



Ridgeway

CARE & SET-UP SHEETS

TARANTULAS & SCORPIONS

Tank Set-Up



It is best to use a glass tank because of the moisture levels needed to keep a tarantula. Most average sized terrestrial Tarantulas and Scorpions require an enclosure of 30cm x 30cm x 30cm. Arboreal species 30cm x 30cm x 45cm. Larger species such as the Goliath and Salmon pink require 45cm x 45cm x 30cm

Nearly all species of commonly kept Tarantulas and Scorpions don't like overly humid or wet environments. Many like an arid environment with a humid burrow. Make sure your tank is ventilated to prevent too much humidity. Always check your individual specific requirements before purchase.

Most tarantulas and scorpions need a temperature of around 24c/75f to 26c/79f. It is easiest to achieve this temperature by fixing a heat mat to the outside of the tank, positioned on the side wall. Always use a thermostat to regulate the temperature by placing the thermostat probe near the floor, in the middle, at the back of the enclosure and setting the temperature to 25c/77f.

Even terrestrial tarantulas are very well equipped for climbing, so it is essential you have a secure lid.

Never place your tank in direct sunlight, near radiators or in busy areas of the home e.g. doorways, hallways, or in cold rooms. A quiet, shaded and warm room is best.

Substrate, Cleaning And Furniture

Always use a substrate that holds moisture. We recommend using either a simple coir or peat based substrate or the Habistat Jungle bio. Be sure, if using a peat based substrate, it has no additives e.g. fertilisers. Never let the substrate completely dry out, always keep it moist but not wet. Always check with the supplier for the specific humidity and moisture levels. The substrate should be spread out inside the tank to a minimum depth of 5cm (more for deep burrowing spiders). Spot clean uneaten food and old webbing regularly. If your animals tank appears too dirty to effectively spot clean, then a full change of substrate is required. It is only normally necessary to clean them out every 3 months at most, often much longer if you stay on top of spot cleaning. Most disinfectants, soaps and detergents are toxic for tarantulas, so it is advised not to use them when cleaning out.

Always provide a suitable selection of hides and decor for your spider, after a while it should naturally burrow and rearrange its environment until it feels comfortable.

Always provide access to water. This can be done with a small bowl or a wet piece of unused clean natural sponge or rolled up kitchen towel.

If you don't have an arboreal tarantula and your tank is quite tall (over 30cm or more), it is important that you put plenty of tank furniture around the sides of your tank. This will prevent your tarantula from falling too far if it climbs the sides.

Feeding, Handling And Health

Tarantula's need very little food so a meal every week to a fortnight is plenty. The meal should be approximately the size of the carapace (the middle part of a spider). Make sure your tarantula's abdomen never gets too distended. A tarantula will take most types of cricket, locust or roach of the required size. If the tarantula doesn't eat its food within a few hours, remove it and don't feed it again for at least a week. Uneaten food may damage your tarantula when its shedding.



It is never necessary to handle any tarantula or scorpion; doing so could be dangerous to your health and the tarantula. Firstly, no tarantula or scorpion can be trained not to bite and all of them have venom or a painful sting. They really aren't to be trusted. Although not normally life threatening, unless you have an allergy to the toxin, it will still be very painful. Secondly most species of tarantula also have what are called urticating hairs on their abdomen. Getting these hairs on your skin or in your eyes can cause an irritable reaction. If you are bitten or get hairs in your eyes, it is best to rinse thoroughly and seek medical advice. Thirdly for the tarantula's safety, it is best not to handle them because they are very delicate. When bitten most people will drop the spider or try to remove their hand with such speed that the animal is flung some distance. If you drop the tarantula from as little as 20cm it could burst the abdomen.

Never use any aerosols, cleaning solutions or anything that might produce fumes around your tarantula. This includes polish, air fresheners and paint.

Occasionally your animal may shed its skin. It may choose to shed in an enclosed burrow or out in the open. If you are lucky enough to see your tarantula shed in the open, it will first flip it's self on to its back. Do not flip it back; it will almost certainly kill it. It will then climb out of its skin. This can take 24 hours or more. Once it is out it will be very fragile and must not be fed or touched until it is fully hardened. This will take 5-7 days, maybe more. Your tarantula may stop feeding some months before it starts this whole process. Do not worry it is quite normal. Unfortunately for your tarantula this whole process is quite complex, and during this time a lot can go wrong. There is very little anyone can do if it does. If you feel at any time that something may be wrong with your tarantula, seek professional advice.



To summarise, if kept sensibly, tarantulas and scorpions can be a fascinating and rewarding pet. They are clean, odour free and extremely easy to keep.

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