

Please read this entire file! Once you're done, there's a printable "Quick Care Guide" at the end for easy future reference:

General Care Sheet for Leopard Geckos

Before Getting a Leo

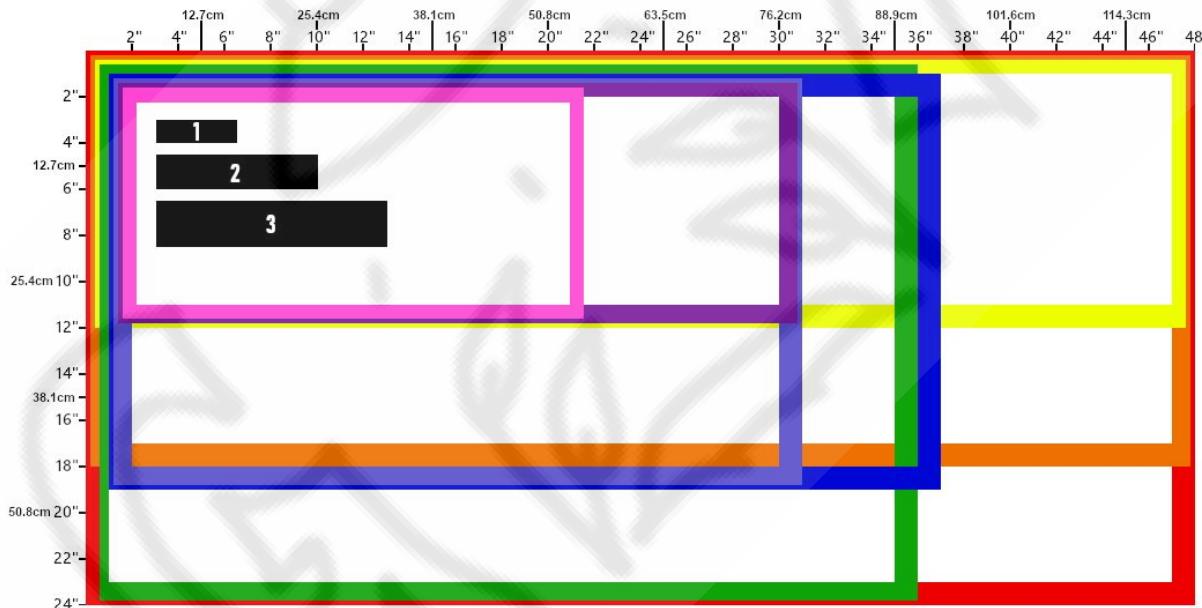
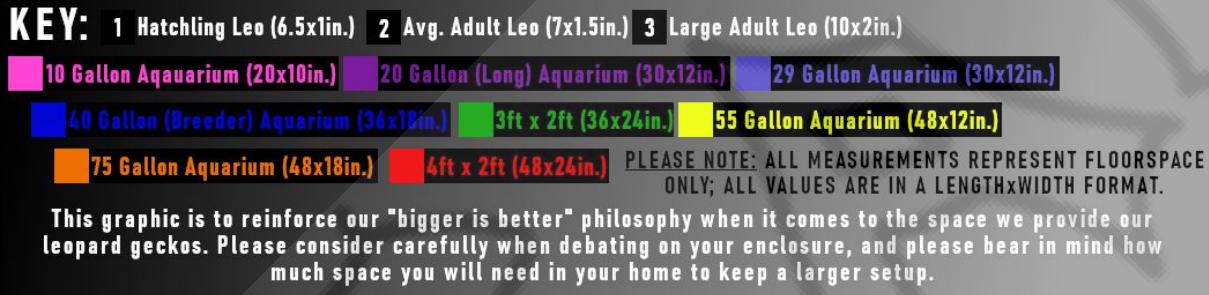
- Make sure to do lots and lots of research! Also make sure to find a local, reputable exotic vet, so you know where to go in case of an emergency, as well as for yearly fecals (parasite checks).
- Keep in mind that getting a leo brings a lot of responsibility. They easily live 15-20+ years. Are you able to afford a good 20 years of live feeders, possible vet bills and all the energy needed for heat, lighting, etc? Do you have enough room for a properly sized enclosure and housing for the insects? Is your partner, roommate, landlord, etc. okay with you getting one, as well as having to keep live insects?
- You should have a rough idea of possible health issues as well as know the difference between a healthy and a sick leo (check out the files "Where to get a leo" and "Health issues" for more details) so you not only can identify possible issues but also ensure you're bringing home a healthy leo.
- If you decide to get a leo from a breeder, make sure the breeder is reliable. Ask lots of questions on age, diet, sex, temperament, etc; good breeders will be willing to answer these questions for you, and **good breeders will always be able to tell you the morph and parentage of their leopard geckos**. It would be great if they even let you see the setups they use, either via photos or even in person if possible, so you know exactly where your future leo is coming from. Many breeders use rack systems, ideally it would be great to find a breeder who doesn't (meaning they offer above and beyond care in larger setups), or at least find breeders who use large, well "decorated" rack setups if that's your only option and you trust the breeder in question. While rack systems are less than ideal, many breeders who use them still produce amazing, healthy leopard geckos. **Please remember, leopard geckos with an unknown morph/parentage, whether from a breeder or pet store, cannot be visually labeled as any morph, and should be considered "pet quality". Only the original breeder can confirm morph/parentage and they should be extremely confident when doing so.**
- New leopard geckos should always go through "quarantine", a period in which they should be kept in a setup that's as clean as possible and their health should be monitored. Quarantine should last 3 months, testing for crypto every month of quarantine to ensure they are not a carrier of this deadly, incurable, and incredibly common parasite. It's ideal to have your quarantine setup separate from your final setup, so you have time over the span of quarantine to properly set up an ideal, long-term habitat that replicates their natural habitat.

**THE REST OF THIS GUIDE IS FOR YOUR FINAL SETUP.
PLEASE SEE THE QUARANTINE FILE FOR YOUR FIRST SETUP.**

Enclosure

Size: The **bare minimum** enclosure size for a single adult leopard gecko is roughly 90cm Long x 45cm Wide x 45cm Tall / 36in Long x 18in Wide x 18in Tall. Bigger is better! In terms of glass aquariums, bare minimum would be a 40 gallon breeder.

LGIAH Comparing Tank Sizes (To Scale)



Larger enclosures offer your leo so many benefits, such as more options for hiding, more enrichment & stimulation, more opportunities to climb and exercise, and overall improved wellbeing. The only downside to large enclosures is that you'll need more decor, but having more items can be a fun experience to set up for your leo. **Leopard geckos will only be stressed in larger enclosures if they are too bare/open, the wild is full of hiding places & shade.**

Created by Jessica Gordon Puglisi

Place: When deciding where your enclosure is going to go inside your home, make sure it's **not** directly in front of a window—sun coming through the glass of the window and then the glass of the enclosure intensifies the heat of that sunlight, causing a greenhouse effect that will raise the temperatures inside the enclosure dangerously if not fatally high. It's also ideal not to place the enclosure directly on the floor to prevent drafts. Your enclosure should also go somewhere quiet, like a low-traffic area of your

home or designated room, so electronics, children, guests, and/or other pets are less likely to disturb and stress your leo. If you do have young children, ensure they cannot get into the enclosure unsupervised; investing in a lock for the tank can be the simplest solution. If you have uncaged pets, especially cats, ensure they cannot get too close to or on top of the enclosure to avoid accidents and/or stressing the leo.

Material: Enclosures can be made out of many materials, and all have pros and cons:

Wood - Most wooden enclosures are front-opening, which helps to stress your leo less when you go to reach inside and makes it easier for you to do maintenance or handle your leo. They are also very good at holding heat and humidity inside the enclosure. It's also opaque (non-see-through) on every side but the front, helping your leo feel safer. It's easy to install lighting and heating when using wood, as well as create fake-rock backgrounds out of foam for your leo to climb on. Downfalls of wood are that they can sometimes be hard to find pre-made, especially at a reasonable price, and that these would have to be waterproofed if you ever decided to go bioactive (see below). They can also be very heavy, but they're very sturdy!



Glass (Aquarium) - Glass allows for easy viewing, but this is typically not that great for the animal, as they can feel exposed with open walls. The biggest upside to aquariums is they're typically the easiest and cheapest to find in the US, but they come with a lot of drawbacks. Glass isn't good at holding heat, but it can be decent at holding humidity. Typically your heating equipment will have to work harder in a glass enclosure, and they have poor ventilation. Aquariums are also only accessible from the top, making it harder to get into the tank, and when approaching your leo it can scare them when reaching toward them from above like a predator would. If using a glass aquarium, you will also have to purchase a mesh tank lid, and we recommend covering the **inside** back and side walls with some kind of paper (construction, cardstock, printer, etc.) or an aquarium/reptile "backdrop". You can also make foam backgrounds in aquariums to help cover the walls and offer your leo somewhere to climb, but it can make getting into the tank harder. It's also extremely difficult to mount lighting inside an aquarium. Glass is also heavy and very fragile.



Glass (Vivarium) - What we're referring to here is glass Exo Terra enclosures, or similar ones made by competitors such as Zilla and Zen Habitats. These are great for being front-opening, making your life as well as the leo's easier, but again, glass unfortunately doesn't hold heat well. If you don't mind needing to use a little extra



electricity, these can still make great enclosures! These are also great for adding a fake backdrop, especially because the mesh-top is usually removable, and makes using UVB and dome lamps for heat easy! But if you had to mount a UVB light inside the enclosure, it can be difficult in a front-opening glass enclosure. Once again, without a fake backdrop you'll want to cover the walls! Once again, these can be heavy and very fragile.

Melamine - This is typically a less common material, but can work well. It's essentially the same as wood, but the downside is it's basically particle-board coated in a layer of PVC, so if the particle board inside ever gets wet it will disintegrate. This can be avoided by sealing all of the seams inside the enclosure with GE1 All Purpose Silicone or Aquarium Silicone. The biggest downfall of this material is that it's the heaviest of all these options, but does offer all the same benefits as wood, plus it's fully waterproofed after sealing only the seams.



PVC - Arguably the newest material used for building reptile enclosures, it offers all the same benefits of wood and melamine combined, plus some. PVC is typically the best option you can possibly get, but it's also the most expensive, especially when looking at pre-built enclosures such as ones from Herptastic or Animal Plastics. It's great at holding heat and humidity, is light-weight but sturdy, and is **completely** waterproof once after sealing the seams and heat-resistant, as well as customizable.



Essentials: These items should always be in the enclosure:

- Water Dish
- At least **1** Humid Hide
- At least **2** Dry Hides (**1** Hot, **1** Cool)
- Clutter (for the leo to hide in and to offer shade)
- We also highly recommend a Calcium Dish (without D₃), but this is only truly essential for leos suffering from Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD).

Substrate

Non-Loose: Some people are uncomfortable with using loose substrate or are unable to due to their leos having issues that make loose substrate dangerous or hindering. If opting not to use loose substrate, we recommend using a rough-textured slate, ceramic tile flooring, or excavator clay (see below). Plain white paper towels can be used temporarily, but we don't recommend them long-term. If opting for non-loose substrate such as tile, we highly recommend offering a dig box (or two!) or at least having half of the enclosure loose substrate. **Please note: when using paper towels, frequently**

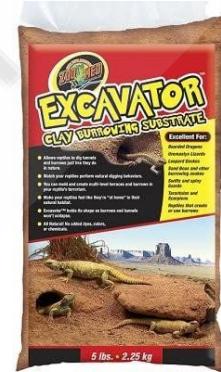
check that your gecko is not shredding the paper towels (trying to dig). They have a habit of eating shredded paper towels and this often causes blockages that can be impossible to pass through the leo naturally.

Basic Mix: We highly recommend using loose substrate, so your leo is able to dig for enrichment and comfort just like they would in the wild. To start, a good base to your substrate is a mix of organic topsoil with no harmful additives (such as manure) mixed with play sand (about 70% soil and 30% sand). Loose substrate should be at least 4-6in / 10-15cm deep to allow your leo to dig properly.



Additives: If using loose substrate, there's a lot of things you can add to your basic substrate mix to make it more natural for your leopard gecko!

- **Excavator Clay** - Mixing this into the substrate can help it replicate the hard-packed earth leos live on in the wild, and following the directions on the packaging can allow you to shape climbing opportunities or hides on top of your substrate. **TIP** - To make your own excavator clay, mix plain clay powder (bentonite powder) with 3-5+ parts sand and 1 part topsoil, the more sand you add the looser the clay will be. The harder the clay the easier it will be to make tunnels/hides with it, while looser clay is great for digging.
- **ReptiChip / ReptiBark / Mulch / Orchid Bark / Forest Floor** - All of this is essentially the same, a bark-like material that's typically good at retaining moisture. For this reason you only want to use a little of this, but it helps your substrate have a more natural texture.
- **Eco Earth / Coconut Husk / Coconut Coir** - Eco Earth and similar substrates are often advertised as a natural option, but it's nothing like the actual ground anywhere on earth. It holds a lot of moisture and creates a lot of humidity when damp, and when it dries it becomes incredibly dusty. For these reasons we only recommend using this sparingly in your substrate to help it retain a little moisture and keep your humidity at ideal levels, but it can only be used excessively in the humid area/humid hide. **Eco Earth should never be used throughout the entire tank by itself.**
- **Leaf Litter** - Leaf litter is a great additive to your substrate, once again it really helps it replicate nature, and leos can even hide under larger leaves. Leaf litter can be

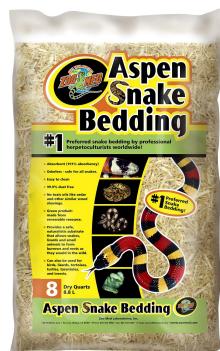


found at pet stores but checking online for non-toxic leaves like oak leaves and Indian almond leaves is a great option.

- **Stones / Rocks** - Large, flat rocks can be used on top of the substrate as decor, and small rocks like pebbles or gravel or river rock can also help your substrate closer replicate nature, but be sparing with this! A lot of stones will prevent your leo from digging, and **stones or straight pebbles throughout the whole tank is very, very dangerous!**
- **Sphagnum / Forest / Natural Moss** - Typically we recommend only using this in your moist hide/area, as it's great at holding moisture, but **a little** in your substrate won't hurt!

AVOID: These substrates are dangerous or inappropriate for leopard geckos:

- **Reptile Carpet / Reptile Terrarium Liner** - Carpet in particular is very fibrous, catching claws and harboring bacteria. This often makes them annoying for your leo to walk on and impossible to fully clean no matter what you do to them, so they become expensive quickly having to replace them every 1-2 months, and even then they become filthy quickly. Even the non-carpet terrarium liners are often made of plastics that are simply unsafe in the heated environment your leo needs.
- **Plain Sand** - In truth, no single substrate item should be used by itself. Very few places on earth are nothing but loose sand, and leos do not live anywhere near them. Sand by itself is slippery, easy to ingest, and incredibly unnatural for your leopard gecko. They also enjoy digging and this behavior is impossible in loose sand. Remember, mixing sand with clay and/or topsoil will make it perfectly safe and ideal for your leo!
- **Calcium Sand** - This is probably the most dangerous substrate you could ever use for your leopard gecko. Calcium sand is made from, as the name implies, calcium, so your leo will be enticed to eat it. In the wild leopard geckos get their calcium from the huge variety of insects they catch and eat as well as purposely eat earth or lick rocks they can tell are calcium-rich. Unfortunately, if calcium sand is ingested it will harden in the digestive tract, effectively blocking your leo's system, known as impaction. This is a very serious issue, and calcium sand impaction often requires surgical intervention to prevent fatality.
- **Aspen Bedding / Wood Chips / Small Animal Bedding**
 - None of this is appropriate for a leopard gecko. All of these are dry, potentially harmful materials that offer no natural benefits, such as digging.
- **Crushed Walnut Shell** - This substrate is slightly worse than Eco Earth and almost as bad as Calcium Sand. Unnatural, indigestible, sharp, no benefits, and once again it's potentially harmful.



Bioactive: This is essentially a different kind of setup that involves creating a mini-ecosystem inside your enclosure. For this you would want to start with the Basic Mix we recommend and throw in all the additives, as well as some other components. You would add some live plants and lighting for them, as well as tiny bugs known as CUC (Clean-Up Crew). For more information on bioactive setups please check out our Announcements and substrate file.

Temperature & Humidity

Temperatures - Because reptiles are cold-blooded ectotherms, meaning they don't create their own body heat, they will use heat from outside sources. In the wild, this would be from the sun. Because of this, they will need to be given the ability to cool down as well as warm up. To accomplish this you want to create a temperature gradient in the tank, meaning one end is colder and the other end is warmer.



Daytime:

- Hot Spot / Basking Spot - This is the warmest part of your enclosure, directly below your **primary heat source**. This is where your leo will get the higher temperatures they need to digest their meals. We recommend using a large, flat stone for your hot spot, slate works great! **You want this to be in a range of 91°F - 100°F / 33°C - 38°C. Your hot spot should be read using an infrared temperature gun for accuracy.**



- Hot Side Ambient (Air) - This is how warm the air is on the same side as your hotspot is. **You want this to be in a range of 80°F - 85°F / 26°C - 30°C, and this should be read using a reliable, digital thermometer.**

- Cool Side Ambient (Air) - This is the lower temperatures on the other end of the setup that your leo needs to cool down properly should they get too warm. **This should be in a range of 70°F - 75°F / 21°C - 24°C, and should be read with a second digital thermometer.**

NOTE: Using thermometer / hygrometer combos can help you keep an eye on both temperatures and humidity levels!

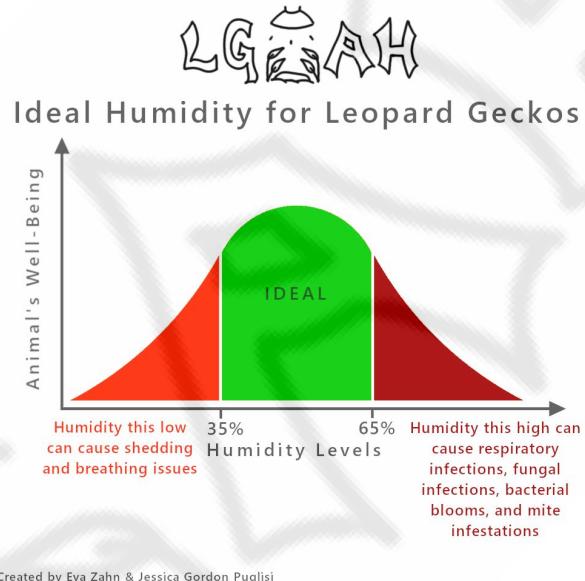


Nighttime: • You want to simulate nature and allow your leo to experience nightly temperature drops, this allows them to cool down and greatly aids their day / night cycle.

- You do **not** want to offer a hot spot at night, this is very unnatural! You also want to make sure it's as dark as possible, so no lights at night.
- You do not need to use heat of any kind at night unless your home / the enclosure's ambient (air) temps gets colder than 65°F / 18°C, in which case you can use a CHE (Ceramic Heat Emitter) **with a dimmer or thermostat** to raise ambient (air) temps no warmer than 72°F / 22°C.

Humidity:

- Leopard geckos are very hardy and can handle a wide range of humidity. Ideally you want your humidity to be **no lower than 40% and no higher than 60%**, we typically recommend 35-65%.
- Too low of humidity can cause shedding and even breathing issues, and too high of humidity can put your leo at a high risk of a respiratory or fungal infection.
- Please note that lower humidity during the day (due to your heat source burning off moisture in the air) and higher humidity at night (when heat is off) is perfectly normal, it also occurs in nature!



Source: <https://www.der-leopardgecko.de/das-terrarium-1/beleuchtung-grundlagen/umsetzung-im-terrarium/>

Heat Source

We recommend offering heat from above, just like it works in nature! Please note we **do not recommend the use of heat mats / under tank heaters**, they are incredibly unnatural!

- For your **primary heat source** (what provides a hot spot / basking spot) we recommend:
 - **HALOGEN LIGHT** - Par30 - Par38 DIMMABLE Halogen FLOODlight 50-100W
OR
 - **ARCADIA DHP** - Deep Heat Projector by Arcadia 80W



Use either option with an 8.5" Clamp Lamp, look in hardware stores and online sites!

- Your heat source should be regulated by a **dimming thermostat**, not to be confused with regular on / off thermostats. Dimming stats work by controlling how much heat is actually coming from your heat source, allowing it to emit a steady heat to maintain precise, safe, and ideal temperatures. On / off thermostats work by turning the heat source on to bring temps up and then turns it off once it warms enough—repeat! Unfortunately on / off stats are only good for heat mats and CHEs, DHPs and halogen bulbs will need a dimming thermostat!



- A great temporary option for controlling your heat source is a **plug-in dimmer**. These work by plugging them in and then plugging your lamp into the dimmer, then you can manually control the temp using a sliding switch on the dimmer's cord. **If using a plug-in dimmer, make sure to use your temp gun to check your temperatures.** When using this option you should be checking your temperatures frequently, since a manual dimmer will not regulate the temp for you, they simply allow you to dim down the bulb (and therefore the heat emitted). **If your home experiences large fluctuations in temperature, a plug-in dimmer will not be suitable and a dimming thermostat is 100% necessary.**
- If you need to raise ambient (air) temperatures, you can use a **secondary heat source**. Great options include:
 - **CHE (CERAMIC HEAT EMITTER)** - These are great at heating the air but not the floor, which is why we don't recommend using them for your hotspot. Because of this they can be used for increasing daytime hot side ambient (air) temperatures (if needed) as well as for overnight use in colder homes, since it doesn't produce light. A better option, however, would be to use a DHP as a secondary heat source (alongside a halogen light or second DHP for your daytime primary heat source).
 - **DHP BY ARCADIA** - Should you choose to use a halogen floodlight for your daytime primary heat source, using a Deep Heat Projector for secondary heating is an even better option than a CHE (please see heating file for more info on why). If you use a DHP for your primary heat source you can also use it at a lower setting at night if your home is too cold, and if you need to raise your ambient (air) daytime temperatures, you could use a second DHP set to a lower temp to help increase temperature.



UVB

When it comes to calcium and how our bodies use it, leopard geckos are actually similar to us. A vitamin known as D₃ is necessary for the body to absorb calcium, without it the body can't use any of the calcium consumed. In the wild all reptiles get D₃ naturally, from the sun, by absorbing ultraviolet rays known as UVB. It works the same for us, too! While we can offer D₃ through supplementation (see below), I have still seen leopard geckos develop calcium-related health issues such as MBD simply because UVB lighting was not offered.

- Recent studies have shown leopard geckos are incredible at creating D₃ from UVB, converting the light to D₃ at impressive rates. Even minimal exposure to UVB, such as a brief period of just the leo's tail being under the light, can give them plenty of D₃. For this reason we **highly recommend offering UVB!** Please see the UV file for more info on the science of this!
- Other reasons UV is highly beneficial are that it allows your leo to take full advantage of their amazing eyesight, UV rays stimulate and increase appetite, and using UV will result in your leo having brighter, healthier coloration. It also helps decrease the risk of egg-binding and MBD in laying females when paired with good calcium supplementation.
- We recommend using linear-style UVB, meaning T5 or T8 style bulbs, **not** compact or coil style bulbs. **If the UVB bulb isn't a long tube, we do not recommend using it.**
- Options for UVB will depend on the height of your enclosure, please see the graphic on the next page to determine what UVB light is right for your setup!** Please note that shorter setups should almost always have the UVB on top of the enclosure to be as safe as possible, and this is a big reason why we recommend a good amount of height (especially for setups without a mesh lid; e.g. most wood and PVC enclosures).
- Please note that UVB bulbs should be replaced every 6-12 months (typically 6 months for T8s and 12 months for T5s). Overtime the UVB output will die even if the bulb is still emitting light, it's very important to replace it.

LG-AH UVB GUIDE

When deciding what kind of UVB to get, ask and answer these 3 questions:

- 1) How tall is my enclosure?
- 2) Is the UVB going inside the enclosure or on top of a mesh lid?
- 3) How close can the leo get to the UVB light?

There are many options for UVB lighting, please follow the chart below on what kind to get for your setup:

-P I N S I D E T H E E N C L O S U R E :			
BRAND / MODEL:	*DISTANCE w/o Reflector	*UVI	*DISTANCE w/ Reflector
Arcadia Shadedweller ProT5 Kit	Not Tested	—	10" / 25cm ~ 1.5
*Arcadia 6% T8	Too Weak	—	Too Close —
*Arcadia 6% T5 (HO)	10" / 25cm	1.4	20" / 50cm 1.4
*Arcadia 12% T8	10" / 25cm	1.2	16" / 40cm 1.3
*Arcadia 12% T5 (HO)	16" / 40cm	1.1-1.4	Too Strong —
Reptisun 5.0 T8 (by ZooMed)	Too Weak	—	Too Close —
Reptisun 5.0 T5HO (by ZooMed)	Too Close	—	12" / 30cm 1.4
Reptisun 10.0 T8 (by ZooMed)	Too Close	—	14" / 35cm 1.4
Reptisun 10.0 T5HO (by ZooMed)	18" / 45cm	1.3	Too Strong —
- O N T O P O F M E S H L I D :			
BRAND / MODEL:	*DISTANCE w/o Reflector	*UVI	*DISTANCE w/ Reflector
Arcadia Shadedweller ProT5 Kit	Not Tested	—	8" / 20cm ~ 1.5
*Arcadia 6% T8	Too Weak	—	Too Weak —
*Arcadia 6% T5 (HO)	6" / 15cm	1.6	16" / 40cm 1.0-1.4
*Arcadia 12% T8	6" / 15cm	1.4	10" / 25cm 1.6
*Arcadia 12% T5 (HO)	12" / 30cm	1.2-1.4	20" / 50cm 1.3-1.6
Reptisun 5.0 T8 (by ZooMed)	Too Weak	—	6" / 15cm 1.1
Reptisun 5.0 T5HO (by ZooMed)	6" / 15cm	1.1	10" / 25cm 1.3
Reptisun 10.0 T8 (by ZooMed)	6" / 15cm	1.3	10" / 25cm 1.4
Reptisun 10.0 T5HO (by ZooMed)	12" / 30cm	1.6	Too Strong —

*DISTANCE - This is the absolute closest your leo should be able to get to the UVB light when directly under it.

*UVI - UltraViolet Index, measurements used to read the intensity of UV rays. Ideal UVI for a leo actively basking under the UVB light is 1-1.5.

*REFLECTORS - This is the shiny material that is often behind the UVB bulb, inside most fixtures, and it makes a massive difference in UVB output.

*ARCADIA 6% & 12% - Please note that the smallest size these bulbs come in are 24" (60cm), so they are typically only ideal for 4ft+ (1.2m+) long enclosures.

CREATED BY JESSICA GORDON PUGLISI using information from ArcadiaReptile.com & "Measured UVI of Popular Fluorescent UVB Tube Configurations" ©F. Baines & R. Bullock June 2015. To see the aforementioned graphic and more information on UV lighting please see the LG-AH UV File.

Hides / Decor

- Dry Hides:**
- These are your “hot” and “cool” hides. As stated earlier, you want **at least** 1 hot hide and 1 cool hide, but you can never have too many dry hides! Any and all options will be utilized by your leopard gecko.
 - Great options for dry hides include store-bought reptile caves and similar items, but stacking rocks and building substrate can also form crevices for your gecko to hide in. If you’re crafty, you can even make hides out of clay or foam! Hiding areas can also be offered by using fake (or real!) plants for your leo to shelter in/under.

- Humid Hides:**
- Your gecko should always have access to at least 1 humid hide. This gives them the option to be in a small area with very high humidity to help with shedding without raising the humidity of the whole enclosure to dangerous levels.
 - Options for humid hides include: store-bought reptile caves, a crevice under cork bark, or a closed container (tupperware or mason jar).
 - To create a humid hide, add sphagnum moss and/or eco earth (coco coir) to the hide and ensure it’s thoroughly damp to raise the humidity inside.
 - We recommend having your humid hide around the middle of your enclosure or slightly closer to the hot side.

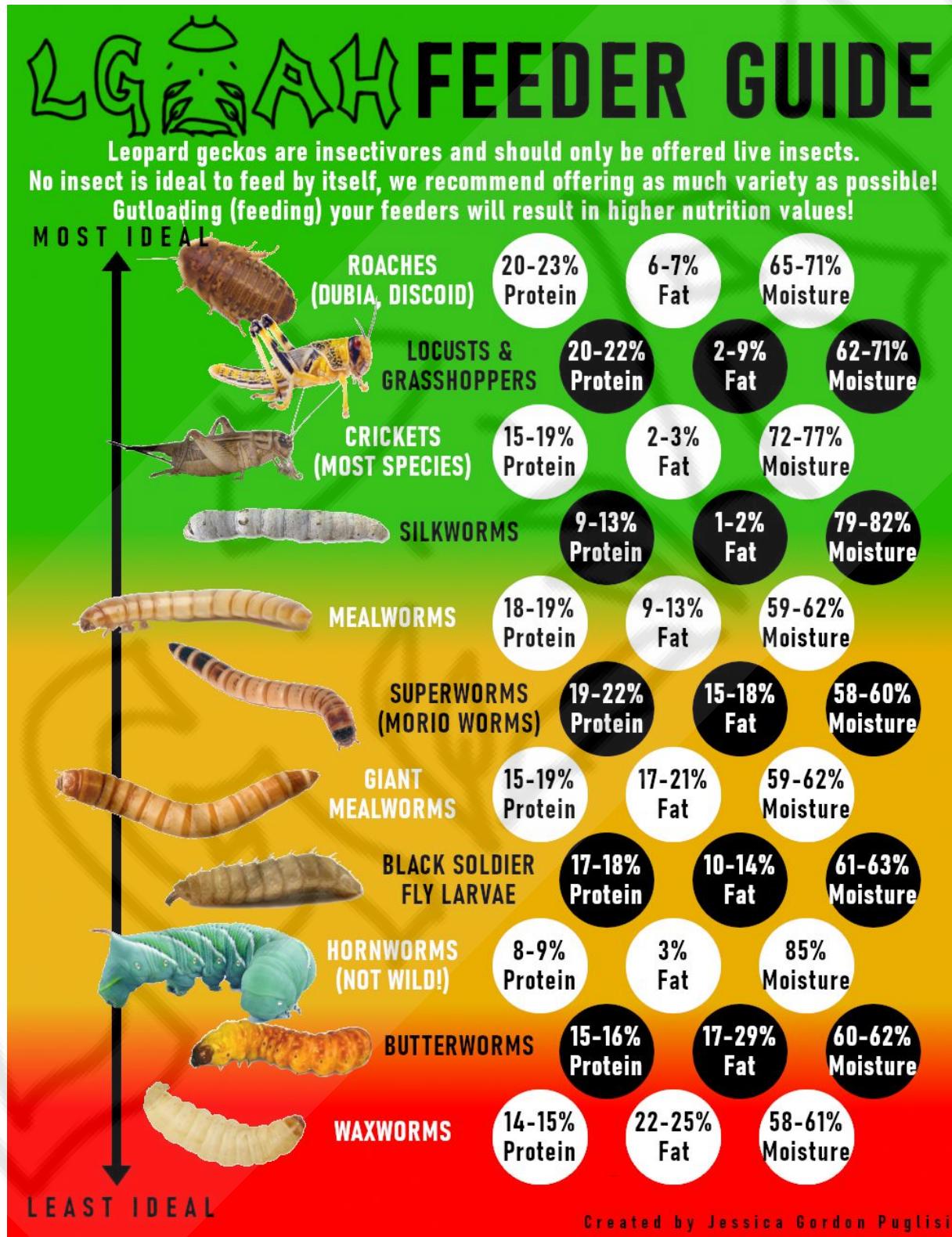
- Decor:**
- This is anything and everything else you put in your enclosure!
- **Water Dish** - This should be cleaned daily and full at all times, and should go on the cool side or in the middle of the enclosure to avoid rapid evaporation.
 - **Calcium Dish** - This should contain calcium WITHOUT D₃ and is purely optional unless the leo suffers from a calcium-related illness such as MBD.
 - **Flat Basking Rock** - This should go directly under your heat source to hold ideal Hot Spot temperatures.
 - **Plants** - These can be either real or fake, but it's typically a lot easier to start with fake. Use these to provide lots of shade, cover, and clutter for your leo to shelter in and under. Typically you cannot have too many fake plants, they will allow your leo to feel safer and more confident when exploring the enclosure. Please note your hot side should be brighter (less shaded/cluttered) than your cool side.
 - **Cork Bark** - This is a great decor option and can be utilized almost anywhere in the enclosure! Especially beneficial for bioactive setups.
 - **Climbing Opportunities** - these can be offered by piling substrate, stacking cork bark, adding a fake background with ledges, and by using larger items like driftwood. When deciding how tall to make your climbing options or how to set them up please remember that while leos do love to climb, they're not exactly great at it! Also, **we highly recommend incorporating a fake background, it more than doubles your gecko's enrichment and climbing opportunities.**

Feeding

Leopard geckos require a diet of live insects, freeze-dried or canned insects unfortunately are not ideal. In the wild they would eat hundreds of different species of insects, so in captivity it's ideal to offer as much variety as you possibly can. It's also important to gutload your feeders, This means offering them fresh, healthy food to keep them well-fed and hydrated, boosting their moisture,

protein, fat, and calcium contents. This will be highly beneficial for your leo and will help your feeders stay alive as long as possible.

Please follow this graphic for deciding what kind of feeders to get—remember, you want a good balance of both protein and fat in your leo's diet!



Created by Jessica Gordon Puglisi

Written by Eva Zahn & Jessica Gordon Puglisi

Feeding Schedule:

Age:	Feeding Frequency:	
0-4 Months	Daily	When feeding, offer as many insects as your leo will eat in 5-15 minutes, depending on how quickly they consume them. Leos with good aim that eat quickly should be cut off after about 10 minutes, and leos with poor aim, vision problems, or are otherwise just slow eaters, should be given 10-15 minutes. Use your judgement!
4-6 Months	Every Other Day	
6-12 Months	2-3 Times per Week	
12+ Months	1-2 Times per Week	

NOTE: Not all leos are the same! Many keepers will feed based on weight and/or the leo's appetite, HOWEVER, please stick to a strict schedule if your leo is becoming or already is overweight, even if the gecko is acting hungry. Obesity is a very serious issue that brings life-long health issues.

[Please see our Feeders File for more information.](#)

Supplements

In the wild, leos achieve a balanced diet by consuming hundreds of different species of insects. Because we cannot replicate this in captivity, it's very important your leo's diet is properly supplemented by dusting your feeder insects.

Calcium w/o D₃ - This is a powder that's just plain calcium, but it's important to note that reptile-specific calcium is phosphorus-free in order to counteract the phosphorus in insects. We recommend having a dish of plain calcium in the tank at all times, but it's not required unless the leo suffers from a calcium-related illness such as Metabolic Bone Disease.

Calcium w/ D₃ - This is a powder that's the same as the calcium above, but it has vitamin D₃ added to it. D₃ is what allows an animal's body to utilize the calcium it has ingested. Naturally reptiles (and us!) would get this from the sun, but in captivity it's important to offer this through supplements, especially if you don't offer UVB or your leo rarely (and sometimes never) utilizes their UVB lighting. Please note that it is possible for reptiles to overdose on D₃ when consumed in large quantities, and for this reason we do **not** recommend leaving D₃ in the tank. We also advise that you store any supplements containing D₃ in a cool, dark place to avoid degrading the vitamin. Another reason not to leave D₃ in-tank is that after some time the D₃ will degrade and go from potentially harmful to useless to your leo.

Multivitamin - This is a powder that contains a wide variety of vitamins and minerals that are important for a truly balanced diet and are essential for good health, and once again should be reptile-specific. This can often be found both with or without D₃; if you do not offer UVB it's important to use a multivitamin that contains D₃, but with UVB either is fine! Regardless, it should not be left in-tank to ensure your leo doesn't consume too much of it.

To offer supplements, dust your leo's feeders with them by putting the insects into a bowl or plastic baggy, adding the powder, and then shaking your container to coat the feeders. It's important to offer these supplements on a schedule to use them properly, and this will vary by brand:

Arcadia Supplements (UK)

WITH OR WITHOUT UVB:

EarthPro-A should be dusted on all insects for every feeding.

CalciumPro Mg should be offered every 4th feeding.

RevitaliseD₃ should be offered every 6th-8th feeding (if not using UVB or you never see your leo use their UVB, **occasional** extra feedings with D₃ would be beneficial).



Source: <https://www.arcadiareptile.com/earthpro/feeding-programme/insectivore/>

ZooMed Supplements (US & UK)

WITH UVB:

Calcium without D₃ should be offered every feeding.

Reptivite without D₃ should be offered once per week.

Calcium with D₃ can be offered once per month; if you never see your leo use their UVB this should be offered every 2 weeks.

WITHOUT UVB:

Calcium with D₃ should be offered 1-2 times per week.

Reptivite with D₃ should be offered once per week.

Calcium without D₃ should be offered all other feedings (if applicable).



Repashy Superfoods Supplements (US & UK)

WITH UVB:

SuperCal NoD should be offered every feeding.

SuperVite should be offered once per week.

WITHOUT UVB:

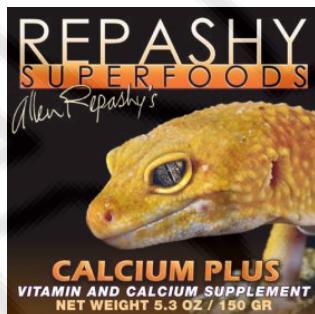
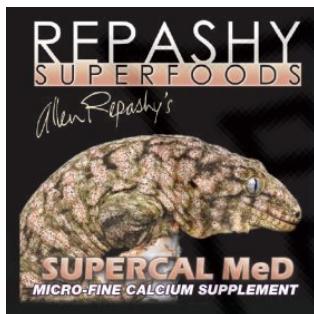
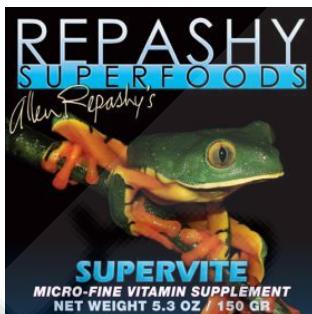
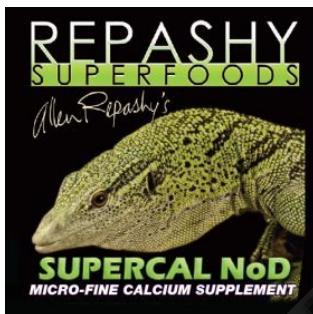
Calcium Plus should be offered every feeding.

OR

SuperCal MeD should be offered 1-2 times per week.

SuperVite should be offered once per week

SuperCal NoD should be offered all other feedings (if applicable).



Please see our Feeding File for more information.

For our Quick Care Guide, please see the following page.

LG-AH Quick Care Guide

TANK: Minimum 36" x 18" x 18" (90cm x 45cm x 45cm) glass aquarium, wooden vivarium, melamine vivarium, or PVC vivarium.

SUBSTRATE: Base mix of 70% Topsoil and 30% Play Sand.
Adding Excavator Clay can make your substrate more hard packed (roughly 3-4 parts soil, 1 part sand, 1 part clay).
Add leaf litter, a little mulch, and other items for a more natural substrate.

TEMPS: Hot / Basking Spot: 91-100°F (33-38°C)
Hot Side: 80-85°F (26-30°C)
Cool Side: 70-75°F (21-24°C)

HUMIDITY: 35-65%

HEAT SOURCE: Arcadia DHP 80W or Halogen Floodlight 50-100W Par30-38
Pair with 8.5" dome / clamp lamp and plug-in dimmer or dimming thermostat.

UVB: T5 or T8 style UVB from Arcadia or Reptisun that's roughly half the length of the enclosure. Please our in-depth UVB Guide for the right style and strength.

HIDES / DECOR: At least 1 Hot Hide.
At least 1 Cool Hide.
At least 1 Humid Hide.
Plenty of fake plants for hiding and shade.
Climbable decor.

FEEDING: 0-4 mo. feed daily.
4-6 mo. feed every other day.
6-12 mo. feed 2-3 times per week.
12+ mo. feed 1-2 times per week.
Offer as much variety as possible with roaches, mealworms, superworms, silkworms, etc. and ensure your feeders are well-fed (gutloaded).

SUPPLEMENTS: Ensure you dust feeders appropriately with calcium without D₃, calcium with D₃, and a multivitamin. Using UVB will change how you supplement, so please follow our in-depth guides.