

Quick guide for new RES keepers

Aquarium tank

Your turtle will require a tank large enough to house a filter, heater, basking area, UVA bulb and UVB light. An easy guideline to remember is 10 gallons of tank per inch of shell length. Plastic storage containers work well in this situation. Water depth, at a minimum, should be higher than your turtle's total length.

Water conditioner and filter

Tap water may contain chlorine and chloramine, which can irritate your turtle's eyes and skin. In addition, chloramine could harm any biological filter media. Consider using a water conditioner to remove and neutralize these and other contaminants.

Water changes will be required at least every 2 days if a water filter is not present. A water filter will reduce the amount of water changes necessary and the frequency will depend on the filter strength and media..

Water temperatures

A water heater is absolutely critical for sliders. Water temperatures should be approximately 78 degrees Fahrenheit for hatchlings and 75 degrees for yearlings. Water that is too cold may make your turtle lethargic with a refusal to eat.

Basking

Sliders need to bask. By drying off and absorbing warmth, they can prevent shell diseases and increase digestive and immune system efficiency. There are many pre-made basking areas, and keep in mind your turtle will probably require privacy when basking. A UVA bulb, such as a regular light bulb, is sufficient in providing the necessary heat to entice basking. Read below for additional information.

UVA

Standard household incandescent light bulbs can provide enough heat for basking. Caution must be taken so that these bulbs do not get wet. Special ceramic bulbs that emit no light are also available. Basking area temperatures should be around 85–95 degrees Fahrenheit, approximately 10 degrees warmer than water temperatures.

UVB

UVB rays are the metabolization into vitamin D3 which processes calcium. A special florescent bulb is required, and there should be no interference between the UVB bulb and your slider. Glass, plastic and water can obstruct these rays. Unfiltered sunlight is the strongest source of UVB. They UVB light should be exactly positioned over the area where your turtle chooses to bask.

Diet & Nutrition

Your turtle should be fed the amount of pellets that would fit inside its head. Hatchlings should be fed daily and older turtles every other day. Vegetables, such as Romaine, Red leaf and Green leaf lettuce, can be used daily. Read the Nutrition section on the website for more info.

Other notes

- 1 – If your turtle is under 4", you will not be able to tell the gender.
- 2 – Sliders need to be in water to swallow and eat. They may attempt to bite hands in or near water.
- 3 – Sliders move fast and blend into their surroundings well. Always keep an eye on them.
- 4 – High water levels or basking areas may provide a way for a slider to accidentally escape.
- 5 – Never release captive animals into the wild. Leave wild animals alone, unless they need help.
- 6 – Other pets, especially dogs, have injured many turtles. Keep them separate at all times.