



## Isopod Care Sheet

**Species Name:**

*Malacostraca*

**Adult Size:**

1.5cm

**Lifespan:**

1-2 years

**Breeding Age:**

1-2 months



Isopods, also known as woodlice or pill bugs, are fascinating additions to terrarium ecosystems. These small crustaceans play a vital role in maintaining the terrarium's balance by scavenging on decaying matter, helping with nutrient cycling. Isopods thrive in moist environments with ample hiding spots, making terrariums ideal habitats. Their diverse colours and patterns add visual interest to the terrarium, enhancing its aesthetic appeal. Furthermore, isopods serve as natural cleaners, keeping the terrarium free of mould and fungi. Their presence creates a dynamic microcosm, promoting a healthier environment for plants and other terrarium inhabitants while offering enthusiasts an opportunity to observe nature up close.

## Housing:

**Enclosure:** isopods pair very well with other animals in bio-active terrariums, alternately if you wish to house them alone, plastic tubs and boxes with ample ventilation work as well.

**Substrate:** Using a substrate that retains moisture is important for most species, ideally a mix of orchid bark and a loose substrate like coconut coir or moss.

## Temperature:

Provide a temperature gradient to allow your isopods to thermoregulate. The warm end of the enclosure should be 25°C with the cooler side of the terrarium being 18°C.

Use a heat source like a ceramic lamp or a heat mat for heating.

Night time temperatures can drop to 15-21°C.

## Lighting:

Stick Insects do not require UVB lighting to survive, however they will benefit from a 10-12-hour day/night cycle.

## Diet:

**Feeding:** isopods are detritivores, meaning they will feed on waste matter in the enclosure they are housed in, this is why they pair so well with other animals.



## **Humidity and Hydration:**

A humidity of 30-70% should be maintained.

Provide a shallow dish for drinking water or a dish with bug gel to allow the isopods to drink droplets from the surface. Mist the enclosure occasionally to maintain humidity levels.

## **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 animals before introducing them to existing enclosures.

Remember that the care requirements for isopods may vary slightly based on individual needs and species, so observe your animals behaviour and make adjustments accordingly. Always prioritize the well-being and health of your pet by providing a well-maintained and enriched environment.