

# Whimsy's Top Ten No-no's of Chinchilla Ownership



10. No water baths

[10] **Rationale:** Chinchillas come from a high desert biome, meaning there is very limited water in their natural habitat. They keep clean by rolling in a volcanic ash that pulls the dirt and oils from their coats and keeps them powder fresh. Chinchillas are one of the only animals in the world who get clean by rolling in dirt. ;)

9. No Plastic ledges

[9] **Rationale:** Chinchillas explore their environment with their teeth. Plastic ledges are convenient chew things for a bored chin or one who does not have sufficient access to proper chew toys. The plastic can cause an intestinal impaction if ingested, and requires expensive surgery.

8. No bird toys

[8] **Rationale:** Many bird toys are made with items that are dangerous for chins. Leather, stringed or strands of fiber and many hardwoods are not safe for chins for multiple reasons from strangulation, impactions, toxicity, etc.

7. No temperatures over 75°F

[7 + 6] **Rationale:** Chins are born with fur coats meant to keep them warm in frigid mountainous temperatures. A plastic exercise ball acts as a mini green house and can very quickly overheat your chin. This causes rapid heatstroke, brain damage and death. Even a minute's play is too long. A home temperature above 75 degrees is dangerously hot for chinchillas.

6. No plastic exercise ball

[5] **Rationale:** Paper-based bedding is not only more expensive than the natural alternatives, but swells up in the stomach and intestines if consumed. Again, chins explore everything with their teeth. Ingestion of paper based products requires surgery if an impaction occurs.

5. No paper-based bedding

[4] **Rationale:** Cedar bedding is toxic to chins (and many other caged pets).

4. No cedar bedding

[3 + 2 + 1] **Rationale:** A chinchilla's natural habitat is one that produces very bland vegetation. Chin digestive systems are designed for high fiber, low protein, no fat, no sugar foods. Fresh vegetables are too rich and cause gas buildup. Chins cannot pass gas and literally blow up from the inside out; a condition called bloat. Chinchillas do not have a gallbladder and therefore cannot process fats. High fat foods lead to fatty liver disease. Chinchillas love dried fruits, but their bodies are not equipped to handle the sugars. The addition of fruits, even dried, can significantly shorten your pet's life and/or contribute to tooth issues such as abscesses and malocclusion.

3. No fresh vegetables

2. No nuts/seeds

1. No Fruits

