

Green Anole



Anolis carolinensis

The only member of the anole family that is native to the United States, the green anole is possibly one of the most common and least expensive pet lizards available. While not true chameleons, as they are frequently mislabeled, green anoles can change color from green to brown depending on mood, temperature, humidity, and health. Their average lifespan is 4-8 years and have a maximum adult size of about 8 inches.

Housing

Size

A ten gallon tank will be sufficient for a single anole. If you plan on keeping more than one anole it is recommended that you add 5 gallons of space per additional anole. Anoles like to climb, so the higher the tank the better. Two males should never be housed together but several females can be housed together (or a single male and several females) as long as adequate space is provided. Decorations should include plenty of hides (cork bark works well) as well as lots of elevated, leafy plants (real or synthetic).

Substrate

Many substrate types are available for anoles ranging from cypress mulch to a finer coconut husk bedding. Sandy, dry substrates are not appropriate for anoles. Whatever you choose, it is important that the substrate be able to hold moisture well, as anoles prefer a higher humidity.

Lighting

UVB bulbs are a must for anoles. UVB is necessary for your anole to synthesize vitamin D3, which is in turn necessary for calcium utilization. UVB exposure should be provided for 10-14 hours a day. Without adequate UVB exposure an anole can develop metabolic bone disease (MBD) as well as a decrease in quality of life and lifespan. MBD is a diseased cause by a calcium deficiency and symptoms can include a kinked tail or spine.



Some products to look for

- Zoo Med Eco Earth
- Zilla Halogen Mini Dome Heat Lamp
- Exo Terra Mini Mister Hand Sprayer
- Zoo Med Analog Thermometer & Humidity Gauge
- Zilla Low Profile Single Bulb UVB Fixture
- Rep-Cal Herptivite Multivitamins
- Exo Terra Reptile Water Dish
- Zoo Med Mopani Repti Tree
- Exo Terra Abutilon Reptile Plant



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Temperature

Anoles, like all reptiles, are poikilothermic and require an outside heat source to stay warm and properly metabolize food. Since anoles are arboreal, an overhead heating element is a good choice; this can be in the form of a ceramic heat emitter or a heat bulb. An under tank heater is a nice supplemental option to help establish a temperature gradient across the tank and keep night time temperatures above 60°F. A basking area that reaches around 100°F should be provided on one side of the tank and the day time ambient temperature should fall between 75°F and 88°F. A tall branch, or appropriate substitute, should be placed under the heating element, angled away from the heat source so as to provide a way for your anole to thermoregulate.

Humidity

Anoles are tropical lizards that like a humidity between 60% and 70%. A large water dish can help maintain humidity, but regular misting will likely be necessary to keep the humidity appropriately high. Regular misting will also serve to provide drinking water for your anole, as they are not likely to drink standing water from a bowl; they are more likely to drink water droplets on the enclosure's walls and decorations. If you are having trouble maintaining humidity you can try adding live plants or covering a portion of the top of the enclosure to prevent evaporative water loss.

Diet

Insects

Anoles are strict insectivores. Because they do not grow very large there are only a few suitable, commercially available food choices. The most common choice is crickets, with mealworms, wax worms, and butter worms being less common, but still acceptable choices. All of the choices have their own advantages and disadvantages and the merits of each should be researched before selecting a feeder choice. Regardless of the type of feeder chosen, supplementing with vitamins and calcium is a must. Some feeders may also require gut loading.



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