



Russian Tortoise

Origin: Central Asia

Size: 6-10 inches

Life Span: 40 years

Heat and Lighting:

- A UVB bulb is necessary to prevent metabolic bone disease
- Enclosure should be 68-80 F during the day with a basking spot of 90-95 F
- Basking light can be turned off at night and night time temperature can drop as low as 65 F



Tank setup:

- Minimum 2 ft x 4ft enclosure should be used. A plastic bin, stock tank, or even a plastic pool will work. Bigger is always better and you can also build your own. It should be at least 18 inches high to prevent escapes.
- A natural substrate such as coconut fiber/play and mix works well. Organic peat moss can also be used as long as it does not become dry and dusty
- Substrate should be damp but not wet

Diet:

- Russian tortoises are herbivores
- Offer a variety of green such as spring salad mix, kale, collard greens, turnip greens, dandelion greens, and dark lettuces (not iceberg)
- Sprinkle greens with calcium powder 2-3 times per week
- Fruits such as berries or apples can be offered once per week as a treat

Water and Humidity:

- A shallow water dish works well as it allows them to climb in and out
- Clean water dish often as they tend to soak, drink, and poop at the same time
- Soak your tortoise as least once per week for 15-20 minutes in chin-deep water

Temperament:

- Generally docile but they can bite if they are surprised. Pick them with their tail towards you, just in case
- They will recognize you and interact with you but they generally do not like to be held or cuddled