

FREE SAMPLE

Ball Python Care Package

The first 4 pages of the 34-page printable manual, free to keep.



In this sample: What's inside, How to Use This Package, Quick Profile & Cost Overview. The contents page shows every one of the 34 pages, so you can see exactly what the full package covers before you buy it.

Not in this sample: the 30 pages that follow, which are the full care guide, the health section, the quick reference cards, and the owner tools, checklists and logs.

The full package is \$8.99 at beastlyfacts.com/care-packages/ball-python/. One purchase, and every corrected edition is a free re-download from your library. The free ball python care guide it was built from is at beastlyfacts.com/guides/ball-python/, and stays free.

CONTENTS

What's inside

Every page is written to be used, not just read once.

GETTING STARTED

How to Use This Package	3
-------------------------	---

SECTION 01 · QUICK PROFILE

Quick Profile & Cost Overview	4
-------------------------------	---

SECTION 02 · FULL CARE GUIDE

Housing & Enclosure	5
Temperature, Humidity & Lighting	6
Thermostats, Probes & Heat Sources	7
Substrate & Furnishings	8
Handling & First Days	9
Diet & Feeding by Age	10
Prey Chart & the Never-Feed List	11
Thawing, Presentation & Refusals	12
Common Mistakes & Enrichment	13
Sexing, Growth & Body Condition	14
Females, Eggs & Egg Binding	15

SECTION 03 · HEALTH & COMMON ISSUES

Health Red Flags & What to Tell the Vet	16
Respiratory Infection & Scale Rot	17
Mouth Rot, Mites & Thermal Burns	18
Parasites, Regurgitation, Obesity & IBD	19
Shedding, Refusal & Defensive Behavior	20
Reading Poop & Keeping a Ball Python Hydrated	21

SECTION 04 · QUICK REFERENCE

Setup Checklist & Targets	22
Emergency & Quick Targets Card	23

SECTION 05 · OWNER TOOLS

Budget & Shopping List	24
First 30 Days Checklist	25
Symptom Quick Reference	26
Daily, Weekly & Seasonal Routine	27
Power Outages, Travel & Transport	28
Pet-Sitter Sheet	29
Owner Log	30
Equipment, Quarantine & Vet Log	31
Enrichment Checklist & Log	32

REFERENCE

Glossary	33
Sources	34
Version History & About	35

START HERE

How to use this package

Three ways to get value from it, depending on where you are right now.

If you haven't set up yet

Read pages 4 through 12 in order before buying anything. Enclosure material, heat control, and humidity are the three decisions that are expensive to redo, and they are the three most often chosen wrong. Get them right the first time, then use the Budget & Shopping List on page 24 to buy once.

If your ball python is already set up

Jump to the Setup Checklist and Targets on page 22 to audit what you have, and the Health Red Flags section starting on page 16 if anything seems off. If the problem is that your snake won't eat, start on page 12 instead: refusal has seven common explanations in this species and only one of them is illness. If any heat source is running without a thermostat, fix that today, before anything else on this list.

Print these first

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Page 21: Setup Checklist & Targets | ☐ Page 28: Pet-Sitter Sheet |
| ☐ Page 22: Emergency & Quick Targets Card | ☐ Page 29: Owner Log |
| ☐ Page 25: Symptom Quick Reference | ☐ Page 30: Equipment, Quarantine & Vet Log |
| ☐ Page 26: Daily, Weekly & Seasonal Routine | ☐ Page 31: Enrichment Checklist & Log |

WHY THIS PACKAGE EXISTS

Ball python husbandry has moved a long way from the small-tub advice that dominated the hobby for years, and from the idea that a snake wants to feel cramped. This package reflects current enclosure-size, humidity, and enrichment standards, including the peer-reviewed housing research on page 13. Cross-checked against veterinary and herpetological sources (listed on page 34), not recycled forum advice. Every temperature and dimension is given in both imperial and metric.

NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR

A reptile veterinarian experienced with ball pythons. This is a husbandry reference for day-to-day care. Anything urgent or health-related is always a professional call, not a page in this book. Find one before you need one and write the number on page 23.

SECTION 01

Quick profile

Everything at a glance before you read the detail.

Scientific name	<i>Python regius</i> , also called the royal python
Adult size	Females 4 to 5 ft (120 to 150 cm), 1,200 to 1,800 g; males 3 to 3.5 ft (90 to 105 cm), 800 to 1,200 g
Captive lifespan	20 to 30 years, with well-documented individuals past 40
Native range	Grassland, open forest, and farmland across West and Central Africa
Diet type	Obligate carnivore. Whole frozen-thawed rodents, no supplementation needed
Enclosure minimum (adult)	4×2×2 ft (120×60×60 cm), about 8 sq ft of floor. Front-opening, PVC preferred
The one hard rule	Every heat source runs through a thermostat. No exceptions (page 7)
Sexual maturity	Males from about 8 to 12 months, females from about 2 to 3 years and by weight, not age
Handling difficulty	Beginner to intermediate. Defensive as juveniles, notably mellow as settled adults
Conservation status	Least Concern (IUCN). Wild populations pressured by decades of collection for the pet trade

Cost overview

Initial setup

\$255 to \$845 for equipment, plus \$50 to \$150 for the first vet exam. The snake itself is \$40 to \$100 for a normal, \$50 to \$150 for a common morph.

Monthly ongoing

\$17 to \$47 for frozen-thawed rodents, substrate, electricity, and the annual exam averaged out. Roughly \$205 to \$565 a year.

BUDGET FOR THE WORST CASE TOO

A sick or emergency visit runs \$100 to \$500 or more, and imaging or surgery pushes that higher. Neither is likely if you follow this package, but a 20 to 30 year animal will need a vet at some point. Set the money aside now rather than deciding in an emergency.

Fun facts worth knowing

- The name comes from the defensive pose, not the diet. A stressed ball python curls into a tight ball with its head tucked in the center, which is why a new snake that won't uncurl isn't being difficult. It just hasn't decided yet that hiding is unnecessary.
- They hunt with heat. Pits along the upper lip detect the body warmth of nearby prey, letting a ball python strike accurately in complete darkness.
- A brooding female generates her own heat. Through shivering thermogenesis she contracts her muscles repeatedly to keep the clutch warmer than the surrounding air, living off fat reserves for months while she does it.