

# Cockatiels | Health and record keeper



*(Nymphicus hollandicus)*



Congratulations on adopting your new feathered companion. Here are a few basic recommendations we've compiled to guide you in becoming the best caregiver possible for your small parrot. We encourage you to continue your parrot care education with numerous resources available to provide optimum care, health and enjoyment for years to come.

**Record for:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Bringing your Cockatiel Home

*Cockatiels make a sweet, calm and gentle companion pet. They have tremendously friendly characters and an impressive whistling ability. They are affectionate, curious, naturally gregarious and will thrive if provided an enriched and stimulating lifestyle, safe comfortable and spacious living quarters and a healthy diet.*

They welcome challenging occupational therapy such as foraging toys and weaving materials. They enjoy daily bathing, plenty of exercise and training. We recommend that you have your Cockatiel sexed (blood sampling for DNA sex determination to give you additional guidance for its future behavior and health preoccupations).



Cockatiels are reputed to have an expansive personality, despite their limited talking abilities. Compared to larger parrot species, their small size, quiet nature and relatively less destructive nature make these excellent feathered companions. They are extremely sociable birds but must be guided with loving discipline and training so they can understand the boundaries and what is expected from them. We encourage all new Cockatiel caretakers and all members of the family to establish a healthy flock hierarchy within your home from the start. With the participation of all members of the family, a relationship of tutor and child must be promoted and should not encourage one of mating companion. Allowing the avian companion to pair bond with a human flock member can have undesirable consequences (contribute to unfavorable behaviors such as screaming and biting).

## ***“Versatile living quarters” for your Cockatiel***

In order to prevent cage bonding and territorialism, your bird should be equipped with a variety of habitats to provide versatility throughout the day and a distinct retreat for the night. This will also challenge him mentally, prompting and encouraging his instincts for adaptability and independence. Unfortunately many birds are not provided with versatile living quarters, regrettably

living in a single cage dwelling day and night can have irreversible consequences that often lead to hormonally triggered undesirable behaviors and health concerns.

## ***Day Cage***

The day cage is perhaps the most important investment you can make. It should be a spacious, stimulating environment allowing for plenty of light and air. Ideally the space within the day cage (actual total useable area to allow some exercise especially if this will be the only living quarters) should be at least 10 times the size of your bird with its wings opened or as large as you can accommodate within your living space. The dimensions can vary based on the design of the cage and the other living quarters offered.



*An exercise gym and a separate training stand are also recommended.*

## ***Sleeping Cage***

Your bird should also be provided with a sleeping cage, covered at night and placed in a quiet retreat within your home to allow undisturbed sleep for your feathered companion. A “starter” cage, purchased for weaning and fledgling chicks can always be converted to the sleep (or boarding) cage once is not longer needed for its original purpose.

Cockatiels are quite prone to night thrashing (night fright) although the sleeping quarters may be covered and quiet it is important to provide a night light to make them feel secure.

It is recommended that caregivers provide their cockatiel with 10-12 hours of undisturbed sleep to maintain a healthy lifestyle. You'd be surprised at how quickly undesirable behaviours can be managed and eventually modified when your pet is provided with a comfortable and secure nighttime retreat. To promote an undisturbed sleep, the sleeping cage should be covered at night and located in a quiet and safe location, away from disturbances and predators (i.e.

cat or dog, family entertainment room, and/or electrical devices that can make sudden noises (furnace, refrigerator).

## ***Socialization***

It's also important to socialize your cockatiel. A well-socialized cockatiel is curious and gregarious, takes an interest in its surroundings and thrives on attention. To help socialize your pet, you might want to consider taking him along to family events or for strolls through your neighbourhood. This can be achieved through the use of a carrier.



*Cockatiels are very small, delicate and light weight; it may not be realistic to attempt to harness train. Partial flight feather grooming should also be discussed with your avian veterinarian, as this may be necessary to prevent any accidental uncontrolled flight.*

## ***Visual Enrichment***

"Bring" the flock to your feathered companion with videos intended for this purpose. Numerous amounts of wild bird footage has been compiled for companion parrots to virtually participate in social flock vocalization and communication. This boredom buster will also encourage & teach foraging skills, preening activities and social hierarchy.

## ***Transportation***

Another method of transporting your cockatiel is by the use of an avian transport carrier. From his first car ride to his new home, to annual vet check-up, to grooming appointments, to “play dates” with other feathered friends - a carrier plays an essential role.



# My Cockatiel Profile and Health Records

These forms and charts can help you record and monitor your bird's specific lifestyle, the care you are providing and the relationship he has with his family, flock and environment. These details of your cockatiels' life can provide valuable information to your veterinarian, bird sitter or future adoption family. Should your pet require hospitalization or boarding, a copy of your birds profile will be useful to the clinic or bird sitters. The answers to these questions could be valuable when consulting for medical and behavioural concerns. The complex nature of these birds should not be limited to these questions. We encourage you to add as much information as possible to your parrot's profile forms. Conserve this information along with the birth certificate, feathers, photos and any health related documents.

## INFORMATION

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hatching date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**This bird was rehomed with limited information available :**

**Species:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Latin name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Band #:**  Opened  Closed \_\_\_\_\_ **Physical characteristic of ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Microchip #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chip manufacturer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Breeder:** \_\_\_\_\_  Captive bred **Neonate diet fed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Average weight:** \_\_\_\_\_ g Sex:  M  F  Unknown

**Sexing Method** (cockatiels are dimorphic and can easily be sexed by the color pattern under carriage of their wings and tail feathers. Sex can also be guessed by the behavior and facial color at 3-6 months):  Sexual dimorphism  Has layed eggs

**History** (source, previous owners, quarantine, parent ID, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

## EXAMINATION

**Tested for:**  Polyomavirus  Pacheco's Virus  Psittacose Chlamydia  PBFD **Borna:** Type \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample taken from:**  Feathers  Blood  Nail  Vein  Environmental swab  Droppings

**Samples submitted by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **To which lab:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Past vaccinations:** (register all records and conserve all documents):  Polyoma  Pacheco's

**Diet provided - specify as much detail as possible** (quantity eaten, brands, frequency offered, etc.)

**Formulated diet:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ %

**Sprouting grains, seeds, nuts:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ %

**Veggies & fruits:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ %

**Supplements (vitamins / calcium):** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ %

**Water source & quality:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Daily Intake:** \_\_\_\_\_ ml

## MEDICAL HISTORY

**Check-mark the following** (if your cockatiel has previously encountered & required medical attention for):

<input type="checkbox"/> Respiratory problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Ear infection	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypervitaminosis A	<input type="checkbox"/> Intoxication
<input type="checkbox"/> Egg binding or related peritonitis' *cockatiels are exceptionally prone to chronic egg laying	<input type="checkbox"/> Bacterial infections	<input type="checkbox"/> Balding	<input type="checkbox"/> Skin disorder
<input type="checkbox"/> Bumble foot /pododermatitis	<input type="checkbox"/> Feather damaging behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> Pygostyle (tear under vent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fractures
<input type="checkbox"/> Yeast / mycosis infections	<input type="checkbox"/> Eye infection	<input type="checkbox"/> Trauma	
<input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Wing tip injury (night trashing)	<input type="checkbox"/> Allergic reactions	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypovitaminosis A	<input type="checkbox"/> Parasitic infection	

**Which avian veterinarian have you consulted:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Clinic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Yearly visits:**  Yes  No **Frequency:** \_\_\_\_\_

# My Cockatiel Profile and Health Records

## ENVIRONMENT

Day cage dimensions: Length: \_\_\_\_\_ Width: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_

Cage manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Sleeping cage dimensions: Length: \_\_\_\_\_ Width: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_

Cage manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Sleeping cage is covered at night  Night light is provided near sleeping quarters

Does your parrot have (check all that apply):

Activity center  Play gym  Activity tree  Bird safe room  Other Cage  Flock lifestyle in bird safe room

Types of perches available:  Plastic  Polyresin  Java/Manzanita  Concrete/Self Grooming

Cotton rope  Ergonomic  Natural branches (specify type of wood): \_\_\_\_\_

Pesticide free:  Yes  Unknown Are the perches of varied dimensions:  Yes  No

Does your parrot get;  Showered  Bathed  Misted? Frequency & enjoyment: \_\_\_\_\_

Is basking lamp available for post misting / showering / bathing moments?  Yes  No

How many times a week? \_\_\_\_\_ How long for each basking session? \_\_\_\_\_ min

Exposure to natural sunlight:  Yes  No Full spectrum lighting:  Yes  No Number of hours per day: \_\_\_\_\_

The number of hours of undisturbed sleep per night: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of hours of daytime nap: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the cage covered for the night:  Yes  No Do you retreat your bird to a sleeping cage at night?  Yes  No

Access outside of the cage unsupervised:  Yes  No

Does your parrot have a cage mate?  Yes  No if yes, since when? \_\_\_\_\_ what species? \_\_\_\_\_

Are they reproductively active?  Yes  No if yes, since when? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there other birds in your household?  Yes  No If yes, specify number: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use hazardous detergents / appliances / products in your home?  Yes  No

If yes, which ones: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Potentially toxic plant species in your home:  Yes  No

If yes, which ones: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Is your family or parrot sitter familiar with potentially toxic & hazardous materials?  Yes  No

The weaning cage can be used as a sleeping cage or retreat quarters to provide quiet and peaceful environment for the bird.

1. Accessorizing the cage with cotton rope perch provides a comfortable foot rest and stable grip.
2. White paper liner at the bottom of the cage is recommended for daily monitoring of the droppings.
3. Extruded diet and water dish solely provided (ideally, no enrichment foods).
4. No toys within nor activity gym on top of the cage.



# My Cockatiel Profile and Health Records

## BEHAVIOUR AND CHARACTER TRAITS

**Biting:**  Yes  No

**Frequency:**  Rarely  Occasionally  Frequently

**With whom & under what circumstances?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Screaming:**  Yes  No

**Frequency:**  Rarely  Occasionally  Frequently

**Under what circumstances?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Whistling abilities:**  Yes  No

**Tunes Whistled:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Talking abilities:**  Yes  No

**Number of Words:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Vocabulary:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Language(s) understood:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Weave when offered weaving material?**  Yes  No

**Towel trained and comfortable wrapped in a towel (in case of an emergency intervention)?**  Yes  No

**Caretaker is familiar with signs of distress, illnesses and basic first aid techniques?**  Yes  No

**Enjoys visual enrichment such as:**  Television,  radio,  windows specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Is your cockatiel trained to step up on a scale perch for weight monitoring?**  Yes  No

**Frequency of weight monitoring:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you record the weight of your bird:**  Yes  No

**Feather damaging behaviour:**  Yes  No **Where and since when:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you bring your bird outdoors?**  Yes  No **Do you use a harness:**  Yes  No

**Does your bird have an outdoor flight cage?**  Yes  No

**Are flight feathers groomed?**  Yes  No **Frequency & degree** (# of flight feathers equally on each side): \_\_\_\_\_

**Does your cockatiel perform tricks?**  Yes  No **Explain:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Behaviour around children:**

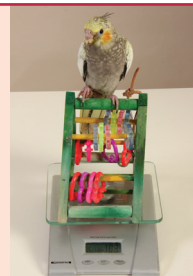
**Behaviour around strangers:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Behaviour around other birds:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Behaviour around other animals:** \_\_\_\_\_



Weight monitoring is recommended at least once a week to monitor health and evaluate the dietary needs, prevent obesity and adjust the exercise program of your feathered companion. For more accuracy, always weigh your bird in the morning before his first meal. If you note a significant weight loss over a short period of time, consult with your avian health professional for advice.



# Buyers Guide

Your new feathered companion will bring years of joy to your life. It is your responsibility to make sure your bird enjoys a healthy, happy lifestyle. Use this handy checklist to help you keep track of necessary equipment, treats and toys.

The checklists have been divided into five categories, **Nutrition & Supplements**, **Cage & Cage Accessories**, **Toys & Exercise**, **Perches**, and **Health & Training**. Each category provides a detailed list of products that are key to providing a long and healthy life for your bird. Not all items are required at all life stages of your bird. The following legend is simply there to guide you with your future purchases and can be kept as a reminder of what you have on hand and will need/want in the future.

ESSENTIAL	NEEDED	OPTIONAL	DAY	NIGHT	CARE
Essential items are an absolute must at the time of acquiring or adopting your bird.	Needed items should be provided to your bird over time as lifestages, agility and dexterity progress in order to offer an optimal lifestyle.	Optional items are suggestions and may be required according to your and your bird's lifestyle, interests and choice needs.	Recommended for use in your birds day cage. A separate day and night dwelling will favor versatility, prevent cage bonding, territorial behaviors and hormonal activity.	Recommended for use in your birds sleeping cage. A distinct, separate sleeping cage is recommended to provide optimal rest and versatility.	Care items are indispensable and should be considered in order to provide responsible health monitoring, first aid assistance and behavioral training.

## NUTRITION & SUPPLEMENTS

	OPTIONS	ESSENTIAL	NEEDED	OPTIONAL	DAY	NIGHT	CARE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extruded diet (Tropicana)	X			X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrichment diet (Tropimix)	X			X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seed mix	X			X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vitamin / mineral supplement (Prime)			X	X		X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cuttle bone & beak conditioner	X			X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Oyster shell			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Probiotics			X	X		X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mealworms (live or canned)			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clay supplement (Clay-cal)			X	X		X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spray millet	X			X		X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Charcoal	X			X		X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthy treats		X		X		



# Buyers Guide



## CAGE & CAGE ACCESSORIES

	OPTIONS	ESSENTIAL	NEEDED	OPTIONAL	DAY	NIGHT	CARE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Day cage		X		X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sleeping cage (weaning cage)	X			X	X	X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cage cover		X		X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sleeping tent			X		X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Food dishes for formulated or seed diet	X			X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stainless steel / ceramic dishes (water and soft food)	X			X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water bottle		X		X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cage bottom paper liner (or litter if grill is used)	X			X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seed Guard			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Food clip / Skewers		X				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sand perch covers			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mirror			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bird pacifier			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bird room accessories (ropes etc)	X	X		X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nesting material & nest		X				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Full spectrum lighting			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water misting bottle			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bird Bath			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shower Perch			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Post misting basking lamp		X		X		X



# Buyers Guide |

## TOYS & EXERCISE

	OPTIONS	ESSENTIAL	NEEDED	OPTIONAL	DAY	NIGHT	CARE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transporter (carrier)	X					X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training stand			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flight harness			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Activity center/ play gym			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor flight			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bird stroller or back pack for travelling			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exercise toys (swing, net, bouncing perch)		X		X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elementary foraging materials	X		X	X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate foraging toys		X	X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foraging box & foot toys		X		X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced foraging toys		X		X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational toys			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Destructible toys			X	X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Indestructible toys			X	X		



## PERCHES

	OPTIONS	ESSENTIAL	NEEDED	OPTIONAL	DAY	NIGHT	CARE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural branch perch	X			X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rope perch	X			X	X	X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plastic perch	X			X	X	X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-grooming perch			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ergonomic perch	X			X	X	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Manzanita / java perch			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wooden dowel perch			X			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rope bouncing perch		X		X		



## HEALTH & TRAINING

	OPTIONS	ESSENTIAL	NEEDED	OPTIONAL	DAY	NIGHT	CARE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feather conditioner			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Auditory & visual enrichment (DVDs, Cds)			X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency first aid kit		X				X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weight monitoring scale & Perch	X					X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rotary tool, cutter, nail file (nail grooming)			X			X
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference books and DVDS		X				

# Lifestyle Monitoring Charts...

### My parrot's weight chart Why is this Important?

A responsible avian caretaker's health management program should include weekly weight monitoring. Keeping records of your companion's weight might highlight a health concern or suggest a diet re-evaluation. Furthermore, a weight management program can guide you to be proactive with your bird's exercise program. Should your bird suffer from any illness, this data keeping will help your veterinarian to quickly evaluate the condition of your bird.

**MY PARROT'S WEIGHT CHART**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SEX: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

WEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_

FOOD: \_\_\_\_\_

WATER: \_\_\_\_\_

TOILET: \_\_\_\_\_

PERCH: \_\_\_\_\_

TOY: \_\_\_\_\_

REST: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

### Chick's primary lessons

This primary lesson progress chart is intended to be used along with the **EARLY PARROT EDUCATION PROGRAM**. Caretakers should be knowledgeable and skilled to mentor and ensure the safety and well being of the bird throughout these lessons.

To learn more about the Early Parrot Education Program, visit [www.hari.ca/avian-care/early-parrot-education/](http://www.hari.ca/avian-care/early-parrot-education/)

**CHICK'S PRIMARY LESSONS**

YOUR LOGO: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SEX: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

WEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_

FOOD: \_\_\_\_\_

WATER: \_\_\_\_\_

TOILET: \_\_\_\_\_

PERCH: \_\_\_\_\_

TOY: \_\_\_\_\_

REST: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

### My parrot's body & mind chart

Should your avian companion start an undesirable or unusual behavior, use this chart as a preliminary assessment of the potential cause of the behavioral change. Before rushing to your avian vet, be sure to answer all questions and then take them along with you. You will probably save valuable time, energy and money by understanding your companions behavioral condition.

You might wonder about questions in the charts, after all your bird's problem is behavioral and we are asking you questions relating to health and essentials care. The reason is quite simple, the body and the mind are intertwined so tightly that one doesn't go without the other. Just think of how you can act differently when you are not eating or sleeping properly for awhile, sometimes what you need is not a psychologist's help but a nutritionist's help or simply a new mattress!

We've tried to cover all angles but remember that nobody knows your companion as much as you do, feel free to add any other questions and comments you think are important and pertinent. It might be a good idea to consult with a behaviorist but take the time to reflect upon the situation and try to analyze it yourself first. Sometimes, just putting things on paper helps us to understand things that seemed incomprehensible before, perhaps you might find the answer to your problem relatively easily.

**FULL BODY & MIND CHART**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SEX: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

WEIGHT: \_\_\_\_\_

FOOD: \_\_\_\_\_

WATER: \_\_\_\_\_

TOILET: \_\_\_\_\_

PERCH: \_\_\_\_\_

TOY: \_\_\_\_\_

REST: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_