

BONDING WITH YOUR FERRET

Bringing a new ferret into the family, whether the first or the fifth, is always exciting. It is easy for us to fall in love with their little noses and tender kisses... but do they feel the same about us? Like any relationship, trust builds over time. Be patient! Make bonding with your ferret easy and fun with these tips:

1 **LET THEM LEAD.** When you first bring your new ferret home, it is best to give your pet time to get acclimated. Show them their cage, food and litter. Give them and you a small, enclosed and ferret-proof space to allow your ferret to explore you. Just sit there. Occupy yourself with things other than the animal and allow them to figure you out. Let them climb and snoop, sniff and taste. Familiarity is the first step in building that bond.

2 **TREATS & PRAISE** are a good way to establish you as the caretaker. Give them treats and praise to reinforce good behavior. Get down on their level to feed them and stick around for a minute while they dig in. Once they understand that they can trust you for the things they need, they will start to let down their guard and show affection in return.

3 **LEAVE THEM YOUR SMELL.** Bond with your ferret even when you are not there. Leave them with a dirty shirt or pillowcase to curl up in while you are gone. Sleeping with your smell comforts them and instills a sense of safety associated with your smell.



Sneaker Toy
Item # FT-463

4 **GROOM YOUR FERRET.** It is likely that your ferret is young. Groom your ferret as if you were its mother. Take a warm washcloth and start at the ferret's face. Gently wipe their eyes, nose, mouth and ears. Continue to clean them with the washcloth from the top of their heads down their backs. Turn them over and get their bellies. If your grooming session doesn't end with them napping in your arms, be sure to return your ferret to the warmth of its cozy bed.

5 **GIVE THEM TREASURES.** It's well known that ferrets love to steal and hide treasures. That's why the most popular ferret name is Bandit. Give them treasures that are associated with you. Choose things that they cannot chew through or break apart in their mouths. Choose toys that are durable enough to hold up to their play yet small enough for them to stash. Things that are shiny or sparkly are especially cherished.

6 **PLAY WITH THEM.** It seems like a no brainer, but many first-time ferret owners don't know how to play with their new pets! Ferrets like to jump and run. They like to burrow and explore. Dig boxes and teaser toys are an extremely entertaining way to have fun with your ferret and strengthen your bond. Ferret-proofing a play area is imperative to keeping your ferret safe during play time.

You and your ferret will soon be best friends. The bond between a human and a ferret is like no other.

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