

Pet Care Advice

Caring for your Tortoise

Keeping tortoises in the correct environment and feeding them the correct balance of nutrients is very challenging as they are so reliant on their environment to survive.

This leaflet aims to give you some basic pointers to get your tortoise's nutrition correct.

In the wild, tortoises graze on a wide variety of leafy vegetation. By wandering across a wide area and eating a range of different leaves, tortoises ensure they have the correct balance of essential minerals and trace elements they need for growth and healthy bone development.

No commercially available 'complete tortoise food' is a good substitute for a well-balanced varied diet of fresh leaves and vegetation.

Home-grown leaves and edible weeds are better than bought fruit and vegetables as they have a higher nutrient content.

Always make sure water is available for your tortoise

You can also give a vitamin supplement sprinkled on the food a few times a week. Don't forget other husbandry requirements such as UV light and a ceramic heat lamp.



Plants/edible weeds- these should make up the majority of the diet

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|-----------------|--------------------|
| - Dandelion | - Petunia |
| - Clover | - Geranium |
| - Chickweed | - Wild chicory |
| - Plantain | - Ground elder |
| - Heather | - Oilseed rape |
| - Bindweed | - Teazle |
| - Rose petals | - Violet |
| - Forget-me-not | - Bergamot |
| - Fuschia | - Dalia |
| - Hibiscus | - Evening primrose |
| - Nasturtium | - Hollyhock |
| - Pansies | - Prickly pear |

Vegetables- these should be given in smaller quantities

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|-------------------------|--------------|
| - Cabbage | - Chicory |
| - Spring greens | - Watercress |
| - Carrot | - Chard |
| - Cauliflower | - Kale |
| - Spinach | - Marrow |
| - Cucumber | - Endive |
| - Cress | - Pumpkin |
| - Parsnip | - Courgette |
| - Fennel | - Radicchio |
| - Pak choi | - Rocket |
| - Romaine/lambs lettuce | |

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Fruit- these should be offered only in small amounts + infrequently

- Apple
- Pear
- Tomato
- Grape
- Strawberry
- Blackberries
- Peach
- Melon
- Plum
- Apricot
- Gooseberries

Are there any poisonous plants which I shouldn't feed my tortoise?

- Lupins
- Daffodils
- Foxglove
- Mistletoe
- Rhododendron
- Lily of the valley
- Hydrangea
- Tobacco plant
- Chilli peppers
- Azalea
- Crocus
- Hellebores
- Ragwort
- Peony
- Rhubarb
- Avocado
- Aubergine

(This list is not exhaustive but contains some of the most common plants to avoid)



You should never feed your tortoise any of the following-

- Meat
- Cat or dog food
- Processed food
- Bread/cakes/biscuits

Tortoises are herbivorous and meat or processed food can cause kidney damage.

If you have any concerns about your tortoise's health or appetite, then please do give us a call for some advice.

