

You must know what's normal in order to recognize what's abnormal. This PowerPage shows the normal lifespan, weight, temperature, heart rate and respiratory rate of the small mammal species that are most frequently encountered in veterinary practice. It is not necessary to memorize all of these values, but it will be helpful to have a sense of the typical lifespan, weight, and vital signs for these species.

Lifespan, Litter Size, and Recommended Temperature

Species	Lifespan	Litter Size	Recommended Ambient Temperature (°F)
Mouse	1 to 2.5 years	7 - 11	70 - 77
Rat	3 years	6 -13	70 - 75
Ferret	8 to 10 years	2 - 17 (average 8)	60 - 75
Rabbit	5 to 8 years	4 - 10	40 - 80
Chinchilla	10 to 15 years	1 - 6 (average 2-3)	50 - 70
Hamster	1.5 to 2 years	5 - 10	70 - 75
Guinea Pig	4 to 7 years	1 - 10 (average 2-4)	65 - 80
Gerbil	1.5 to 2.5 years	3 - 7	65 - 75
Hedgehogs	5 to 7 years	1 - 7 (average 3-4)	75 - 85
Sugar Gliders	8 – 10 years	1 - 2	70 - 80

Weight, Temperature, Pulse, and Respiratory Rates

Species	Weight (metric)	Weight (oz/lb)	Body Temp (°C/°F)	Pulse Rate (beats/min)	Resp. Rate (breaths/min)
Mouse	20 - 40 grams	0.7 - 1.4 oz	37 - 38 °C 99 - 100 °F	400 - 700	80 - 200
Rat	400 - 800 grams	1 - 2 lbs	37.5 - 38.5 °C 100 - 101 °F	300 - 500	75 - 150
Ferret	600 - 1200 grams (females smaller than males)	1.5 - 2.5 lbs	38 - 40 °C 100 - 104 °F	180 - 250	30 - 40
Rabbit	1 - 10 kg (varies by breed)	2 - 20 lbs (varies by breed)	38.5 - 40 °C 101 - 104 °F	150 - 300	30 - 60
Chinchilla	400 - 500 grams	1 lb	37 - 38 °C 99 - 100 °F	100 - 150	40 - 80
Hamster	20 - 40 grams	0.5 - 1.5 oz	36 - 37.5 °C 97 - 100 °F	300 - 500	40 - 100
Guinea Pig	750 - 1000 grams	1.5 - 2 lbs	37 - 39.5 °C 99 - 103 °F	250 - 300	50 - 125
Gerbil	70 - 130 grams	2.5 - 5 oz	37 - 38.5 °C 99 - 101 °F	250 - 600	80 - 140
Hedgehog	300 - 600 grams	0.5 - 1.25 lbs	33 - 36 °C 91 - 96 °F	200 - 300	25 - 50
Sugar Glider	80 - 200 grams	3 - 7 oz	31 - 32 °C 88 - 90 °F	200 - 300	15 - 40