

Crestie Care Basics



Atmosphere

- **Temperature:** Keep the ambient temp at 73 – 78 °F during the day & 68 - 75 °F at night.
- Avoid temperatures of 82 °F or higher.
- Retained temperatures of 85 °F or higher can be fatal.
- Do not use heating mats. The temperature needs to be the ambient temp of the room.
- **Lighting:** Use a 12-hour day/12-hour dark schedule.
- NEVER use a heat lamp for crested geckos. Heat lamps get way too hot for this shade dwelling species.
- UVB is optional, but if you choose to use it, use a low level one like ZooMed 5.0 T8 linear UVB, Arcadia 6% UVB, or Arcadia Shade Dweller
- **Humidity:** Mist the enclosure in the evening.
- It should be humid after misting, but not wet all day.
- Allow the enclosure to dry back between mistings.
- **Water:** Provide a clean, shallow water dish every day. Misting does not replace a water dish. Crested Geckos require both.

Enclosure

- **Babies:** A ventilated 6-quart grow-out enclosure.
- **Juveniles:** 12 × 12 × 18 inch enclosure.
- **Adults:** At least a 16 × 16 × 24 inch or 18 × 18 × 24 inch enclosure.
- **Substrate:** Paper Towels, Paper, ReptiChips, dampened sphagnum moss, or organic potting soil with no perlite.
- Crested geckos need height, climbing branches, foliage, hides, and secure resting areas. The enclosure should have lots of foliage, hiding spots and branches to climb on. It is also a good idea to include a humid hide in the enclosure for both males & females. Females especially need a humid hide typically consisting of damp sphagnum moss where they can lay eggs - females may or may not lay dud eggs even when they have not been bred.
- Do NOT put a baby crested gecko in an adult size enclosure. They need to be in an enclosure that maintains their higher humidity needs for baby sheds and is also a lot easier for them to find their food bowl and catch live insects.
- It is typically advised to NOT house crested geckos together unless you are breeding a pair. If you have questions about this, please ask me and I can go more in depth. In some cases, cresties can be housed together but certain guidelines should be followed that are too lengthy for this guide.

Handling

- Start handling with short sessions of about 5 minutes.
- Never grab the tail; cresties can drop their tails, and they do not regrow.

When to Call a Reptile Veterinarian

It is important to find a reptile veterinarian near you in the event your gecko is showing signs of distress.

- Ongoing refusal to eat • Suspected retained eggs
- Weakness or tremors • Dehydration
- Breathing trouble • Straining

Food and Insects

- Feed a recognized complete Crested Gecko Diet (CGD) such as Pangea or Repashy.
- **Babies:** Offer CGD 3 evenings per week.
- **Juveniles and Adults:** Offer CGD 2 evenings per week.
- Remove left over diet after 24 hours.
- Offer appropriately sized, insects (gut-loaded with a gut-load like Crypto Cresties Critter Meal):
 - **Babies/juveniles:** 1–2 times per week
 - **Adults:** About once every 2 weeks if they remain interested in insects.
- Always lightly dust insects with the appropriate calcium supplement. If your gecko does NOT receive UVB, dust with calcium PLUS D3. If they DO receive UVB, dust insects with calcium WITHOUT D3.
- Appropriate insects: crickets, dubia roaches, red runner roaches, mealworms, and silk worms/horn worms (occasional treat).