

Hamsters and guinea pigs comparison



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Katrina 10/23/12 English 1 honors Mr. Martin. Hamster and guinea pigs

ESSAY: Hamsters and guinea pigs are two completely different animals. The most obvious difference is that hamsters are very small; they can fit in the palm of your hand. Guinea pigs are much larger, generally weighs around 3 pounds or so when fully grown. Hamsters are native to Europe and Asia while the guinea pig is native to South America. That's one difference which shows they are not related. Although the two eat approximately the same foods, the guinea pig is much larger and is commonly used as a food animal in the Andes Mountains.

The hamster is strictly a pet or laboratory animal. Although they are both rodents and are popular as pets, hamster and guinea pigs have many differences such as there body and their behavior. 'Guinea pig' is the common name for members of the species *Cavia porcellus*. They are native to South America in the wild, weigh roughly 700-1200 grams, and usually live for around five years. Guinea pigs are tailless, herbivorous, and live in social colonies in the wild. They are active during the day. The guinea pig is very likely to get into space when space habitats are finally developed.

They breed easily, have several litters per year, and mature quickly. A guinea pig gets about 5 times the size of a hamster, and eats more like a rabbit. They are both good pets though. They do look a lot alike, but are completely unrelated. Guinea pigs are a whole different species. Possibly not even rodents, scientists are debating that. Guinea pigs are the larger of the two, they don't have a tail but they have a bump where there tail should have been. Guinea pigs are usually the hardest to train but once trained they will be very attached to you. Guinea pigs like to be kept in pair's or groups.

A perfect example of a social animal that enjoys each other's company and like living outside. A guinea pig is bigger, and has a life p of about 5 to 10 years. Hamsters can actually be one of several species from the genus Phodopus (dwarf hamsters), Cricetulus (includes dwarf and normal sized species) or Mesocricetus. The most common pet hamster is Mesocricetus auratus, the Syrian hamster. Size of pet hamsters is usually around 5-15cm. The hamsters have little short hairless tails and prefer to live a solitary lifestyle, only coming together to mate.

They are omnivores, mostly eating only seeds and fruits, but may also eat things like insects in the wild. Hamsters can live for around 1.5 to 2 years and are nocturnal, being most active when it is dark. Hamsters are generally nocturnal which means that they will sleep in the night, but you can train them not too. Hamsters aren't as clean as guinea pigs but they can be taught to use a litter box. Hamsters must be kept alone because of the fact that they are very territorial. Hamsters are usually solitary with the exception of dwarfs who can live happily in groups, they have a lifep from 1.5 years to 3 years, but some can live longer. There are also different breeds of hamster, ranging from tiny Robo, Chinese & Russian dwarf hamster to bigger Syrian ones. These have small tails. Rats are about 3/4 or even larger than hamsters with long tails. Hamsters bite if they smell food on you. By owning both animals : hamsters and guinea pigs it is safe to say , guinea pigs are harder to keep clean (as long as you don't put 2 males in a cage with a female nearby), they are " sweeter" and seem more stable.

Guinea pigs are more easily played with , and when they run on the floor you can find them way easier than hamsters! Other than them both being

vegetarians and furry they couldn't be much more different. I hope for the sake of any animal that you find out the difference before attempting to keep one. Pets provide us with so much more than companionship. Although there are responsibilities with pet ownership, the benefits greatly outweigh the work. Pets give us benefits not always readily available from our human companions and that's unconditional love and acceptance.

Our pets are always there for us and they are great listeners! A pet never judges us and they continue to love us in spite of our flaws and mistakes. That simple fact can be a stress reducer. One thing I have come into generalization with is no matter how small or big the animal is or how great their differences are. We should assume responsibility for them. We should do our best to nurture, care and love them. That is our responsibility as humans.