Caring for Your Salamander

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Slick Salamanders

Salamanders are a type of amphibian. They are related to frogs and toads. Amphibians live in water and on land. They are cold-blooded animals that have a backbone. They do not have hair, feathers, or scales.

It is rare to see salamanders in nature because they are shy and like to hide. Keeping a salamander as a pet allows you to watch him every day. Owners must be patient because even pet salamanders enjoy hiding. Do not startle a salamander with loud noises or quick movements. Be quiet and still, and you can glimpse the life of this unique creature.

For many people, salamanders make interesting pets.
Pet salamanders are easy to care for. They do not need to be brushed, bathed, or walked. They also do not need to be fed every day. Although salamanders are easier to care for than some pets, they are still a big responsibility. Owners must make sure salamanders are healthy and happy by giving them a cool, wet place to live. With proper care, a pet salamander can live a long time.

**Fascinating Facts**

- In nature, salamanders often live in places where the ground is wet and shady. They may hide under logs or rocks near streams.
- Most salamanders feel moist or slimy.
- The largest salamander is the Japanese giant salamander. It grows to about 5 feet (1.5 meters) long.

The California newt lives in the coastal mountain ranges between San Diego and Mendocino County, California.
Pet Profiles

Many factors will affect the type of salamander you choose as a pet. Some salamanders are aquatic. They live in the water. Other salamanders are terrestrial. They live on land. There are also salamanders that spend time both in the water and on land.

**Tiger Salamander**
- Terrestrial
- Grows to about 12 inches (30 cm) long
- Thick-bodied
- Color is black with yellow stripes or splotches
- Can live as long as 25 years
- Less shy than other salamanders; will eat from a person’s hand

**Fire Salamander**
- Terrestrial
- Grows to about 5 to 12 inches (12 to 30 cm) long
- Color is black with bright yellow or orange spots
- Can live as long as 50 years
- Less shy than other salamanders; may follow their owner

**California Newt**
- Aquatic and terrestrial
- Grows to about 7 inches (18 cm) long
- Long, skinny body
- Color is black to reddish brown
- Lives the first part of its life in water, the second part on land, and the final part in the water