

Green Iguana Care: Adults (greater than one year of age)

I. Heat and UVB requirements.

A. Heating

1. A temperature gradient of 70-95 degrees Fahrenheit should be maintained with cooler areas of 70 and 95 at the basking spot.
2. No 'hot rocks' are to be used with green iguanas due to the risk of thermal burns.
3. Daytime temperatures can be maintained by use of regular incandescent bulbs or ceramic heat emitters (ceramic heat emitters require porcelain fixtures)
4. Nighttime temperatures can be maintained by use of black or red 'night lights' and/or human heating pad or reptile pad (**under** the enclosure or carpet substrate).
5. Green iguanas require a daytime/nighttime cycle: bright bulbs on during the day and black or red bulbs at night.

B. UVB

1. A UVB source is mandatory for all green iguanas and should be changed every 6-8 months.
2. The UVB source should be placed no further than 14 inches from iguana.

II. Housing & Habitat

A. Space

1. An adult iguana can grow as large as 6 feet in length and weigh as much as 20lbs, therefore, for proper thermoregulation, it is imperative that the enclosure be twice the iguana's size in length and at least 1 ½ times it's length in height.
2. The enclosure should be made of a sturdy frame with no "chicken wire" or any similar wire used. Plastic-coated wire mesh is suggested if wire is to be used, or Plexiglas is a good alternative.
3. Adult iguanas should **NOT** be housed together to prevent injuries caused by aggression and territorial behaviors.

B. Substrate

1. Indoor/outdoor carpeting, newspaper, tile or linoleum is preferred. Bark, pine, cedar or other wood chips should not be permitted as they are dangerous to the iguana's intestinal health (easily cause impactions and death).
2. Substrate should be cleaned or changed daily, or if housing multiple iglets, twice daily.

C. Decorations

1. Strong climbing apparatuses should be present to allow for thermoregulation (regulating temperature by varying distance from the heat source).
2. Artificial plants are not suggested as they are easily mistaken for food and can cause serious health problems if ingested.
3. Several shelves are recommended for various areas of basking.

III. Food and Feeding

A. Size of food

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1. Bite-sized pieces (no larger than the iguana's head) of greens should be available at all times. "Stems" from greens should not be included as they can present choking hazards.

B. Types of food

1. **Greens** (should be the bulk of the iguana's diet)
 - a. Suggested types: collard greens, mustard greens, dandelion greens, turnip greens, and arugula
 - b. Variety is important (a mix of the above recommended greens) to ensure nutritional needs and proper calcium/phosphorus ratio.
2. **Fruits** (aid in digestion and bowel health)
 - a. suggested types: banana, mango, grapes berries and figs
3. **Inappropriate foods**
 - a. Animal protein is not suitable for the green iguana and can cause irreversible damage to vital organs - this includes cat food, dog food, dairy and any other animal-based products.

C. Water

1. Iguanas are dew-lapping animals that require a supply of fresh water at all times.
2. Misting greens with water prior to feeding aids in keeping the iguana properly hydrated.
3. Misting the iguana with a fine spray bottle several times a day helps maintain proper humidity, aids in shedding and helps maintain kidney health.

Additional Resources

NC Iguana Rescue Association – www.iguana-rescue.com

Melissa Kaplan's Herp & Iguana Care Information Collection - a comprehensive source for iguana health, care and diseases - www.anapsid.org

Anna's green iguana web site - a great source of up-to-date information to help your iguana thrive! - www.myiguana.com

The Iguana Den - iguana care & feeding; home of the IguanaDen diet - www.iguanaden.com