



HAMSTER CARE GUIDE: BEHAVIOR

VOCALIZATION

Squeaking: When disturbed, surprised, or picked up, some hamsters will squeak. This can be a protest to what is happening or a cry in pain.

Teeth Chattering/Grinding/Hissing: This means your hamster is irritated or afraid. It's next step is to bite, so leave it alone.

BODY LANGUAGE

Biting: Hamsters are small, prey animals and many of them use biting as their first line of defense. Some hamsters will bite fingers if they think they are food or if they smell like food. Always allow your pet to come to you before picking it up, always wash your hands before handling them, and work on trust-training your hamster in order to prevent bites.

Burrowing: Hamsters love to build nests, burrows, and tunnels. Provide them with lots of nesting material for them to explore in!

Stashing Food In Cheeks: Hamsters often shove food in their large cheek pouches to transport the food to their burrows and nests for safe keeping.



Standing On Hind Legs: This can be an aggressive stance to warn you to back off or an exploratory stance to better investigate something. Context should be able to tell you your hamster's intended meaning.

Freezing: When startled or frightened, sometimes hamsters will freeze in place or roll over and freeze.

Rolling Onto Back: This is a submissive, fearful move.

Grooming: Hamsters tend to groom themselves when they are feeling relaxed and content.

Stretching: Stretching occurs when a hamster is content and of course after just waking up.

Yawning: This indicates your hamster is either nervous or tired.

Repetitive Behaviors: If you notice your hamster engaging in repetitive behaviors such as pacing, running in circles, or flipping/falling backward he may have a neurological disorder, ear infection, or stroke. Another cause for these behaviors is inadequate housing and enrichment. Boredom can cause obsessive, repetitive behaviors.