

Sand Boa Care: The Complete Recovery Standard

1. The Enclosure: Burrowing Space

Sand Boas are fossorial (burrowing) snakes. Adults require at least a **40-gallon breeder tank** or 36"x18" enclosure. The most critical element is 4–6 inches of a sterile, burrowing-safe substrate (e.g., aspen shavings or a bioactive sand/soil mix). They must be able to tunnel without the substrate collapsing. Ensure a secure, locking lid.

2. Thermal Gradient: Desert Specialist

Maintain a cool side of 75–80°F and a warm basking spot of 90–95°F. Use a thermostat with **all** heat sources to prevent thermal burns. Overhead heat (DHP or CHE) is preferred to avoid the risk of them digging down into an under-tank heater. Keep ambient humidity low (30–40%), with a "humidity box" provided during shedding.

3. Nutrition: Consistent Feeding

Offer humanely euthanized, frozen-thawed rodents. **Never feed live prey**, which can inflict life-threatening bite wounds. Juveniles: every 7–10 days. Adults: every 14–21 days. As ambush predators, you may need to present the prey item near their "lookout" spot. Always wait 48 hours after feeding before handling.

***THE REALITY CHECK:** Sand Boas are a 15–20+ year commitment. They are secretive, fossorial animals that spend most of their time hidden. If you are looking for a pet that is constantly 'on display' or highly active, a Sand Boa may not be the right choice.*

4. Health: Recovery Red Flags

- **Respiratory Infection:** Wheezing, clicking, or excess mucus from too much humidity.
- **Eye Caps:** Failure to shed the clear eye scale is an emergency; consult an exotic vet.
- **Substrate Impaction:** Swallowing too much loose substrate can cause severe internal health issues.

5. Enrichment & Sustainability

Sustainability tip: Use large, clean, plastic food-storage bins as hides, modified with an entry hole—ensure all edges are smoothed with sandpaper to protect delicate scales.

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