

Hermit Crab Essentials Shopping Checklist

Hermit crabs are complex creatures who require a tropical environment to survive:

Approximately 80% Relative Humidity and 80F

Visit crabstreetjournal.org for more detailed information.

Glass tank with lid:

A glass tank with a glass or plexi glass lid will maintain the temperature and humidity in the crabitat. Starting with a 20 gallon tank is ideal for 2 or 3 crabs. If you can go bigger, you should.

Substrate:

The ideal substrate is play sand mixed with coco fiber bedding (sold in compressed bricks) approximately 5 parts sand to 1 part coco fiber. Small to medium hermit crabs should have 6 inches of substrate. Large hermit crabs should have 8-10 inches of substrate. A jumbo hermit crab needs at least 12 inches of substrate. Deep, moist substrate is essential for successful molting. Play sand can be purchased at hardware stores.

Under Tank Heater:

An Under Tank Heater (UTH) can be used to warm your crabitat. UTH's work more effectively when placed on the wall of the tank and then covered with an insulating material to direct the heat inward. Options: heat tape, thermo panels, or Reflectix insulation (sold in a roll at hardware stores), foam board, styro foam with aluminum foil between.

Overhead light:

Hermit crabs require normal cycles of daylight and darkness. An overhead light can also be used to warm the tank in place of an UTH. Choose a light fixture that allows for a full spectrum day bulb and a night bulb. Just a day bulb is needed when used in conjunction with a UTH at night.

Dishes:

You will need a fresh water pool, an ocean water pool, and a food dish, non metallic. Pools should be deep enough for your crabs to submerge in.

Food:

Feeding commercial foods is not recommended. The only exceptions are foods that are free of chemicals. Land hermit crabs are omnivorous scavengers so they can eat a wide variety of foods. All foods should be free of chemicals and table salt. Find food lists on our site.

Thermometer:

A quality thermometer is required.

Hygrometer:

A hygrometer is used to observe the humidity inside the tank. Analog hygrometers must be calibrated. A digital combo unit is a perfect solution for monitoring temperature and humidity.

Water Treatment:

It is important to remove harmful substances from tap water such as chlorine, chloramines and heavy metals, which can kill hermit crabs. Prime is the commonly used product for this.

Ocean Salt:

You should use a salt mix intended for salt water aquariums. Fresh water salt is not the same and does not meet the needs of land hermit crabs. Never use table salt. Instant Ocean is the commonly used product.

Shells:

Provide 3 spare shells to choose from (per crab). A properly fitting shell will allow your hermit crab to fully retract and close off the opening with its large pincher. **NO PAINTED SHELLS.** Painted shells are toxic and dangerous.

If you are having trouble maintaining a consistent temperature in your crabitat a thermostat and rheostat or a powerstrip with a timer makes can help.

Moss is an excellent way to create and maintain humidity in your tank.

Water pool amendments to prevent drowning: glass stone, river pebbles, plastic canvas or Gutter Guard can all be used to provide traction in the pools. Use aquarium sealant to secure.

Plastic or fabric plants and vines provide a more natural environment.

Substrate enhancements

The basic substrate mix of play sand and coco fiber is sufficient but you want to create a more realistic environment you can add some additional items to the substrate. If you can mix these in at the time you are setting up your tank that is ideal. Once your crabs are down molting it's difficult to add more items. You can add coco bark (often sold as Orchid Bark), crushed oyster shells and leaf litter (pesticide free) from known safe trees.

Extras!

Where to find more info online:

- Crabstreetjournal.org
- Coenobitaspecies.com
- Facebook.com/groups/landhermitcrabowners
- Twitter.com/crabstreet
- [Google+ Community: Hermit Crabs](https://Google+Community:HermitCrabs)
- Instagram.com/crabstreet
- Pinterest.com/crabstreet/
- Tumblr.com/blog/crabstreet/
- flickr.com/photos/crabstreet/
- [Youtube.com Crabstreet](https://Youtube.com/Crabstreet)



HERMIT CRAB SHOPPING LIST

Use this handy list to provide a proper home for your new pet hermit crab

These are the ESSENTIALS for survival!

LET'S BUILD A HOUSE !

I need a glass house with a lid that holds in humidity.



I need to be kept warm and humid. Buy me a heatpad!



I need substrate to burrow in. Sand and Coco fiber are ideal



Is it warm and humid enough? We need gauges!



LET'S EAT!



I prefer natural foods free of chemicals.



I can eat lots of different things including most fruits, vegetables, flowers and organic proteins.

WATER ME!



I must have access to fresh water AND oceanwater.



Never straight from the tap. Chlorinated water is deadly for me.

LET'S DECORATE!



I need things to climb on and places to hide in to feel safe and more at home in captivity.

NOT A THING TO WEAR

I need 3 or 4 empty shells to wear.



NEVER painted shells tho!



Sources: crabstreetjournal.org
lhc.org
coenobitaspecies.com
twitter.com/crabstreet
crabstreet.tumblr.com
pinterest.com/crabstreet
facebook.com/groups/landhermitcrabowners/