



Russian Tortoise

Testudo horsfieldii
Care Sheet

Caging Needed: A 20 gallon or larger aquarium is recommended for a single tortoise. Large plastic storage bins and plastic play pools can also be used. These tortoises love to dig so always provide a deep substrate of loose material for them.

Substrate: ½ sand and ½ peat moss or coconut fiber, rabbit pellet or alfalfa pellets can be used. Rabbit pellets and alfalfa pellets help keep odor down and provide another food source for your tortoise.

Temperature & Lighting: Daytime temperatures should be around 75-85 degrees. Nighttime temperatures should be around 60-75 degrees. Keep humidity very low. When kept inside use a fluorescent light for 12 hours during the day. At night allow a dark and cooler period. Use an over the tank light to achieve appropriate temperatures. Your tortoise may use the spot directly under the light to bask in. You can use a low watt red bulb for viewing your tortoise at night. They need a UVB light in their indoor enclosures to help them properly process the calcium in their diets.

Diet: Tortoises eat fresh, fibrous vegetables. Leafy vegetables to feed your tortoise include: Romaine lettuce, red and green leaf lettuce, turnip greens, mustard greens, kale, collards, and spring mix. DO NOT FEED ICEBURG LETTUCE. Peas, green beans, carrot (cooked and chopped), celery, broccoli, zucchini, sweet potatoes, and bell peppers can be added to their leaf mixture to add variety. Provide a large shallow water dish with non-chlorinated water or spring water. The water should be deep enough to cover the bottom of their shell up to where it meets their top shell. They use their water dish to keep their nose and eyes clean as well as to regulate body temperature and eliminate waste.

Misc: Always wash your hands after handling your tortoise and/or cleaning their cage. Russian Tortoises like most reptiles carry salmonella.

Average size: 10 inches in diameter

Average life span:

Can live for over 40 years

