



# Ball Python



**Origin:** Sub-Saharan Africa

**Size:** Females: 3-6ft, Males: 2-4ft

**Life Span:** 30+ years with proper care

## Heat and Lighting:

- Daytime basking area 87-95 F on one side. Cool side 75 F
- Night temperatures should range between 75-80 F
- Can provide 8-12 hours of white light daily to raise temperatures during the day and provide a day/night cycle.
- A red heat lamp or ceramic heat emitter on top of the screen can be used at all times to provide heat. A heat mat may not penetrate the substrate enough to raise temperatures.

## Tank setup:

- A 10 gallon is recommended to start; upgrade your tank size as the snake grows
- Use a moisture-holding substrate such as coco husk or forest floor bedding
- Hiding areas are particularly important as ball pythons like to curl up in safe spaces; use bark logs, cork board, or other hides
- Provide a hide box filled with moist moss to assist with shedding properly

## Water and Humidity:

- Water should be available at all times, and cleaned regularly.
- Ball pythons prefer higher humidity-50%-60%: provide a moist hide box, use a moisture-holding substrate, and always provide fresh water

## Temperament & Handling:

- Ball pythons can be shy and you will need to establish trust between you and your snake
- Give your snake some time to settle in before handling
- Handle your snake calmly and confidently so that he/she feel safe

## Diet:

- Feed hatchlings and juveniles once per week; adolescents and adults can be feed less often
- Ball pythons happily eat thawed (previously frozen) mice. Soak a mouse in hot tap water (never boiling) until soft
- Simply hold the mouse with tongs in front of the head of the snake, shaking gentle until it strikes and grabs the rodent. Never jerk the food away
- Avoid handling (besides moving back to tank) after feeding for at least 24 hours

## Recommended Feeding Size and Schedule

| Weight of Ball Python in gm | Feed Size in gm | Feed Type                      | Feed Frequency     |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Hatchling-99                | 9 to <13        | Large Fuzzy or Hopper mice     | Every 5 to 7 days  |
| 100 to <200                 | 13 to <21       | Small rat pups or weaning mice | Every 5 to 7 days  |
| 200 to <350                 | 21 to <31       | Rat pups, fuzzy mice           | Every 5 to 7 days  |
| 350 to <500                 | 31 to <46       | Weanling rat                   | Every 7 days       |
| 500 to <800                 | 46 to <80       | Small rat                      | Every 7 days       |
| 800 to <1500                | 80 to <150      | Medium rat                     | Every 7 to 10 days |
| 1500 to <2500               | 150 to <266     | Large rat                      | Every 7 to 14 days |
| 2499 to above               | 266 to 360      | XL or large rat                | Every 14 days      |

Source: ballpythonguide.com

**Shedding:** As your snake gets ready to shed, their eyes will turn a milky blue/gray and their skin will dull in color and develop a whitish sheen. Avoid handling if possible during this time.