.	Difficult to find experienced vet care. Bring rat to vet immediately if any lumps found (prone to cancerous tumors).
More Than One?	Other dogs: Pack need can be met by humans. But many dogs enjoy company of another dog. Best M/F, then M/M, finally F/F. Depends on breed; should be spayed/neutered.	Other cats: Known to be more solitary but can enjoy company of other cats. Easier if introduced at early age. Best M/F, then M/M. F/F can be difficult if both adults and territorial. Introducing kitten to either M/F usually OK. Should be spayed/neutered.	Other rabbits: M/F best, makes sure spayed/neutered. F/F OK, may fight at first. M/M not recommended. With dogs: Can work. Dog must be well trained, if in doubt, don't. With cats and guinea pigs: Can work after adjustment. Always monitor.	Gerbils: Social with other gerbils, separate by sex by 4 weeks. Hamsters: Prefer to live alone, likely to fight if put together. Guinea Pigs: Enjoy other guinea pigs. F/F best or M/F if spayed/neutered. With cats and dogs: Similar to rabbit. Always monitor.	Rats: Enjoy other rats. Same sexes work best. Neuter males. M/F should be spayed/neutered. Mice: Like to live in colony. Separate by sex by 21 days. F/F best, males likely to fight. With dogs: Can work with rats. Similar to rabbits. With cats: No.

*Figures and care requirements are approximate and were compiled from a variety of sources.