



## Horsfield's Tortoise Care Sheet

**Species Name:**

*Testudo horsfieldii*

**Adult Size:**

15-20 cm

**Lifespan:**

60-70 Years

**Breeding Age:**

12 Years



Horsfield's tortoises, also known as Russian tortoises (*Agrionemys horsfieldii*), are small, hardy reptiles native to the arid regions of Central Asia, including countries like Russia, Iran, and Afghanistan. They are characterised by their rounded, domed shells with a distinct yellow-brown colouration and dark markings. Adults typically grow to about 6-10 inches in length. These tortoises are known for their ability to endure extreme temperatures and periods of drought by burrowing underground to escape harsh conditions. In captivity, they require a spacious, well-ventilated enclosure with a substrate that allows for digging, a basking spot, and a diet rich in leafy greens and vegetables. Horsfield's tortoises are popular pets due to their manageable size, docile nature, and relatively straightforward care requirements. However, their long lifespan, which can exceed 50 years, necessitates a long-term commitment from their keepers.

## **Housing:**

**Enclosure:** Provide a spacious enclosure to allow your tortoise to manoeuvre. Ideally a wooden vivarium or tortoise table up to 4ft.

**Substrate:** Dry substrates such as sand or soil can be used to mimic the tortoise's natural environment, always use reptile-safe sand, ingestion of sand can cause impaction, most reptile sands are designed to be digestible in small amounts.

## **Temperature:**

Maintain a basking spot temperature of 32°C.

Provide a gradient, with the cooler side around 22-25°C.

Use a heat source like a basking light and a heat mat for heating.

Night time temperatures can drop to 18-23°C.

## **Lighting:**

Provide a UVB light source (10-12%) for at least 10-12 hours a day to support calcium metabolism and overall health.

## **Diet:**

**Feeding:** Offer a varied diet of leafy greens, vegetables, and fruits. They will also eat commercial tortoise pellets.

**Supplements:** Dust food with calcium and vitamin supplements 2-3 times a week.



## **Humidity and Hydration:**

A humidity of 40-60% should be maintained.

Provide a shallow dish for drinking water and bathing. Tortoises can get very messy! Feel free to take them out of their vivarium and bathe them yourself, make sure the bath water only goes up to the base of the shell and don't use any soaps. Scrub the shell gently to avoid any damage.

## **Enrichment and Handling:**

Place hiding spots, rocks, and branches for climbing to create a stimulating environment.

Provide a secure hide for them to retreat and feel safe.

## **Health Considerations:**

Regularly monitor for signs of illness, such as lethargy, changes in appetite, or difficulty shedding.

Quarantine new reptiles before introducing them to existing enclosures.

Remember that the care requirements for Horsefield's Tortoise may vary slightly based on individual needs, so observe your reptiles behaviour and make adjustments accordingly. Always prioritise the well-being and health of your pet by providing a well-maintained and enriched environment.