

Complete Food Guide – 2020

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Kibble

Good quality cat biscuits should be part of your hedgehog's staple, daily diet. These biscuits can be available for your hedgehog at all times without being limited, unless your hedgehog is visibly overweight (in which case, biscuits can be limited to 1 tablespoon per day).

Meat should be the first ingredient – ***foods listed with cereals or meat meal as the first ingredient should be used as fillers alongside the higher quality biscuits.***

In the UK, we advise to **avoid foods with fish as a main ingredient.** This is because it has been noted that feeding fish based produce causes hogs' poop to smell significantly more than normal. Any kind of foul smell to waste matter usually suggests that something is not being digested effectively. Fish oil can't be avoided in most kibbles but this is fine as it's a small amount.

When transitioning or adding a new kibble, it's important to remember to do this gradually – usually by adding 10% at a time every few days. APH have a delicate digestive system, and changing food over too quickly or introducing too many new foods too quickly can lead to an imbalance in gut flora and result in a poorly hog.

Kibble is important as a staple food for hedgehogs, but sometimes they can be fussy! If you find that your hog is leaving their kibble, try cutting back on insects or treat foods for a while, as your spiky friend is definitely more likely to pick these.

Protein should be between 30-35% so if choosing a higher protein food, make sure to mix with lower protein foods.

A rough guide of what fat percentage your hog will need based on weight:

Overweight: 10-13% fat

Ideal weight: 13-15% fat

Underweight/struggles to keep weight on: 15-20% fat

First, choose 3-5 of the following kibble, catering the fat content to what your hedgehog needs.

Name	Fat %	Protein %	Main Ingredient
Wainwrights Turkey and Rice Light	10%	30%	Turkey Meal
James Wellbeloved Turkey Light	10%	34%	Turkey Meal
AVA Weight Management	10%	38%	Chicken
Arden Grange Light	11%	30%	Fresh Chicken
Burgess Supacat Chicken	12%	30%	Poultry meal
Happy Cat Alpine Beef	12%	30%	Meat Meal
Harringtons Chicken	12%	30%	Chicken Meat Meal
Amazon Sulimo Chicken	12%	31%	Cereals
Yarrah Organic Chicken	13%	29%	Dried Chicken
Eukanuba Weight Control	13%	33%	Dried Chicken & Turkey
Wellness Core Grain Free Chicken and Turkey	13%	38%	Chicken
Purina One Adult Cat	14%	34%	Chicken
Iams Vitality Chicken	14%	35%	Dried Chicken & Turkey
AVA Optimum Health Grain Free	14%	36%	Chicken
Almo Nature Beef and Rice	15%	31%	Beef
Royal Canin Fit	15%	32%	Dehydrated Poultry Meat
Vets Kitchen Chicken	16%	30%	Poultry Meal
Happy Cat Meadow Lamb	16%	32%	Poultry Meat Meal
Royal Canin Saviour Exigent	16%	33%	Maize
Life Long Adult Chicken	16%	34%	Chicken Meat Meal
ProPlan Optirenal Chicken	16%	36%	Chicken
Canagan Grain Free Light	16%	37%	Chicken
Applaws Chicken & Lamb	17%	37%	Dried Chicken
Wainwrights Turkey and Rice	18%	30%	Turkey Meal
AATU Grain Free Chicken	18%	34%	Chicken
Carnilove Duck & Turkey	18%	37%	Duck Meal
Arden Grange Adult Chicken and Potato Grain Free	19%	31%	Fresh Chicken
Hills Science Plan Adult Light Chicken	19%	32%	Chicken & Turkey Meal
Wainwrights Grain Free Turkey and Sweet Potato	20%	30%	Turkey Meal
James Wellbeloved Grain Free Turkey	20%	31%	Turkey Meal
AATU Grain Free Duck	20%	34%	Duck
Applaws Chicken and Duck	20%	38%	Dry Chicken Meal

Then choose one from this list – ‘indoor’ brands help with odour control.

Name	Fat %	Protein %	Main ingredient
Concept For Life Indoor	12.5%	30%	Poultry Protein
Royal Canin Indoor	13%	27%	Poultry Protein
Purina One Indoor Turkey & Whole Grain	13%	34%	Turkey
James Wellbeloved Housecat - Duck	14%	31%	Duck Meal
Bozita Feline Indoor & Sterilised	14%	32%	Chicken

Insects

Being **insectivorous omnivores** (diet of mainly insects and meat), makes insects a highly important part of an APH's diet and so they should have them regularly alongside kibble - though some insects are better left as treat!

Live-bought insects are the most recommended. Insects can be "**gut-loaded**" then kept for live feeding, chilled for a short time to slow them down for easier handling, or frozen for 24-48 hours which kills the insects but maintains their nutritional value. Frozen insects should be defrosted at room temperature before feeding.

"**Gut-loading**" is feeding insects up, with different fruits and vegetables to get as many nutrients into them as possible before your hedgehog eats them. Although APH can eat fruit and vegetables, many of them can be fussy and won't take to them, so via insects is a great way for them to benefit from these nutrients.

You can use most safe fruit or vegetables to gut-load, and you're best off feeding them raw, cut into small chunks. Some of our recommendations include: parsnips, broccoli, carrot, cauliflower, cucumber, green beans, butternut squash, potato, swede, spinach, lettuce, kale, apples and lots more. Worms and isopods will tend to favour the chunks, whereas crickets, locusts and other hoppers tend to favour the leafy greens – ***remember to empty out the remains of fruit and vegetables frequently else you risk ending up with a rotten slushy mess!***

Freeze dried insects are not recommended for poor nutritional content due to the drying process and have been suspected to cause impaction and constipation.

So, how many insects should you be feeding your hog? Insects should make up about ¼ of their diet. For the most well-balanced diet, have a staple of a handful of different insect types and try to balance them nutritionally to avoid having too much protein or fat etc.

A few suggestions on where to buy live food online/in-store:

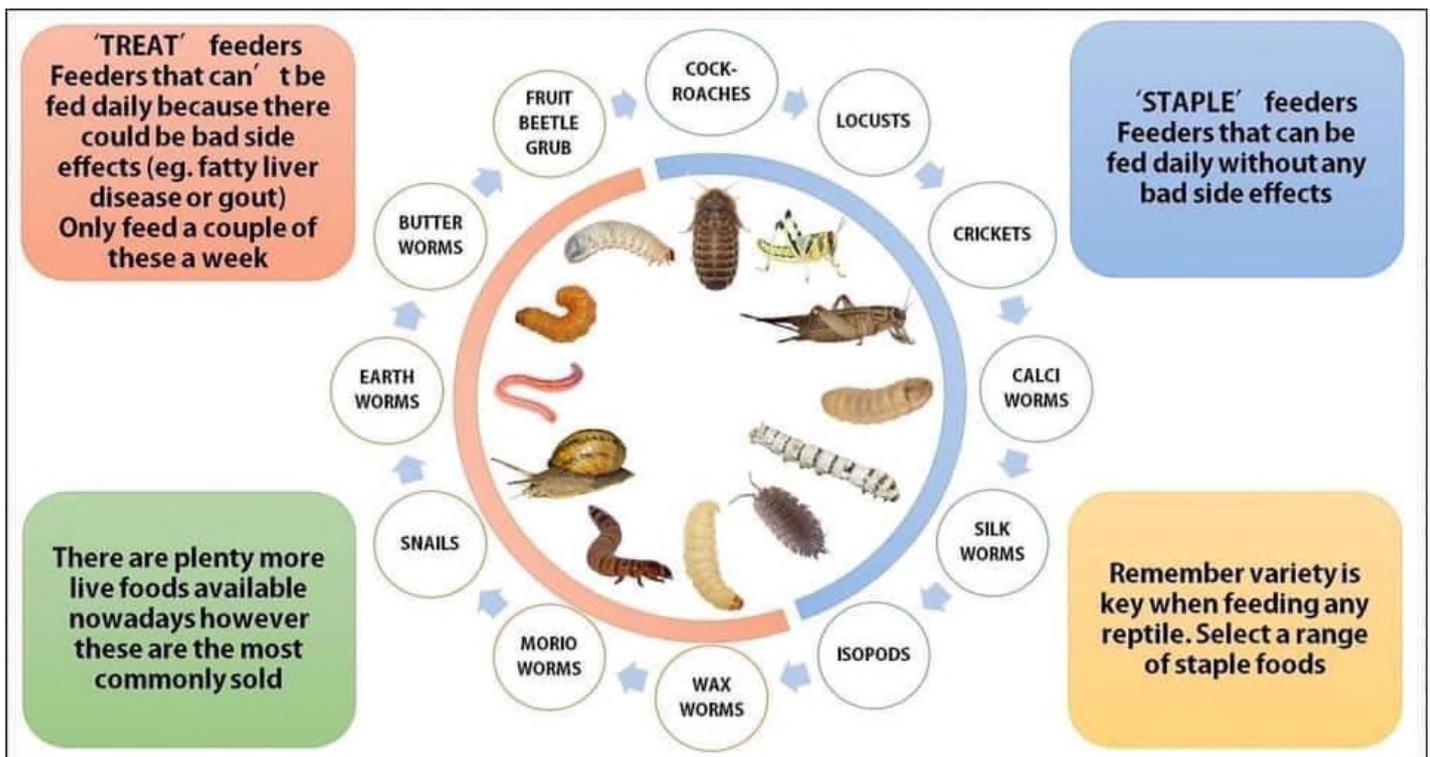
- Northampton Reptile Centre – live and canned insects, bulk buy pinkies
- Swell Reptile – live and canned insects, bulk buy pinkies
- Live Foods Direct – live insects, bulk buy pinkies
- Live Food UK – live and canned insects, bulk buy pinkies
- Exotic Pets – live and canned insects, bulk buy pinkies
- Pets at Home – live and singular pinkies (note: this is lower value for money)

Only feed insects bought specifically for live-feeding. This ensures that they are not carrying any parasites, and don't dispose of live insects outside to protect our ecosystems – freeze them before throwing them away.

The table below contains a list of common feeder insects and their fat and protein values. “Green” indicates a good staple feeder insect for every day feeding. “Orange” indicates that these insects should be given occasionally but preferably not daily, or a smaller number each day. “Red” indicates that these insects should be fed rarely or in small quantities, for example, mealworms should ideally be limited to a maximum of 5 a day.

There are other feeder insects available and this is not a fully comprehensive list of all the bugs your hogs can enjoy - have a quick search in the group if you’re wondering about any other to check they’re safe to feed.

Insect	Fat %	Protein %	Notes
Brown Crickets	4%	20%	Good source of fibre, low in calcium
Locust	5%	40%	Good source of fibre, high in calcium
Earthworms	5%	60%	Good source of protein and fibre, high in calcium
Dubia Cockroach	8%	22%	Good source of protein and fibre
Silkworm	10%	64%	Good source of protein and fibre, high in calcium
Black Crickets	12%	16%	Good source of fibre, low in calcium
Isopods (Woodlice)	12%	40%	Good source of protein and fibre, very high in calcium
Calci-worms	14%	17%	Good source of fibre, high in calcium
Butterworms	5%	16%	Very high in calcium at 42.9mg/100g
Morioworms	18%	18%	Low in calcium, high in fat
Mealworms	14%	19%	Very low in calcium, low nutritional value
Waxworms	22%	15%	Very high in fat, low in calcium



Safe & Dangerous Foods

APH can also enjoy a wide range of “human” foods a part of their balanced diets. Below are lists of safe foods and also foods to avoid feeding your hog.

Meat	Meat
Cooked chicken	Pork
Lean mince	Fish
Cooked turkey	Fruits
Small bits of cut beef	Citrus fruits
Small bits of cut lamb	Orange
Pheasant	Lemon
Fruits	Limes
Banana	Pineapple
Strawberry	Grapefruit
Apple	Grapes
Melon	Dried fruit
Peach	Raisins
Pear	Legumes
Blackberry	Avocado
Raspberry	Tomatoes
Cherry	Vegetables
Pumpkin	Onions
Squash	Mushrooms
Kiwi	Garlic
Mango	Rhubarb leaves
Vegetables	Other
Carrots	Chocolate
Sweet potatoes	Junk food
Mashed potatoes (no milk or butter)	Seeds & nuts
Cucumber	
Sweetcorn (off the cob)	
Bell peppers	
Swede	
Cauliflower	
Broccoli	
Spinach	
Butternut squash	
Peas	
Courgette	
Other	
Scrambled egg (no milk)	
Small amount of pasta	
Small amount of rice	

Treats

You can give your APH a variety of treats such as meat-based wet cat food and baby food made from hedgehog-safe foods. You can also give your hedgehog other small meat-based cat treats – Dreamies are a popular choice (not the fish or cheese flavours). Make sure any treats you're feeding aren't dehydrated as these can stick to the roof of your hog's mouth and pose a choking risk.

Raw Food

It is common practice for many owners and breeders to feed their hedgehogs **pinkies** (day old mice, usually bought frozen and fed once thawed). These are a nutritious treat, although should be offered sparingly to the majority of hogs as they are fattening. Most will love pinkies and will anoint with them which can get messy, so we advise you have a wipe on hand!

Supplements

Below is a table of a couple of popular supplements used amongst APH owners. These are not necessarily an obligatory part of your hog's diet so long as it is well-balanced and varied, but can be useful to include.

Supplement	Use	Notes
Flaxseed Oil	Add a few drops of flaxseed oil in food once or twice per week - we find getting flaxseed oil capsules is a good way to measure this out.	Helps promote healthy skin and help with dry skin & quilling.
Nutrobal	Sprinkle a small amount of Nutrobal powder on the food once per week.	With a good diet, vitamin supplements are probably not necessary; however problems such as calcium deficiency are fairly common in exotic pets. This supplement contains calcium, vitamin D3 (which helps the body absorb calcium), and multivitamins.
Avipro Avian	Dissolve a small amount into fresh drinking water or sprinkle a small amount on food as required, or once a week as part of regular dietary supplementation.	When hedgehogs are experiencing stress, it can be beneficial to add a probiotic to their diet. In these instances Avipro Avian is a good choice, and can also be used for regular dietary supplementation.

Special thanks given to Victoria Murray for her research, help and contribution.