



Repxotics  
Unit 3 Fosse Lane Trading Estate  
Shepton Mallet  
Somerset  
BA4 4PW

**CONTACT:** 01749 937340  
**EMAIL:** repxotics@hotmail.co.uk

## INTRODUCTION

This care sheet covers all the basics to get you going with one of the most popular pets in the reptile hobby: Bearded dragons!

These animals originated from Australia where there is still a prevalent wild population, though all the ones you see in the UK are captive bred.

This species come in a wide arrange of colours and patterns known as morphs, and the morphs available in the hobby are ever-evolving.

Even though these reptiles are one of the most popularly kept pets in the hobby, unfortunately this also means they're more often than not, set up incorrectly. Its always best to go right for a lifetime kit, which does seem expensive at first, but it works out more expensive in the long run if corners are cut.

These animals have a 10-13 year life span and it's important to keep them happy and healthy throughout their lives, they're extremely charismatic and known to rarely show aggression, super easy to handle and forgiving to beginner mistakes. The important thing to do before buying a reptile is to do extensive research to make sure the animal fits into your lifestyle and you have the facilities for the long-term commitment

## HUMIDITY

General humidity for Bearded Dragons should be in the ranges of 20%-40%, they should never have consistent exposure over 60%, short term humidity exposure (i.e. when substrate is changed) will not cause lasting respiratory issues.

# BEARDED DRAGON

*Pogona vitticeps*



## HOUSING

**The minimum adult enclosure size for bearded dragons is: Length 4ft x Depth 2ft x Height 2ft (48" x 24" x 24") The most popular vivarium of this size is the Vivexotic AAL Bearded Dragon Vivarium.**

This in no way means that you can't go bigger if you have the space, bearded dragons can be quite active and would further be enriched by more space.

Bearded Dragons grow extremely fast and most reach their maximum size at 18 months old, because of this we advise against buying anything smaller than a 4'x2'x2', doing so would work out more expensive for you and negatively affect the animal as it is much harder to achieve the necessary temperature gradient that bearded dragons require in a smaller vivarium,

## LIGHTING & EQUIPMENT

Bearded dragons are fully diurnal animals, which means in the wild they would spend 90% of their day out in the sun soaking up the heat and UV. Because of this, bearded dragons do not need a 'dark end' of the enclosure like some animals require, you can just provide a few hides and use décor to give them the option for shade. Bearded dragons need a Day/Night cycle of 10-12hrs so all lighting must be turned off at night.

We recommend a T5 39w 12%/Zone 3 or 14% UVB strip light for 4'x2'x2' vivarium's, if going bigger the light would also need be upsized depending on the vivarium. These bulbs are popularly available in 2 brands – Arcadia ProT5 kits or Reptile Systems ECO Units.

Bearded dragons have multiple spectrum needs, so if you wanted to more replicate their natural behavior and light up your vivarium a little more, adding supplementary light such as LED strip lights (i.e. White Python Daylight White) is beneficial to the animal.

## HEATING

Any heat source you use for your bearded dragon must be thermostatically controlled to avoid harming your animal. The basking area (spot directly under the bulb) for a bearded dragon should be ranging between 40°-42°celcius, you can control this with a dimming thermostat. Because of their spectrum needs and the way they absorb heat (from above) their heat source must be a basking bulb and not a ceramic heat emitter or a heat mat.

The best way to measure your temperatures is with an infrared thermometer, which lets you check the temperatures across the tank; however, a standard digital thermometer will do the trick for just measuring the basking spot.

We recommend a 150w Heat lamp in a 4'x2'x2' vivarium controlled by either a microclimate or habistat dimming thermostat, alternatively you can use an Evo or Day/night thermostat to automate all aspects of your heating providing they have a dimming function

In most houses, additional heating at night is not required, however if your house regularly drops below 16°C at night you may need to look into nighttime heating such as CHEs on a separate pulse stat.

## DIET & FEEDING ROUTINE

---

**Bearded dragons are omnivorous, a general rule with bearded dragons is when they're young their feeding ratio should be 60% Live and 40% Greens, this ratio is flipped when they mature to 40% Live and 60% Greens.**

### Live Feeding

Bearded dragons can thrive on a majority of different live foods, the most popular ones are Crickets, Locusts & Dubia roaches.

Young bearded dragons should be offered livefood twice a day if they're under 6 months old, after that it can be reduced to once a day. When a bearded dragon matures (Approx. 18 months) you can reduce their live feeding to once every other day. You should be offering your animal as much as it wants to eat in the space of 15 minutes.

### Salad/Vegetation

Bearded dragons should be offered greens at every stage in life, we give bearded dragons access to salad 24 hours after they hatch. This daily salad is continued throughout their lives. We offer a variety of foods such as: Black Kale, Spring Greens, Rocket, Lambs Lettuce, Watercress, Opuntia Cactus, butternut squash, bell peppers, etc. It is important to avoid greens that bind calcium such as: Spinach & Curly Kale

### Treats

Treat food should be offered in moderation and no more than once a week due to their low nutritional value, popular treats for bearded dragons are Morio Worms, Wax Worms, Fruit Beetle Grubs & Fruit. These items should be carefully monitored and some have high fat content and high sugar content. Over-feeding of these treat foods can lead to an obese animal which can cause various health problems. Worms of any kind should not be fed as a staple diet to bearded dragons.

### Supplementation

All food that you're giving to your bearded dragon should have the appropriate supplementation for that feed, be it the multi-vitamin or the calcium. There are multiple brands of both but the most popular are Arcadia Earth Pro-A, Calcium Pro-MG, Vetark Nutrobal, ZooMed Calcium without D3, ZooMed Reptivite, any combination of a calcium/multivitamin is fine as long as you follow the correct schedule. Our recommended schedule is:

**Days 1 & 2** – Calcium supplement (ProMg or branded Calcium)

**Day 3** – Multivitamin (Pro-A, Reptivite, Nutrobal, or another branded reptile Multivitamin)

**Day 4 & 5** – Calcium supplement

**Day 6** – Multivitamin

**Day 7** – Calcium Supplement (with D3 for younger/deficient reptiles, additional D3 should be offered no more than once a week as it can be overdosed)

[thebeardeddragon.org](http://thebeardeddragon.org) is a great resource for more information on their diet.

## DÉCOR & SUBSTRATE

---

### Decor

Bearded dragons primarily need décor for health and enrichment purposes. They need to have a raised area below their basking spot to bring them closer to the heat, and branches/landscaping to climb on to help keep them fit and healthy and to prevent any muscle problems. You can also add fake plants/cactus to help create shaded areas.

### Substrate

Loose substrate has been a taboo subject for a long time in the hobby due to the risks on impaction, however that has since been proved to be false, although substrate is a common cause of impaction, it is only a risk if the animal's husbandry is incorrect. We recommend Pro Rep Beardie life or similar reptile-branded clay-base sand substrates. These substrates are made to almost replicate the natural terrain these reptiles would be on in the wild, safe use of loose substrate will enrich and improve the life of your reptile.

Always avoid using Calci-sand or any type of 'Calcium enriched' sand or other substrate. This is not safe for reptiles as it encourages them to each substrate. We also recommend avoiding wood-chip style substrates as they're not appropriate for use with bearded dragons.

Other substrate options include: Repti-Carpet, Newspaper, or Lino. If using any of these you must spot clean daily to prevent bacteria growth.