



Sulcata Tortoise Care Sheet

Species Name:

Centrochelys sulcata

Adult Size:

75cm+

Lifespan:

60-70 Years

Breeding Age:

5-10 Years



The sulcata tortoise (*Geochelone sulcata*), also known as the African spurred tortoise, is the third largest species of tortoise in the world and the largest mainland tortoise. Adults typically measure 75cm+ in length and can weigh 100-200 pounds, with males being larger than females. Sulcata tortoises are native to the southern edge of the Sahara Desert in northern Africa. They are well-adapted to hot, arid environments, digging burrows up to 10 feet underground to escape extreme heat. Their diet consists primarily of grasses, leaves, and other vegetation high in fibre but low in protein. These tortoises are long-lived, with lifespans of 50-150 years or more in captivity.

Housing:

Enclosure: Provide a spacious enclosure to allow your tortoise to manoeuvre. Ideally a wooden vivarium or tortoise table up to 4ft while they are young however, be prepared to expand as they grow!

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 35-40°C.

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

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

Night time temperatures can drop to 20-23°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 40-50% 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 African Spur Thighs may vary slightly based on individual needs, so observe your reptiles behaviour and make adjustments accordingly. Always prioritize the well-being and health of your pet by providing a well-maintained and enriched environment.