

Bird Tips

Cleaning Supplies and Equipment

Cleanliness is very important to the health of your bird and for maintaining a pleasant home environment for all the members of your family. Nothing can put the damper on bird ownership more quickly than unpleasant odors and dirty cages, food dishes or toys. So on a regular basis, you need to clean and disinfect your bird's cage, dishes, toys and other items that she uses.

Dishes

Your best bet for cleaning your bird's dishes is washing them in hot soapy water, using an anti-bacterial soap. Some soft foods can harden on food dishes into a substance just slightly softer than granite, so you may want to soak dirty dishes overnight to make cleanup easier. Unless you're using a dishwasher, you should wash your bird's dishes separately from those used for the human members of the family. Rinse them in hot water to which you've added a couple of drops of household disinfectant, making sure the disinfectant is non-toxic. You can include the dishes in your regular dishwasher load if you remove dried-on food first, because the high heat of the dishwasher will disinfect them effectively.

It's a good idea to have at least two sets of food and water dishes, so one can be in use while the other is being cleaned. Stainless steel food and water dishes are an excellent choice because they are durable, won't stain, are easy to clean and are dishwasher-safe.

Toys

When they are dirty, wash your bird's washable toys in hot soap and water, or rinse with hot water and a few drops of non-toxic household disinfectant.

Cages

You should clean the bottom of your bird's cage every two or three days, replacing soiled lining with fresh material. Her cage and toys should be washed weekly with hot, soapy water and completely disinfected once a month. The best disinfectant to use is common household chlorine bleach; add two or three drops to a gallon of water and be sure to rinse the cage, dishes and toys thoroughly with hot water to remove all traces of the bleach.