



The A to Z e-Book on Every Day Parrot Care

Written and Compiled by: [Nathalie Roberts](#)

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Thanks for downloading this e-book on parrot care. Taking care of your parrot every day will help in reducing the chance of serious problems in future. A little time and care goes a long way in having a healthy, happy and friendly parrot.

I have made sure that this e-book turns out to be really helpful for you. You will be able to refer back to it every now and then to clear out issues that can arise in the day-to-day upbringing of your parrot.

This e-book is for every parrot owner, whether a novice who is just going to bring his first parrot home or an experienced parrot owner who can always use a little more help. I have tried to cover issues that are important and also require daily care. Issues like hygiene, food and different behavioral problems.

I have presented the chapters in a step-by-step, logical manner so that you can get to the very information that you require and put it to use.

So, let's get going.

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Is Your Home Safe For Your New Parrot?

A parrot is just like a little baby. It takes him hardly a few seconds to run into danger. And then there could be hidden dangers lurking around in your home. Have you really "Bird Proofed" your home?

Here's a list of points that will help you bird-proof your home.

- Keep your transparent windows covered. Put a curtain over them. Otherwise when you let your bird fly for the first time in your house, he might try to fly through it and get injured in the process.

Don't keep any door or window open, while playing with or training your bird.

- Put a curtain over your mirror for a few days. And slowly familiarize the parrot to the mirror, or he might try to fly right into it.

- Cats mostly see birds as their prey. So if you have a cat, make sure you place the cage out of his reach. Also, it is better to have a larger bird such as a Macaw or a Cockatiel. Cats generally don't attack such large birds.

- If you have a dog, then introduce him to the parrot gradually. Dogs can be taught not to harm birds and coexist peacefully.

- A few house plants can be poisonous for your bird, so make sure you don't have Ivy, Poinsettia, or Dieffenbachia in your home. Ask your vet more about poisonous plants.

- Don't use any insecticides on your home-plants. They are toxic for your parrot.

- Make sure there are no exposed electric wires in your house.

- Open Bowls and Pans of Water attract parrots. There have been many cases of parrots getting drowned in water. Make sure all containers are covered. Keep bathroom doors closed.

- If you have any nonstick cookware, throw them away. Or make sure to place your bird far away from them. Nonstick cookware, when overheated, emits fumes that are deadly for parrots.

- Any sort of chemical cleaners you use can be fatal for your bird. So, throw them out. Make sure to buy natural products that are bird safe.

After you get the parrot, give him some time to know his surroundings. He needs time to adjust to his new surroundings. Try to familiarize yourself with the bird. Soon he will realize that you mean no harm and he will learn to trust you.

Food That Is Strictly a NO-NO

Along with what is healthy for your parrot you should always know what you should never feed your bird.

Don't ever let your bird eat

- Chocolate
- Avocado
- Rhubarb
- Beverages containing caffeine
- Alcohol
- Onions
- Sprouted lima
- Fava
- Acorns
- Mushrooms
- Peach seeds
- Garlic
- Sweet Peas
- Apple Seeds
- Almonds
- Junk food and any food high on fat, sugar or salt
- Dairy products should be limited to very small amounts.

The above mentioned food items are poison for your bird so keep an eagle's eye over that list.

Don't forget to refer to this list whenever you think of introducing some new food to your bird. It will keep you from making any serious mistakes.

Parrot and Poisoning

Parrots are inquisitive by nature. It loves to explore its surroundings and try out different things.

Your parrot may consume some toxic food or plant. Inhaling something poisonous like fumes emitted by scented candles and direct contact with other toxins can lead to poisoning.

I am giving you a list of some things that are poison for your parrot. Most of them are general household items and most of us are not aware that they are injurious to our parrot's health. You will have to make sure that your parrot is absolutely safe from these items.

Poisonous household items

Air Conditioner, Cage, Carpet, Candles, Cleaners, Cooking Oil, Cotton Candy Toy, Glue, Halogen Lamps, Leather Sprays, Pens, Pine-Scented Items, Potpourri, Rope, Salt, Scented Tissues, Teflon (cookware), Petroleum Products, Dishwasher detergent, Kerosene, Paint remover, Shoe polish, Wood preservative, Ammonia, Bleach, Crayons, Herbicides, Matches, Nail Polish, Paint, Perfume, Pesticides, Drugs, Shaving lotion and Turpentine.

Is something wrong with your parrot?

To understand the signs of poisoning, there is no other way but keep your bird under strict vigilance. Observe it carefully. To help you better, let us go step by step and watch out for the different kinds of poisoning - their symptoms and sources. This way, you will know exactly how to avoid the fatal conditions.

Check out the abnormalities that may be caused due to poisoning....

- Droppings: Loose, foul-smelling excrement, blood in the stool
- Urine: Red colored urine
- Change of Behavior - lethargy, shock, and depression, trouble while walking, refusing food or reduced intake of food
- Weight - Sudden weight loss
- Other Symptoms - Diarrhea, Coughing, Breathing problems, Convulsions and Paralysis

Types of Poisoning

Lead Poisoning

Symptoms: Feather picking, Depression, Ataxic (loss of balance), Regurgitating, Colored urine and even Blindness

Common sources of lead: solder, bird toys, batteries, galvanized wire, hardware cloth, linoleum, paints (lead-based), stained glass, curtain weights, fishing and diving accessories, some kinds of ceramic pieces, foil covering champagne or wine bottle openings, leaded gasoline fumes and tiffany lamps.

Even your parrot's drinking water can have a high percentage of lead. So, I would suggest to you to use cold water for its drinking purpose, as hot water dissolves lead more readily.

To keep the amount of lead low, ensure the pipes are regularly flushed. It is better to avoid using the water remaining in the pipes for more than six hours.

If you suspect lead poisoning in your bird, seek medical attention without any delay.

Insecticide Poisoning

It takes only some extra precaution to avoid the condition. While you are applying the insecticide sprays, do not keep the bird in that room. After you are done with the spraying, open the windows. Let the fresh air come in. Only then take the bird into the room.

Symptom: Respiratory or breathing troubles

Once you spot the sick bird, take it out to an open place. Call the vet.

Zinc Poisoning

Common Sources: Paint, Galvanized Wire, Toys, Costume jewelry or metal beads, Food and Water Dishes.

Common Symptoms: Feather picking, Polydipsia, Anemia, Cyanosis, Polyuria (urine in the dropping), Hyperglycemia and Seizures.

Poisoning due to Unsafe Plants

Some common toxic plants: Amaryllis, Bird of Paradise, Caladium, Clematis, Crocus, Daffodil, Eggplant, Ivy, Juniper, Marijuana, Narcissus, Oleander, Poppy, Potato, Sweet Pea, Tobacco, Tomato, and Tulip.

Direction: If you are providing wood perches and toys to your parrots, ensure they are pesticide and chemical free. Disinfect them before use.

What To Do If Your Parrot Is Scratching Forever and Plucking its Plumes?

When you find your parrot itching and scratching forever, it's maddening! I know how frustrating the experience can be.

Most of the time, scratching or itching is caused due to external parasites. There are lots of anti-parasitic powders available in the market that can disinfect the bird and the cage. But check with a vet before buying this product if it is absolutely safe for birds.

Sometimes, the plucking frenzy develops due to lice. Also, there can be more medical conditions for feather picking - Bacterial infections, Giardia (an internal parasite), dry skin, and improper wing clipping. And there are vitamins and medications available to control these problems.

There are a few tests that can be done under the guidance of the vet during such conditions:

- Giardia test
- CBC
- Vent & Crop Swabs
- Beak & Feather test.

Things To Note:

I will give you some more reasons that may be the cause of your bird's irritation. Try to see if you can identify the right cause of your parrot's unnatural behavior. The reason may be a very simple one - only you need to pick it!

Let's see...

Do you smoke?

Or does anybody in your house? From now, don't allow anybody to take even a small puff near your bird. Birds are allergic to smokes and fumes.

How much time does your bird stay in bed?

How long does it sleep uninterruptedly? If it is less than 8 hours, make sure you help it have a sound sleep! Remember, stress is a common cause for feather plucking.

A perfectly balanced diet is ideal in any situation.

Give your parrot plenty of fruits, vegetables, seed mixture, and vitamin supplements. Does it have peanuts in meals? Peanuts and plucking may have a connection. Take no risk!

Have you made any changes to the daily routine that your bird usually follows?

If you have, then restore the previous order and see if it works!

Do you have any guest in your house?

And did your parrot start plucking just the day after he/she moved in with you? If yes, make a note of this.

Your bird needs privacy. Sometimes, let it play alone while you watch from a distance. It needs its own time.

At times, active ingredients like aspirin is found in the natural perches we provide. It causes irritation in birds. So, be thoroughly informed about the kind of wood used in your bird's perch. And remember to scrub it before offering it to your bird.

Provide various and interesting colorful toys to keep it busy. At least, this will occupy its attention for sometime!

Give a good shower. It reduces itchiness. And if possible, remove you bird's collar while it takes a shower. As soon as she/he is dry or starts plucking, replace the collar.

Do you know if your bird loves watching a particular television show?

Turn it on! This can reduce its boredom.

One more simple trick...

Play some soft music near your bird. It loves listening to music!

You never know which one of these ideas will be a miracle for your bird. If nothing works, gift your parrot a friend. Bring another of its species! You know, sometimes inability to find a mate becomes a major cause for plucking.

Don't Let Biting Become a Fun Game

There are numerous reasons that stimulate biting impulses in your Parrot. You need to be alert, attentive and cautious if you want to avoid getting hurt.

- Being afraid is one such reason. If your Parrot was not hand fed earlier and you try to do it now, you have a good chance of being bitten. If you try to abuse your Parrot by hitting, flicking or hurting it, then it will answer back by biting you.

- If your bird looks like it's going to bite you, you move your hand away suddenly. This becomes a fun game for your bird. This puts the bird in charge. Don't let this happen.

- Learning your bird's body language properly would save you from injuring your fingers.

- Parrots usually investigate various objects through it beak. That is how Mother Nature has set things up for them. Even when it sees your fingers, it sees them as something tasty and tries to investigate it. A sharp 'No' would have a good effect by stopping the bird from biting you.

- To avoid being bitten, it is important to be able to gauge your bird's mood correctly. If your bird is not in the mood to be picked up or played with, give it space. Otherwise, you will encourage aggressive behavior in the bird, and the end result will be injury to yourself.

- Even playfully, Parrots may bite you. But it is better not to take too much offense if anything such as this occurs. Accidents may occur, and since the bird gets overexcited, it may tend to grasp some human body part to keep its balance.

- Sometimes a Parrot bonds with its owner too strongly. And when it feels that another individual is intruding upon their bonding, it becomes aggressive. This may lead to biting since the Parrot becomes overtly protective.

- Biting out of fear or being nervous is a common phenomenon among Parrots. Even other pets like cats or dogs do such things. Here, their survival instinct is at work and they bite out of fear. In your Parrot's case, since it's in captivity, it cannot fly away. Therefore, for them biting works as the only resort.

- A bird can be truly aggressive during its breeding time. During this time, biting behavior is more hormone-driven than anything else. This behavior is also driven by the act of protecting their cage or their mate.

If a bird feels unwell, it may want to be left alone. It is the owner's responsibility to detect such behavior and act accordingly. They may start biting more, eat and play less. I would advise you to take your pet Parrot to a vet immediately under such circumstances.

Clean The Cage

Cleanliness is very important for your parrot's health. Cleaning the cage with all its crevices, corners and bars may seem to be a tedious job.

Make a schedule for cleaning the cage. Set aside a day each week to do a weekly cleaning. The same goes for once every month. But there are a few things that you should take care of, every day.

I have made a "Clean-the-Cage" routine and follow it regularly. Giving just a little time regularly on cleaning your parrot's cage will not only keep your bird hale and hearty, it will also save many tense nights and anxious visits to the vet.

Let us now go through the basic guidelines of the "Clean-the-Cage" routine.

Daily Routine

Cage lining

Change the cage lining everyday. It is better to line the cage with newspapers. Using fancier materials such as corncobs and sawdust not only cost a lot; they can create a damp environment, favorable to bacteria growth. Alternatively, replacing newspapers is easier.

It is not at all healthy for your bird to walk about in discarded food and droppings. Unchanged papers also give out an undesirable stench.

So make sure to change the lining everyday.

Cage

Use a damp towel to clean the cage, including the perches and the bars. You can also give the toys a light scrub, but make sure they are dry when you restore them.

Food and Water bowls

Make sure to remove and clean your bird's food and water bowls. Wash them with a mild detergent. And remember they should be completely dry before you place them again in the cage. This prohibits the growth of bacteria. Use a disinfectant once a month to clean the food and water bowls.

You may have to clean the water dishes more than once a day. If the water is soiled with food, toy parts or droppings, make sure to change it immediately. Water should never have any food particles in it. It can quickly breed bacteria.

Weekly Routine

Tray

Clean the cage tray on which you place the cage lining once every week. Remove it and scrub it with a damp towel and a cage cleaner. Make sure that it is a bird-safe cage cleaner.

Remember, the tray should be completely dry before you put it back in the cage.

Grate

Remove the grate and place it in a tub and scrub it with a brush to remove all waste that might have collected on it.

As I have mentioned earlier regarding other cage parts, make sure the grate is also dry before returning it to its former position.

Toys

Birds use their beaks to explore everything. They even use their beaks to play with their toys.

Now just think of your parrot as a little human baby. How will you take care of his toys? Once a week remove every toy from your pet's cage. Soak them in water and scrub them well.

It's always better to have a variety of toys. So when you have cleaned one set of toys, you can replace them with the other set. This way your bird won't get bored with his playthings and you will also get ample time for cleaning and drying them.

Perches

Perches are good breeding grounds for germs. Take them down once every week, soak them and scrub them thoroughly.

Just like toys it is better to have more than one set of perches. Some perches like the wooden ones take a long time to dry.

Monthly Routine

Once a month give the cage a thorough clean - up. If you have a small cage then remove all toys, perches, and food and water containers and soak them in water in a bath - tub. But if you have a big cage like I have, you can easily do what I do. Place the cage in the lawn and hose it down with the garden hose.

Use a sturdy scrub brush and a cage - cleaner to clean every corner, every crevice in the cage.

After cleaning it, remember to rinse it thoroughly with water to remove any remnant of the detergent or the cage-cleaner. Use a towel to dry it completely before placing your bird back in to the cage.

Cleaning the cage may take a lot of time. But a dirty cage can harbor a lot of diseases. Always keep in mind that giving a little time for cleaning the cage can add many years to your parrot's life.

Play Games With Your Bird

Parrots are fun loving creatures. When you interact with them one-to-one each day, you can expect a happier and well-adjusted companion Parrot. To make your Parrot bond better with you, you need to get involved in interactive sessions. And what better way can there be than to play games with your bird?

To make the playing sessions effective, you need to pour in as much laughter and praise as possible. Parrots love to hear us laugh. Some Parrots even laugh with us. A parrot that learns to laugh will sometimes call its owners to play with them by laughing. The laughter of a Parrot is music to a parrot lover's ears.

Repeatedly playing a game with your Parrot will result in the bird developing a skill set for that game. It will learn to excel in performing. This way you are providing it with opportunities to perfect these skills. The reward you will get in return is simply amazing.

Here are some games that you can play with your Parrot. I play these games with my Parrots regularly. And you won't believe, after each playing session, I always feel thoroughly refreshed. And it always delights me to see how happy my bird becomes every time we play together.

- Keeping items in a box: Place some birdie items in a clean box. Also hide some treats like peanuts or a new toy in it. Let your bird find them out.
- Toss and Fetch: Take a lightweight object like a soft toy or a Koosh ball. Toss the ball and let your bird catch it with its beak. Repeat the game by making your bird toss the ball next time. But make sure you toss it gently so that the bird gets to catch it properly.
- Flying through the air: Let the bird sit steadily on your hand. And then go around the house like an airplane. Go slow so that the bird doesn't feel scared or ill.
- Play peek-a-boo: Take a light blanket, a towel or a piece of cloth. Cover your bird's head with it and then slowly lift the corner saying, 'peek-a-boo'. You can repeat the same thing by covering your face with the same towel. Make sure the cloth is not too heavy.
- Singing games: Sing them nursery rhymes. Or you can even sing them singing games like Eeny Meeny Miny Mo, Itsy Bitsy Spider, Inki Pinki Ponki and so on.
- Read out a story: Place your bird in your lap. Open a colorful children's book or a fairy tale in front of you so that the bird can also see it. And then read them the stories from pop-up books and musical books. The latter are better. Your bird will love it. My Fluffy loves it.
- Tummy tickling: Place the bird on your lap. Help it to lie on its back and gently tickle its tummy. You can also give it little toys to fight them upside down.

- Making a mess: Give you bird a piece of old newspaper, a soft tissue paper or a soft card board box and take one yourself. Start shredding them. They would start doing that too. The bigger the mess, the happier your Parrot will be.

Parrots stay mentally and physically active and playful with such sessions. You see, Parrots are like human kids. This way you can shower adequate attention your pet craves for and avoid boredom, loneliness and obesity in your feathered companion.

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Thanks once again for downloading **The A to Z e-book on Every Day Parrot Care**. I wanted to give you a step-by-step manual that will help you take care of your parrot on a regular basis. I have tried to cover important fields that you might need help on every now and then while taking care of your dear companion.

All pet owners want their pets to be happy, healthy and active. They want to have a mutual bond between them that would be strong and long lasting. Love, affection, care, attention and proper training make this bond stronger and everlasting. I am sure my tips will be useful for you. Training a Parrot is not a simple job. But the outcome is worth the effort. I hope you too will be a happy Parrot owner with an equally happy pet. I hope this e-book will be of immense help to you.

Nathalie Roberts

P.S. Check out www.ParrotTrainers.com to learn all about the DVDs on "**Owner's Guide to a Happy and Playful Parrot**" - a breakthrough DVD product on parrot care.

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