

# How To Convince Your Parents You Can... **Care For A Pet Hamster**



Carol Parenzan Smalley



PUBLISHERS

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**A Robbie Reader/How to Convince Your Parents You Can...**

Care for a Kitten	Care for a Pet Mouse
Care for a Pet Bunny	Care for a Pet Parrot
Care for a Pet Chameleon	Care for a Pet Racing Pigeon
Care for a Pet Chimpanzee	Care for a Pet Snake
Care for a Pet Chinchilla	Care for a Pet Sugar Glider
Care for a Pet Ferret	Care for a Pet Tarantula
Care for a Pet Guinea Pig	Care for a Pet Wolfdog
<b>Care for a Pet Hamster</b>	Care for a Potbellied Pig
Care for a Pet Hedgehog	Care for a Puppy
Care for a Pet Horse	Care for a Wild Chincoteague Pony

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Carol Parenzan Smalley thought she wanted a tent for her ninth birthday, until she passed a pet store in the mall. A petite Siamese kitten mewed at her and her dad through the display window. Now, they had to convince Carol's mom that a kitten would be a perfect birthday present. That was 1969, and the Siamese kitten did come home with Carol. She named her Dutchess, and this precious feline loved her and her family for 17 years. Later, two more Siamese kittens came to live with Carol—for 17 and 21 years! Carol knows that owning any pet—whether it's a hamster or a Siamese kitten—takes a lot of time and hard work every day for many years. But if you have the time and patience, a pet can be a wonderful addition to a family.

Today, Carol shares her life in upstate New York with yet two more Siamese kittens. Their names are Junie B. and Amber Brown, for two of her daughter's favorite storybook characters. You can see photos of "the double-trouble girls" at [www.CarolSmalley.com](http://www.CarolSmalley.com).

**PUBLISHER'S NOTE:** The facts on which this story is based have been thoroughly researched. Documentation of such research is on page 29. While every possible effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the publisher will not assume liability for damages caused by inaccuracies in the data, and makes no warranty on the accuracy of the information contained herein.

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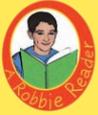
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Words in **bold** type can be found in the glossary.





## Chapter One

# 1



## WHAT'S PEEKING FROM YOUR POCKET?

Would you like a quiet pet that can sleep in your shirt pocket? Would you like to train a small animal? Do you think it would be fun to feed a furry critter from your fingers? If so, a hamster might be the perfect pet for you.

But before you gather your allowance or birthday money to buy a hamster or try to convince your parents that a hamster is the perfect pet, there's much you need to know.

The hamster is a **nocturnal** (nok-TUR-nul) animal that sleeps during the day. It plays, eats, and explores while most animals (including humans) are sleeping at night. It is a petite (puh-TEET) **mammal** that requires a small cage, a quiet place, and limited care. Caring for a hamster can help you learn pet-care responsibilities on a small scale. Your parents won't have to pester you to take care of your pet.





Hamsters are sometimes called “pocket pets.” They like to hide or hang out in pockets. They may hoard, or hide, food in a pocket to eat later!

When you’re in school, your hamster will be home resting. While you’re away, no one needs to take your hamster for a walk or exercise it in your backyard. When your homework is done in the evening, your hamster will be ready to play with you.

At home, you may be able to share hamster-care responsibilities with your siblings. But if you’re an only child, you can care for the hamster yourself. It’s really not that hard and does not take a lot of time.





## fun FACTS

Hamsters are rodents. They belong to the same animal family—Rodentia (roh-DEN-shee-uh)—as mice, rats, guinea pigs, squirrels, porcupines, gophers, and beavers. Unlike your front teeth, a rodent's front teeth—called incisors (in-SY-zerz)—never stop growing. Rodents must chew constantly to keep their incisors trimmed.



Do you live in an apartment that doesn't allow cats and dogs? It may allow hamsters and other small pets.

You should ask yourself: Are there different kinds of hamsters? How long do they live? What do they eat? Can you find hamsters in the wild? What size cage do they need? Do they play with toys? If my hamster gets sick, what will I do? Are they expensive to care for? Do hamsters like to play with other hamsters?

Where can you learn the answers to these questions and much more? Right here! Turn to chapter 2 and meet the subfamily of **rodents** known as Cricetinae (kry-SEE-tih-nay), more commonly called hamsters.



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