



ROYAL PYTHON

Care Guide

A medium sized Python reaching around 4-5 foot. Also known as "ball pythons" due to their tendency to curl up into a ball.

Genus, Species	Python regius
Adult Size	3-5 feet
Habitat	Rainforest
Lifespan	15-20 Years
Diet	Mice/Rats once a week
Ambient Temp (f)	78
Basking Temp (f)	86-90
Night time Temp (f)	70-78
UVB Zone	2 (UVI 0.7-1)
Humidity (%)	40-50
Locality	Africa
Difficulty	2/5

Health Check (Common issues)

Eyes– check the eyes are clear of infection, discharge or stuck eye caps (these can occur from a dry shed, increase the humidity or place snake on soak periodically until eye caps come off)

Skin– check the skin for black spots or raised scales which can be a sign of mites. Mites can usually be seen around the eye socket and under the chin. Mites can be treated using a number of chemical products or for a natural cure, Taururus predatory mites can be used regularly for prevention and treatment.

Respiratory Infections– RI is a term for a broad spectrum of infections in the lungs and respiratory system. It is generally caused by ill health along with damp or cold conditions and can be treated with a nebuliser. We always recommend seeing the vet if you suspect RI, however it is extremely rare and is not usually the actual cause of the symptoms that are seen.

Housing your snake:

Royal pythons should be kept alone and never with another snake. They can be paired for breeding times but should live alone the rest of the time as they do in the wild. Keeping them together can cause a number of health issues including difficulty feeding. There are a number of wooden, plastic and glass enclosures available for royal pythons. Always purchase an enclosure which is a suitable size for your animal. Plastic or wooden and part glass enclosures are the best as glass alone can make it hard to control temperature. Always use a thermostat with your enclosure to keep temperatures accurate.

Due to their humidity requirements and difficulty shedding their skin, Cypress Mulch makes an excellent substrate for Royal Pythons as it retains humidity but also dries out so it isn't too wet. Provide a large water bowl big enough for your snake to bathe in if it chooses to soak. Depending on the enclosure, you will need a heat mat or bulb/ceramic lamp for your snake in order to provide the required hot spot. Royal pythons benefit from having low level UVB in their enclosure so we advise this where possible. If you are housing your snake in a stater kit, you should ensure that you supply UVB once your snake has moved up to a vivarium. We advise this with all reptiles even if they are nocturnal as it helps to maintain good health and an awareness of daylight hours. The enclosure should have adequate ventilation so that the tank doesn't become humid and mouldy. The substrate can be spot cleaned daily and the enclosure should be fully cleaned and substrate replaced every 4 weeks or sooner.

Handling your snake:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling your snake
- Use a hook to gently stroke the top of your snakes nose to distinguish between handling and feeding times (tap training)
- Pick your snake up from the bottom by scooping it and do not handle the first 3rd of the snakes body where the vital organs are
- Do not handle your snake after eating, always wait at least 48 hours to prevent stress

Sexing your snake:

Male and female snakes may differ between sizes and length of tail, but to get an accurate gender of your snake there are 2 methods available.

1 is to get a set of probes and probe your snake by sliding the probe under the vent towards the tail. If the probe only goes in a small amount then the snake is female, if the snake is male the probe will slide further, this is where the hemipenes are. The other is to 'pop' the snake which involves holding the snakes tail in one hand and gently bending whilst rolling towards the vent with the other hand, exposing the snakes genitals. **Always have your snake sexed by a professional to avoid harm.**

Shopping list:

- Substrate: Bark chips, lignocel, aspen, cypress mulch
- Heat bulb/ceramic/heat mat
- UVB light
- Thermometer, Hygrometer and Thermostat
- Feeding tongs
- A large water bowl that the snake can bathe in
- Hides
- Plants/Décor
- Pet care guide/sheet
- Reptile safe disinfectant

Feeding your snake:

Royal Pythons find their food by using heat pits on the sides of their mouths which sense the warmth of their preys body. Dipping your snakes food item in boiling hot water prior to serving allows them to find the prey and mimics the body temperature of the prey item. Shake boiling water drips on to a piece of kitchen roll before serving. Never use a microwave to heat up your snakes food item.