

Leopard Gecko Care: The Complete Recovery Standard

1. The Enclosure: Floor Space & Security

Adults require a minimum of a **40-gallon breeder tank** (36"x18"). They are terrestrial—floor space is infinitely more important than height. Provide at least three hides (warm, cool, and a designated humid hide). Use tile, slate, or a safe "dig-safe" clay/soil mix. **Never use loose sand or calcium sand**—they lick their environment, and sand causes fatal gut impaction.

2. Thermal Gradient: Desert Specialist

Basking spot: 88–92°F. Cool side: 72–76°F. Use a thermostat with **all** heat sources. A deep heat projector or halogen bulb is preferred for deep tissue heating. Keep ambient humidity low (30–40%), but ensure a "**Humid Hide**" (damp sphagnum moss) is always available for shedding.

3. Nutrition: The Insectivore Diet

Strictly insectivorous. Offer a variety of gut-loaded insects: Dubia roaches, crickets, and occasional mealworms. You **must** provide calcium and multivitamin supplementation to prevent Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD). Always provide a shallow, clean dish of fresh water.

***THE REALITY CHECK:** Leopard Geckos are a 15–20 year commitment. They are crepuscular, spending their days hidden. If you are looking for an active, "on-display" pet, this is not the right species. They require disciplined feeding and constant supplement dusting.*

4. Health: Recovery Red Flags

- **Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD):** Rubber-like jaw, bowed legs, or spinal kinks. Permanent and painful; prevention is the only cure.
- **Stuck Shed:** Patches of old skin on toes can cut off circulation—monitor sheds closely.
- **Cryptosporidiosis:** "Stick tail" (wasting away of the tail). Requires immediate, specialized vet intervention.

5. Enrichment & Sustainability

Sustainability tip: Use flat, broken slate or tiles (often free from construction leftovers) to create multiple levels and basking platforms on the floor of the tank.

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