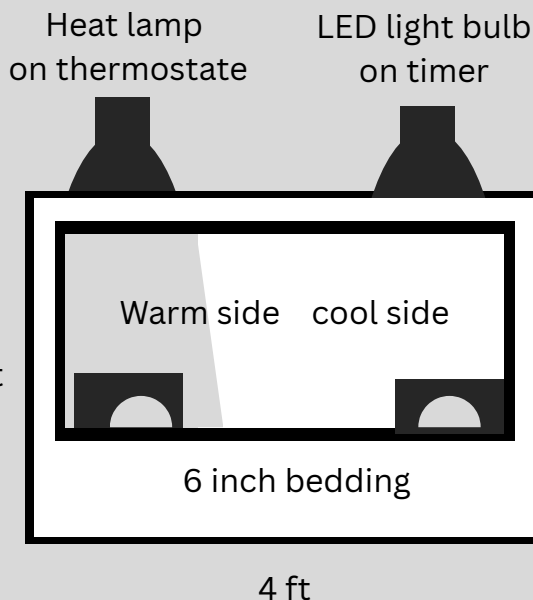


Gopher snake Care guide

For an adult gopher snake, I recommend at least a 4x2x2 enclosure, but bigger is always better. Gopher snakes are active and like to explore and burrow, so give them plenty of room to move around. I recommend having:

A warm hide, A cool hide, Several other hiding spots, Branches, logs, and cork bark, Things to climb over and explore, Deep substrate for burrowing, and a water bowl large enough for the snake to completely curl up inside.

The enclosure should be secure because gopher snakes are strong and very good at finding ways out.



Enclosure

Heating and Temperature

I recommend using a heat bulb that produces no visible light and connecting it to a thermostat to keep heat within safe range. Put the heat source on one side of the enclosure instead of heating the whole thing. This gives the snake a temperature gradient so it can regulate its own temperature by moving between the warm and cool areas.

Temperatures:

Basking area: 85–90°F

Warm side: 80–85°F

Cool side: 70–75°F

Always use a thermostat with your heat source. and keep it around 3-5 inches away from your heat source for more accurate temperature regulation.

Lighting

Use a separate LED light on a timer for the day/night cycle.

Around 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness is a good starting point.

Low-level UVB is recommended because it can provide additional benefits, even though gopher snakes can survive without it when properly cared for.

A Comprehensive Guide

Handling
Gopher snakes can be dramatic when scared. They may hiss, flatten their head, vibrate their tail, strike, or musk. This is defensive behavior and doesn't mean the snake is naturally aggressive. Handle calmly and support the snake's body rather than restraining its head. After feeding, leave the snake alone for about 48-72 hours to allow it to digest its meal and reduce the chance of regurgitation.

Quick Setup
Enclosure: 4x2x2 minimum for many adults, bigger recommended
Heat: Lightless heat bulb
Thermostat: Yes
Basking: 85-90°F
Warm: 80-85°F
Cool: 70-75°F
Humidity: 30-50%
Lighting: LED on timer
UVB: Recommended
Water: Large enough to curl up in
Substrate: Deep and burrowable
Food: Mice and rats, with appropriately sized quail/poultry for variety
Cohabitation: No
Temperature regulation: Give the snake a gradient and let it choose where it needs to be

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Feeding
Gopher snakes naturally eat rodents, rabbits, birds, eggs, lizards, and other small animals. For captive snakes, frozen/thawed rodents should make up the majority of their diet. Good prey choices include:
Mice, Rats, Quail or other appropriately sized poultry for occasional variety

Prey size: Choose prey that creates a small, noticeable lump after being eaten. Don't routinely offer prey that is excessively large.

Feeding schedule:
• Hatchlings/juveniles: every 5-7 days
• Growing snakes: every 7-10 days
• Adults: every 10-14 days
Adjust the schedule based on the snake's body condition and growth rather than blindly following a calendar.
Never feed wild-caught prey because of the risk of parasites, disease, pesticides, and other contaminants.

Humidity

Gopher snakes generally do well with relatively low humidity. Aim for around 30-50% humidity. They don't need a constantly wet enclosure. A humid hide can be provided when needed, especially during shedding. a good way to keep track of the humidity in the tank is with a Geovue Thermostat and Hydrometer.

Substrate

Gopher snakes naturally spend time burrowing, so give them deep, burrowable substrate.

Good options include:

- Aspen
- Soil-based mixes
- Naturalistic arid substrate
- Other appropriate dry, burrowable substrates

Give them enough depth that they can actually dig and make tunnels.

I personally use a mix of coco husk,

sphagnum moss and coco fiber. the specific mixture of each part can vary depending on the humidity of your home.