Safe Toys & Exercise

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Ferret toys should be selected to give your pet enjoyment without endangering his life. Ferrets love to chew rubber. It is the most common cause of intestinal obstruction in ferrets. Baby bottle nipples and pacifiers are very attractive to ferrets, especially if they have any milk or formula on them. Both cats and ferrets will chew the end off a baby nipple, usually becoming obstructed and requiring surgery to remove the rubber from the intestine. Remove anything made of rubber from the ferret's play area. This includes the rubber coasters made to protect hardwood floors and rugs from the pressure of chair and table legs: even when the coasters are in use, some ferrets will gnaw pieces off them. Rubber dog and baby toys, rubber tubing, rubber or latex gloves, and rubber or plastic sandals may be attractive to ferrets.

Suitable ferret toys:

- Ferret balls (large plastic balls with holes cut in them so ferrets can get inside and roll around). These are available commercially.
- Fabric-covered cat toys
- Knotted cotton rope intended for dogs
- Socks tied in a knot
- Empty milk jugs with ferret-sized holes cut in them
- Empty paper bags, the bigger the better
- Cardboard boxes with small holes cut in the sides so ferrets can climb in and out
- PVC tubing (plastic plumbing pipe) or similar tunnel-like materials, like cardboard mailing tubes, big enough for your fattest ferret to get through without getting stuck
- Waste baskets containing smaller items of interest
- A dish pan with a little water inside and a lot of newspaper spread around it. (Not all ferrets like to play in water but those that do are very entertaining.)
- 'Stolen' items such as shoes, socks, gloves or mitts, slippers, hats, car keys
- Other ferrets
- Other animals trained as ferret playmates, such as cats and dogs; and best of all…
- Ferret-loving people, especially those sweeping the floor, reading a newspaper, or doing other interesting tasks to attract ferret 'help'

Note: It is virtually impossible to efficiently perform any task with ferret help, but years later, when there is a ferret grave in your garden, the memories of the times you shared will bring tears to your eyes and make you wish that just once more, you could try to sweep a floor with a ferret hanging on the end of the broom.

And again, note: Most ferrets have a favorite hiding place for their plunder. Watch where they go so you will know where to look for your missing treasures. You will be surprised at what you find there.

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