

Bearded Dragon Habitat Setup

This playbook describes the sequential steps required to build and maintain a suitable habitat for a bearded dragon. It covers the selection of substrate, lighting requirements, and appropriate decor to create a safe and stimulating environment for the bearded dragon.

Step 1: **Choose Enclosure**

Select an appropriate size enclosure for your bearded dragon, taking into consideration the dragon's full adult size. A 40-gallon breeder tank is often recommended for adults.

Step 2: **Set Substrate**

Place a suitable substrate, such as newspaper, ceramic tiles, or reptile carpet on the bottom of the enclosure. Avoid using sand or gravel to prevent impaction risks.

Step 3: **Install Lighting**

Install a UVB light source that spans at least two-thirds the length of the enclosure to provide adequate ultraviolet light essential for vitamin D3 synthesis. Ensure that a basking light is also provided to create a temperature gradient.

Step 4: **Create Temperature Gradient**

Use thermometers at both ends of the enclosure to monitor and maintain a temperature gradient with a basking spot of about 95-110°F and a cooler end at about 80-90°F.

Step 5: **Add Hideouts**

Place multiple hideouts or shelters within the enclosure to provide your bearded dragon with a sense of security and areas to retreat from the heat.

Step 6: **Install Decor**

Add branches, rocks, and non-toxic plants to the enclosure to encourage climbing and stimulate natural behaviors. Ensure that all decor is stable and will not collapse on your pet.

Step 7: **Set Humidity Level**

Keep the humidity level within the enclosure around 30-40%. Use a hygrometer to monitor humidity levels and make adjustments as necessary.

Step 8: **Regular Maintenance**

Perform daily spot cleaning to remove feces and uneaten food. Conduct a thorough cleaning and replace the substrate as needed, typically every 4-6 weeks.

General Notes

Bearded Dragon Size

Be ready to upgrade the enclosure as your bearded dragon grows. Juveniles may start in smaller tanks, but they will require more space as they reach adulthood.

Lighting Schedule

Maintain a consistent light cycle with about 12-14 hours of light each day to simulate a natural environment. Use timers to automate lighting and ensure consistency.

Feeding Considerations

Provide adequate space in the habitat for a feeding area. Be aware that live food such as insects may hide under substrate, consider feeding in a separate container.