



BALL PYTHON CARE AND FAQ SHEET

Temp & Humidity- Hot Side Temp of 87-90° and cool side temp of 80-84°. This is substrate level temp, not ambient temp. The ambient temp will most likely be upper 80's on the hot side and high 70's to low 80's on the cool side. Humidity should be between 55-65% and when shedding or in blue you can bump it up to 75-85%. No matter your heat source, make sure that it's connected to a good temp regulating thermostat. You can cook your snake and overheat it resulting in neurological issues or even death from temps exceeding 95° ambient.

Heating- There are a few options including CHE bulbs, Under the tank heaters (UTH), radiant heat panel, heat tape, or heat cable. What you use depends on your tank size/type and the temps in the room the habitat is in.

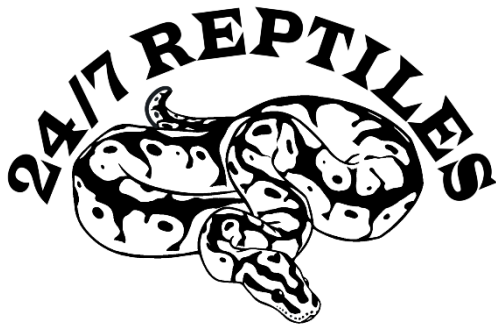
Habitat-With ball pythons keeping the right temps and humidity will be hardest to achieve/maintain in a glass tank. While glass tanks are attractive as they allow ample viewing space, it will most likely result in a stressed ball python. Other options that are better for ball pythons are melamine or pvc enclosures, plastic tubs, or a rack system.

Substrate- Depending on where you live, the type of humidity in your local area, and your enclosure the type of substrate you use can vary. The best options in my opinion are Reptichip, reptibark, coco husk, coco chip, or any of these in combination with Ecoearth or forest floor. You can use Aspen if you live in a high humidity area in which keeping ample humidity is not an issue, but I would put this at bottom of the list just above paper towels long term and reptile carpet.

Feeding- Our breeders should be started on rats from birth but there may be the occasional exception. All of our babies will have a special note if on mice. The best option for feeding ball pythons is rats and appropriately sized. You want to look at the girth of your snake and only go about the same width or 1.5 x their largest portion of their body. Being that we have multiple snakes, we have the option to do fresh kill which our snakes seem to like. Frozen thawed is the safest option to feed and if you need more info on how to do that, check out YouTube. Live feeders are ok, but you should NEVER leave rats in a bin with a snake for long or unsupervised at all. Each snake is an individual, but a safe guide is young hatchlings and juveniles get fed every 5-7 days. We feed our adult breeder females every 7 days, but our adult males tend to keep better weight sometimes with a medium every other week. We do have adult males on smalls weekly but again, you have to judge by what works for that particular snake.

Handling- Ball pythons are not aggressive, they are defensive. Most young snakes will attempt to be nippy out of fear, but they are easily tamed. The key is to not be afraid. A full grown large adult bite may only draw a tiny bit of blood- but they are very hesitant to get to the point of an actual bite. You'll find that if you cover their heads, they usually shy away and you can handle them or "dominate" them into behaving better.

Health- Issues to look out for can include: Respiratory infection (can result from low temps and unclean cages), poor sheds (low humidity), food refusal (mostly enclosure stress related), wobble (can result from overheating but more common is a born disorder, prolapse (straining can cause part of the "butt" to pop out- needs immediate attention, and other problems. But these are the most common.



BALL PYTHON CARE AND FAQ SHEET PG 2

- **Do ball pythons need UVB?** NO- they are nocturnal there is no natural need
- **Do ball pythons need a daylight-** NO-this actually stresses them if possible, use just light in the room no separate bulb is needed
- **Can ball pythons live together-** It is highly dangerous and stressful to have more than 1 ball python in an enclosure. Even breeders do not leave the same snakes together for more than a few days and still requires multiple checkups.
- **Do ball pythons like being held-** They tolerate it, some snakes like to explore but it's usually on their own.
- **How long do ball pythons live?** This can be a wide range. I would say a healthy snake should at least make it to 25 but may go all the way up to 40 or in rare cases 60!!!! Be prepared for the commitment.
- **Do ball pythons have diseases?** All animals have their own unique diseases. Most people's fear with snakes is salmonella. Yes, you can technically catch it from a snake. But this means at some point you had contact with feces or a surface feces were on in your mouth. So common sense says this should be completely avoidable. Snake diseases like respiratory infection and Nidovirus are not contagious to people.
- **What are mites-** Mites are something no snake owner wants to find. They are tiny black blood suckers and will make your snake sick and irritated. They spread quick and in large quantities. At some point though, it is not uncommon for all snake keepers to have at least one experience with mites. Unfortunately, mites thrive in the best environments for snakes.
- **My snake got out-** Well it happens. Snake are escape artists and can be tricky to find. The trick is to look in warm tight places like under a fridge, stove, or even on top of a cable box. Sometimes leaving a rat in their open tank can draw them back if you are able to do that.
- **What is wobble?** Wobble is a neurological disorder and is a controversial subject. Some say all ball pythons with Spider gene have wobble and that wobble is a death sentence. This is not true in my opinion. I have owned more than one spider gene and they both had wobble. They were both great eaters, friendly and healthy. However, if they are stressed, wobble does tend to present more. Symptoms can include head rocking, roller coaster-ing their neck, and stargazing. Severe wobble and failure to thrive will usually kill a hatchling if it is ever enough to be fatal.
- **My ball python won't eat.** There are multiple reasons this can happen. However, if you are not actively breeding this ball python it's almost guaranteed to be one of two things. It's either stressed because something in the habitat is not dialed in or it's sick.
- **My ball python is wheezing.** Well, I hate to say it but chances are the snake has a respiratory infection which is usually caused by low temps or dirty tanks. Symptoms include wheezing, bubbles out of the nostrils and mouth, lethargy, and lack of appetite. I would always say go to the vet first before trying home remedies but that is your call as an owner.

Any more questions that you need a specific answer to, feel free to email me at my24_7reptiles@yahoo.com