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# Sulcata Tortoise

## *Geochelone sulcata*

# Care Sheet

### Average Size

2 - 3 feet & 200 lbs.

### Average Lifespan

75+ years

### Diet

Sulcata Tortoises are a grassland tortoise. They should be fed primarily alfalfa hay, timothy hay, Bermuda grass, orchard grass, clovers, and dandelions. Sulcata Tortoises prefer to graze outside on miscellaneous grasses and weeds. Grocery store fruits and vegetables should be fed sparingly and compose less than 10% of their diet.

**Never Feed Lettuce! It contains no nutrition, only water and cellulose.**

### Feeding

Sulcata Tortoises should be fed various grasses daily. Dust food with calcium powder daily, & a multivitamin once a week.

### Housing

**Habitat** - Sulcata tortoises are found throughout Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia. Their natural habitat is dry deserts. This is a terrestrial species which prefers a dry climate and a suitable place to hide. Sulcata Tortoises can be kept alone or in groups. Breeding males may become aggressive and caution should be taken when housing together.

**Size** - A single adult must have a minimum cage size of 8' Long x 6' Deep. Sulcata Tortoises are a burrowing species and will easily burrow 4-8 feet into the ground. If kept outside, they should be kept in a concrete pen to avoid escape.

**Substrate** - A variety of substrates can be used. Fir bark, dry coconut fiber, and alfalfa pellets are most commonly used. A sandy soil mix of 50% peat moss and 50% sand is also used with great success.

**Temperature** - A temperature gradient of 75° - 85° F should be provided with a basking area of 90° - 100° F. Nighttime temperatures can be allowed to drop to 65° F.

**Humidity** - Humidity levels should be between 40% - 55%.

**Watering** - Sulcata Tortoises should be provided with a water bowl large enough for the tortoise to soak.

**Lighting** - Since this is a diurnal species, it requires two light bulbs. One is the heat lamp which also emits UVA. The second is a UVB lamp. The UVB lamp will specifically say UVB on the box. If the box doesn't say UVB, it's not UVB.

**Plant and Fish bulbs are not UVB bulbs.**



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