



Brownie Girl Scouts Pets Badge

Leader Guide with a focus on Small Pets

A lot of people don't research small animals like guinea pigs and rabbits, which often leads to them ending up in shelters. no matter what pet you get, its important to research! these four steps will help you learn about these animals, if you don't plan to get one.

Step 1. find out what guinea pigs and rabbits need

step 2. learn how to make a pet feel safe

step 3. how to set up a safe cage

step 4. learn how to bond with your pets
through play



Introduction:

The Brownie Pets Badge aims to teach the girls about the responsibilities of having a pet, even if they don't have any pets of their own. Most information is on common pets, like dogs and cats. This guide is focused on guinea pigs and rabbits, two smaller animals a lot of people don't know about and many people don't have as much awareness about how to care for them before they bring them home. **For more information about guinea pigs and rabbits, visit <https://smallpetcare.org>**

This Brownie Pets Badge guide for small pets is divided into five steps :

One: Find out what guinea pigs and rabbits need

Two: learn how to make a guinea pig or rabbit feel comfy

Three: learn how to step up a safe enclosure

Four and Five (combined): learn how to bond with your pets by providing toys and learning what food they eat.

Step 1: Find out what guinea pigs and rabbits need

In this step, Brownies learn what care guinea pigs and rabbits need by playing pet bingo. To play, pass each of the girls a bingo board. Read the following prompts, then read the answer. Once the answer has been read, the girls can mark their boards. **Visit <https://smallpetcare.org> for more information about what guinea pigs and rabbits need!**

Materials:

- Print Pet Bingo Boards- print (they are located at the end of this guide)
- Markers (pennies, small items, tokens)
- Prompts (listed below)

Prompts:

1. This food is a treat that should only be given to rabbits and guinea pigs 1-2 times a week in small portions (Answer: carrot)
2. This food makes up 80% of both guinea pigs and rabbits diet (Answer: Hay)
3. This item should NOT be given to guinea pigs because it can hurt their spine. (Answer: Hamster wheel)
4. What is the minimum size for a guinea pig cage? (answer: 8 square feet)
5. What is the minimum size for a rabbit enclosure (Answer: 12 square feet)
6. A guinea pig needs $\frac{1}{8}$ a cup of this every day (Answer: Vitamin C pellets)
7. This type of wood shaving is toxic to guinea pigs and should not be used as bedding (Answer: Cedar and pine)
8. This snack is super unhealthy for guinea pigs and rabbits and shouldnt be given to them (Answer: yogurt drops)
9. This food item should be given every day to guinea pigs and rabbits in moderation (Answer: vegetables)

Step 2: Learn how to make a pet guinea pig and rabbit feel comfy

Pets need a clean, comfortable space to live. If a rabbit's pen or a guinea pig's cage is dirty all the time, it could make them uncomfortable and ill. For this part, girls will decorate a hideout for a guinea pig. This can be done as individuals or in groups. These hideouts will be for fun, but real guinea pigs and rabbits need hideouts to feel safe. You can make DIY hideouts like these for real rabbits and guinea pigs too, but you can't decorate them and they have to be big enough for your pet. **Visit <https://smallpetcare.org> for more information about making your guinea pig and rabbit comfy!**

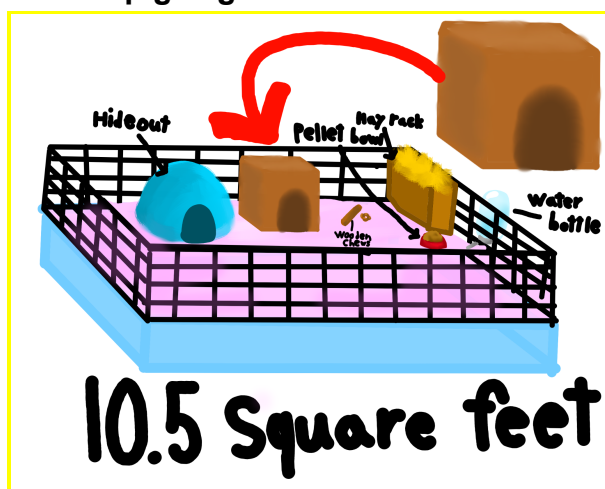
Materials:

- Medium sized boxes (shoe box sized) - cut a small doorway in the side and cover with white paper to make the box easier to decorate
- Markers, crayons, stickers, or other craft supplies

Instructions:

1. Beforehand, grab a few medium size boxes, Cut doorways in them, and cover them in white paper to make them easier to decorate.
2. You may Break them into small groups or have them work independently. Allow the girls to decorate the hideouts with markers, crayons, pencils, stickers or other supplies.
3. Have the girls discuss why it's important that guinea pigs and rabbits have hiding spaces. Hideouts aren't just fun toys to put in their cage- they are essential for prey animals like guinea pigs and rabbits to feel safe. The box isn't an enclosure, it's much too small, but it's an item you can place in an enclosure. It's too small for most rabbits to fit in, but you can use larger ones for them.

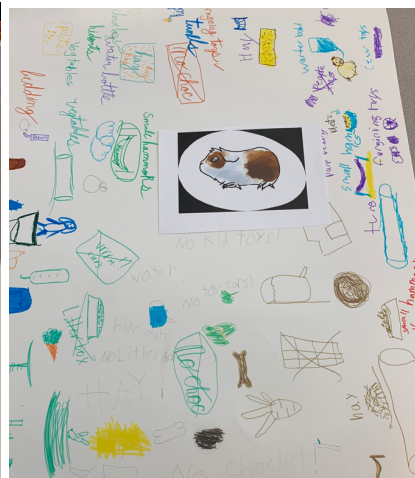
Guinea pig cage:



Step 3: How to set up a safe enclosure

Step 3 is a group activity. For this, get two large poster boards. Label one for guinea pigs and one for rabbits. Read out each of the items on the list below. Have the girls explain if the item should go in a rabbit enclosure, guinea pig cage, none, or both and why or why not. Then, read out the answer and allow them to draw or write it onto the correct poster. **Visit <https://smallpetcare.org> for more information about safe enclosures for guinea pigs and rabbits!**

1. Safe vegetables (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes) (note: see Table on page 6 for examples of safe foods)
2. Hay (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
3. Water bottle (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
4. Pellets (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
5. Vitamin C pellets (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: No)
6. Fleece or paper bedding (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
7. Chocolate (Guinea pig: No Rabbit: No)
8. Foraging toys (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
9. Chew toys (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
10. Figures toys like hatchimals or shopkins (Guinea pig: No Rabbit: No)
11. Toy cars (Guinea pig: No Rabbit: No)
12. Hideout (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
13. Hay holder (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
14. Litter box (Guinea pig: No Rabbit: yes)
15. Tunnel (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)
16. Hammock (Guinea pig: yes Rabbit: yes)



Steps 4 and 5: Learn how to bond with your pets through play and what kind of food they enjoy eating

Learn how to make a guinea pig or rabbit feel loved. A great way to do that is play! Learn how to make some small toys for guinea pigs and rabbits and fill them with their favorite treats or some other healthy food.



Toy option 1: Cardboard treat roll for guinea pigs.

To make this, take a cardboard roll and cut holes on both sides, then fill with hay and pellets. Since you're not making this for a real guinea pig, you don't have to put hay and feel free to decorate.



Toy Option 2: Cardboard treat ball for rabbits.

To make this toy, take a toilet paper roll and cut it into four equal pieces. Layer the pieces to make a ball shape, before adding the last piece, put a treat inside. (check the table for some examples of good treats) since you're not making this for a real rabbit, you don't have to put a treat and feel free to decorate.

Toy Option 3: String food toy for both.

To make this, take a string and using clothespins, hang leafy vegetables (check the table for some examples of vegetables you can use) on it, then hang it up. Since you're not making this for a real rabbit/guinea pig, you don't have to put a treat and feel free to decorate.

Healthy Foods for Guinea Pigs	Healthy Foods for Rabbits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unlimited Timothy hay ● Around 1 cup or 1 handful of vegetables, mostly leafy greens like kale, spinach, parsley but add in a little bit of some Other vegetables like red pepper or carrots. ● Fruits as a treat, like a tiny piece of apple or orange, 1-3 blueberries or a thin slice of banana. ● Vitamin C pellets, 1/8 cup a day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unlimited Timothy hay ● Vegetables, 1 cup or about 1 handful for every 4 lbs your rabbit weighs, mostly leafy greens like cilantro, parsley, basil, romaine lettuce, dandelion leaves. ● Pellets - about 1/4 cup for every 4 lbs of your rabbits weight ● A small piece of carrot, banana, apple (no seeds), cantaloupe, orange, or grape as a treat.

Visit <https://smallpetcare.org> for more information about toys, diet, and how to bond with guinea pigs and rabbits!

Bingo boards:

There are 14 different boards - print one of each so each girl has a different board (you may need to print two of some styles if you have more than 14 troop members, or have them play in pairs/small groups)



























