

# CAGE PLACEMENT IN YOUR HOUSE



Parrots are social! Unless you have more than one bird, your bird will want to spend a lot - really a lot - of time with you. You and your family are your parrot's flock. Your parrot's primary cage should be in a room where the human family gathers together.

The best room requirement: natural light BUT NOT direct sunlight.

Large windows: Pros: your parrot can enjoy watching outside activity. Cons: your parrot could get stressed seeing a predator or something equally scary such as lights of passing cars at night. Help your bird: use curtains or move the cage.

New stimulus: Move the cage to different rooms in the house to see where your parrot prefers to be.

Where to avoid: Not near a door leading outside, not near a drafty window, not in a kitchen (bad fumes, hot surfaces, sharp objects!), not in a room with a fireplace (smoke and fumes)

At night: Birds sleep 10-12 hours! Place the cage in a calm, quiet, dark room.

Make it all easy on yourself! A cage on wheels makes every move a breeze - even taking the cage out in a protected garden for safe outside time.



## CLEANING TIPS

Birds are messy! Place a plastic office/desk mat under a cage to save your carpets and hardwood floors.

To save your lungs from bird dander/feather dust, spray the paper in the cage bottom with water before changing it.

For simple and safe cleaning, make a solution of white vinegar and purified water to clean the cage, get at every corner, and remove old bird poop and dried up food.

Above all, remember to put your parrot in a safe place away from the cage when you clean the cage and all its parts (including toys and perches).

## CAGE BOTTOM PAPER

Basic rule: paper must be changed daily. Letting bird poop and old food accumulate is a recipe for bacteria and fungus! A clean cage and clean papers protect your parrot's health.

Paper choices: newspaper, butcher paper, packing paper. All good although plain, non-inked paper is best, allowing you to notice the color and consistency of your bird's poop. If not "normal" - watery or an unusual color - take your bird to your avian veterinarian!

Parrots often like to play with paper - hiding under it, tearing it, crumpling it. Fun for a while, but too much may encourage nesting behavior and the desire to breed. Paper is best placed in the tray for easy removal.

# caging

make a "home sweet home" for your parrot



Selecting the right "home sweet home" for your parrot is more complicated than you think! Here are many of the important factors.

### CAGE DOOR

Does the door open wide? Necessary to get your parrot in and out of the cage. PLUS Ease for you to clean the entire inner cage including corners.

Does the door close and lock easily for you BUT difficult for your bird to unlock and open?!?!? Parrots are smart and can use their beaks and claws beyond your imagination! Safety is mandatory for you and your parrot!

### PERCHES

Caged birds spend a lot of time standing on a perch. That's a lot of wear and tear on their toes! So using the best wood for perches is important.

Basic rule: perches should be cut from fruit tree branches, thoroughly cleaned and not treated with any pesticide. DO: leave the bark on, giving your parrot the fun and exercise of stripping it off the perch. DO: use branch/perches of various sizes and diameters so birds get exercise and develop strong grips. DO: clean perches when you clean the cage. DON'T: use a standard wooden dowel bar that often comes in a new cage. DON'T: use slippery manzanita wood for an older or injured parrot.

Alternatives to wood perches: is a rope but hard to clean, a play platform that can sit on top of a cage or in a cage corner.



### BOTTOM TRAY

Most cages come with removable tray for cleaning, removing papers, and scrubbing the tray itself. Make sure the space between the wire grid "floor" and the tray is narrow. Too much room and your bird will escape and be caught in a dangerous situation.

### SIZE

Basic rule: get a cage that fits your parrot rather than what fits your house! For small parrots, a cage should be big enough so that the bird can fly inside the cage. **For bigger parrots, the cage width should be at least three times the wingspan of your bird** (as an adult). In any case, the bigger the cage, the better for your parrot - especially if your bird rarely or never gets a chance to be outside a cage.

One exception: if you have a daytime cage and a nighttime cage, the night cage can be a little smaller because parrots sleep at night, not moving around much. The door must be big enough to get your parrot in and out easily!



### MATERIAL

The best: stainless steel. Pros: safe, durable, long-lasting, healthiest. Cons: more expensive, but worth it!

A compromise/second option: powder-coated metal. Pros: cheaper than stainless BUT Cons: powder-coating chips off and needs to be recoated or replaced..

Absolute no-no: paint/spray-paint. Pros: none. Cons: toxic metals in paints your bird pecks at and ingests will poison and kill the bird.

### BAR SPACING

Basic rule: safe bar spacing depends on the size of your bird.

**The smaller the bird, the smaller the bar spacing.** A bird of any size should never be able to push its head between bars.

Horizontal or vertical bars? Vertical Pros: easy to climb. Horizontal Pros: better for an aging bird. Best situation: a cage with front and back horizontal bars AND vertical bars on the cage sides.

### SHAPE

Square? Round? Oval? Square pros: best, most practical, easy to position, efficient use of space, wider better than tall.

Round and oval Cons: more likely accidents/injuries possible where bars meet at the top.