

## Hanging Basket Play Area

I first got the idea to create hanging basket play areas outdoors in the aviary. When I saw how much fun the bird's had on them, I decided to create the same play areas indoors for year round enjoyment. I have hanging play areas all over my house but the absolute favorite places to play are on the baskets. Ditto likes to fly from basket to basket occasionally stopping to play with a toy I've tied onto to it. Buddy has a favorite basket above the end of the kitchen counter where he likes to swing from the toys I have hanging on the ends of the wood perch that passes through the center of the basket. That same basket is also a favorite place for Byrd to play. She likes to chew on the sides as well as climb inside and chew out the bottom of the basket.

An advantage to indoor baskets is that they don't have to be replaced as often as the baskets I hang outdoors in the aviary. I'm always replacing outdoor baskets because they mildew so fast after a rain. Whether you choose to hang them outdoors in an aviary or indoors, it is very easy to create a hanging basket play area.

### Materials needed to make a hanging basket play area:

- 2 Ceiling Hooks (In the aviary I use stainless steel screw eyes)
- Natural Wicker Basket
- Natural Untreated Sisal Rope or a thick hemp rope
- Wacky Wood – you could substitute a bird safe natural tree branch or wooden dowel for the wacky wood. It just needs to be a comfortable width for your parrot to perch on, long enough to fit through the center of your basket and hang over a couple inches.
- 2 lengths of 1 ¼ or 1 ½ inch PVC pipe, approximately 8 – 12 inches long (optional).
- 2 stainless steel quick links large enough for the rope to slide through.



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### Instructions for making a hanging basket play area:

1. Take the length of wacky wood (or natural tree branch/wooden dowel) and run it through the handles of the basket. It should fit through the center of the basket with about two to three inches sticking out on either end.
2. Secure each end of the piece of wood to the basket handle by tying it with your rope.
3. Cut two equal lengths of rope and attach them to the basket on either side of both handles, making a loop at the center top for hanging.
4. I like to cut a length of 1 ¼ inch PVC to thread the rope hangers through as this acts like a ceiling protector and keeps my parrots from climbing up the rope to chew on the ceiling and the ceiling hooks.
5. Attach the stainless steel quick link to the center top of each rope handle for hanging on the ceiling hook. Thread the rope through the PVC pipe and hang.



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**Note:** You want to tie the rope to the ends of the basket in a way that stabilizes the basket. The goal being to keep it from tipping too far forward when your parrot perches on the end of the basket instead of the wood in the center of the basket.

If the basket is too wobbly and tips too far forward, your bird may be afraid to perch or play on the basket.

## Hangin' Basket Play Area

I have found a natural woven seagrass baskets at that will hang on the perch without tipping over. If using this type of basket, I skip steps 2 and 3. I run the wacky wood through the basket handles and tie a length of either leather or sisal rope through a hole at each end of the wood. Then I follow step 4 and 5 to hang the wood perch to the ceiling hooks.



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You can tie toys to the sides of the basket and/or place toys inside.

In my opinion baskets are one of the better bargains to be had when it comes to creating enrichment opportunities for one's parrot. They are relatively inexpensive and great fun for a parrot to destroy or play on or in. There is no end to what you can create with a basket and a little imagination.



Byrd enjoys climbing inside her hanging basket play area and chewing it from the inside out.

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