



Creative Living with  
Sheryl Borden  
7300 Series  
**Miscellaneous Section II**



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**Due to the size of this section, it has been separated into two sections in order for it to be downloaded more quickly. For instance, “Poison Purse” is in Section I on page 3, whereas “10 Reasons Why Guinea Pigs Make Great Pets” is in Section II on page 7.**

# 10 Reasons Why Guinea Pigs Make Great Pets

Author: Dr. Laurie Hess, DVM, DABVP (Avian Practice)



Thinking of getting a pet but don't want the responsibility of a cat or a dog? How about a guinea pig?

Guinea pigs, or "cavies," are short-tailed, rough-haired South American rodents (family Caviidae.) Guinea pigs have always been one of the exotic pets I recommend most, especially for families considering a pet for the first time. Here are 10 reasons guinea pigs make great pets:

- 1. Guinea pigs are hardy.** When cared for and fed properly, guinea pigs are generally very healthy animals. Like other pets, they can be prone to particular diseases - for example, dental disease and bladder stones in their case - but these conditions may be prevented to some degree with proper nutrition and regular medical checkups. Also, since guinea pigs are from cool climates, they don't do well in hot, humid conditions. Keeping them inside lessens the likelihood that they'll overheat and/or dehydrate.
- 2. Guinea pigs are easy to care for.** They require hay, fresh water, fresh vegetables and a small amount of pelleted food formulated for guinea pigs, plus a vitamin C supplement each day. They also need a fairly large cage lined with paper-based bedding. The cage needs to be spot-cleaned daily and completely cleaned weekly. Add some daily attention, and they are good to go. Just remember, unless you want to end up with several little additional guinea pigs, you'll need to separate males from females even before they are a month old!
- 3. Guinea pigs are great pets for children.** Not as fragile as rabbits and generally less skittish than smaller rodents like hamsters and gerbils, guinea pigs are wonderful pets for elementary-school-age kids and older. But remember, younger children should always be supervised around guinea pigs, just as with any other pet.
- 4. Guinea pigs live long lives.** While most hamsters, gerbils and rats live only two to three years, on average, most guinea pigs live five to seven years and some have even lived into their teens.
- 5. Guinea pigs are unique.** Many people don't realize this, but guinea pigs have a lot of personality. Some guinea pigs are shy; others are bold and dominant. Just because two guinea pigs look the same doesn't mean they'll act the same. Before selecting a guinea pig, be sure to interact with her to ensure that her personality meets your expectations. For example, if you're looking for a cuddly pet, you'll want an outgoing, friendly little pig.
- 6. Guinea pigs purr!** Just like cats, guinea pigs make a quiet yet audible vibrating sound when they are happy, often when they are petted gently. Most people who don't own guinea pigs aren't aware of this adorable sound. In addition to purring, guinea pigs make a number of other sounds including "wheeking" (squealing), "rumbling" (a sound made by a male courting a female), and teeth chattering (when they are angry or aggressive).
- 7. Guinea pigs like to pop.** "Popcorning" is a unique behavior more commonly seen in young guinea pigs when they are happy or excited: They jump up straight into the air over and over. Some guinea pigs run forward and backward quickly, while others alternately kick out their front and back legs. Many pigs also squeal simultaneously. Popcorning is unique to guinea pigs and is a fun behavior to watch.
- 8. Guinea pigs are colorful.** Short-haired, long-haired, even hairless - guinea pigs come in various breeds with fur of all lengths, colors and patterns. According to the American Cavy Breeders Association, there are 13 breeds and 10 basic colors of guinea pigs.

**9. Guinea pigs like people.** People who haven't been around guinea pigs often don't believe this, but these friendly little animals really do recognize and respond to their owners. Many squeal with delight when they see their owners or try to climb up the sides of their cage to greet them. They are as interactive and friendly as dogs and cats.

**10. Guinea pigs make great first pets.** Given their low-maintenance care, overall hardy nature, strong ability to bond with their owners and generally long lifespans, guinea pigs make terrific first pets for families who want an animal that is loving and rewarding but can't provide the degree of care that a cat or dog requires — no need to walk a guinea pig!

So, now that you know all about guinea pigs, what's stopping you from bringing an adorable new friend into your loving home?

## HOW TO DEAL WITH A SNAKE IN THE HOUSE!



In warmer climates, we live with snakes. They slither through our neighborhoods and wildlife preserves and, in some cases, onto our properties. While preventative measures are often made to prevent them from entering your home, there's always a risk present, especially in the summertime. Not all snakes are deadly, but you'll always want to err on the side of caution.

**Resist the urge to attack the snake with a broom or stick.** A snake won't attack you unless it feels threatened by you. All snakes, venomous or otherwise, will not pursue a human being unless provoked. Know that you are a larger predator and that the snake will keep to itself if you don't bother it. If you see that the snake has coiled itself up and opened

its mouth wide, then you know that it sees you as a threat. Step away slowly to avoid any further risk.

Remember that snakes are positive forces in our ecosystem, controlling rodent and insect populations. While it's not comforting to see one in your home, you really don't want to kill it, as it does control pest populations within your area. Prevent cruelty against snakes by not acting out in fear.

**Determine whether or not it is venomous.** While your first impulse might be to scream and run away, it's helpful to get a good look at the snake and quickly determine how major the risk is. There are methods to discover if a snake is venomous. Some major qualities of venomous snakes are fat bodies, large fangs, and slit-like eyes. You'll also want to keep your eyes out for the iconic rattling tail.

If you think that you may live in an area where one of these species lives, make sure that you can identify them. Four major species include:

**The Copperhead.** A pit viper with a tan and copper coloration. Their bites are very painful, but rarely fatal.

**The Coral Snake.** The most dangerous of the four. They can be recognized by their red, yellow and black stripes. Know that they can be easily mistaken for the Milk snake, a harmless beast, because of their very similar colorations. While the colors are the same, the patterns on the two species differ. The rhymes "Red on Black, friend of Jack" and "Red on Yellow, kill a fellow" will help you differentiate between the Milk snake and the Coral Snake, respectively.

**The Cottonmouth.** A quick, cranky snake with a brown and olive body. When threatened, they will stand their ground and flash the light "cotton" lining within their mouths.

**The Rattlesnake.** The most infamous and recognizable snake on this list, the Rattlesnake has a brown coloration with lighter stripes, as well as its iconic rattling tail.

**Clear animals or young children from the area.** Regardless of whether or not the snake is a present risk, you'll want to make sure to reduce any and all potential dangers. Because of their size, your pets and children are at larger risk than a fully-grown adult. Their motion is also far more unpredictable,

especially with your pets, and they are more likely to agitate the snake. Calmly move them away from the danger so that you can safely deal with the snake.

If you suspect that your pet has been bitten, bring them to your local veterinarian or call National Animal Poison Control. There may be some redness, swelling, or bruising on your animal. If so, you should act quickly, as they may be at risk of further harm or death.

### **Create a safe distance between you and the snake.**

Even if you have the smallest suspicion that you have a venomous snake on your property, you must avoid entering its proximity. You might not want to leave the snake completely alone, as it could travel to another place in your home, but you should not attempt to get close to it. If the snake is mobile, however, and you worry that your presence might provoke it, evacuate the area and call Animal Control.

### **Open the door and guide the snake out with a broom.**

Only take this risk if you're certain the snake is not venomous. You shouldn't try to push the snake with the broom. Simply open the door and attempt to guide it out softly. Because the snake's presence in your home is most likely completely accidental, it might be trying to get out itself.



**Restrict the snake's motion.** A heavy blanket or laundry hamper is best for this. If the snake is agitated, it will calm down soon after being covered. When it can't see you or its surroundings, the snake will feel less at risk.

Placing heavy objects around the edge of the blanket will prevent the snake from slipping out from underneath it and moving elsewhere. This will buy you some time to deal with it accordingly.

**Transport the snake outside.** If you're still not positive that the snake isn't venomous, **do not**, under any circumstance, attempt to move it. Be sure to wear some sort of hand protection, either gloves or oven mitts, before handling a snake. Approach the snake slowly, being careful not to scare it.

The best way to hold a snake is directly under its belly, near the tail. Inch your hand underneath its body, keeping a solid, but not overly firm grip. You don't want to injure the snake by squeezing too hard. Let it slither in your hands a bit, as this will make it feel more comfortable. Walk it away from your property and release it safely into nature.

If you've trapped the snake under a blanket or other cloth material, you can scoop it up and transport it outside that way. Still be cautious about holding it too tightly, especially as you can't see its movement.

**Call Animal Control** and ask them to send an expert to collect the snake. This is the best solution, after you've restricted the snake, if you don't want to handle it yourself. They will safely catch and release it far from your property.

**Leave the snake alone.** If you cannot see the snake, but know that it is hiding in a dresser or other dark enclosed space, you should not attempt to catch it. Move all family members away from the immediate area. Because you can't see the snake, you have no idea if it's venomous. It may also currently be in a state of agitation.

If you come across a snake outside your property, you should also leave it alone. If the snake is not venomous, then it is of no real risk to you. It should find its way out of the yard on its own terms, and it's unlikely that you'll have to worry about its presence. If the snake is venomous, then you can quickly evacuate the area and get further removal help.

### **Stop snakes from entering your home.**

While having snakes on your property might be hard to avoid, you definitely don't want them entering your home again. Snakes like cool and dark places, so you should seal any entrances to your basement with diameters that are larger than a quarter inch in diameter.



They also could be entering through loose window frames or door sweeps, so you can make sure those are securely fastened. Any vents or drains that lead

into your home can be covered with screening, so that the snakes cannot pass through.

**Find out why the snake entered your area.** If you have birds in your backyard or a rodent problem in your home, you may be attracting snakes onto your property. It's often hard, however, to get rid of small mammals who are native to the area, especially those who are part of your ecosystem.

**Remove rats from your property.** Snakes love mice and rats. Because our buildings are made mainly out of timber, rodents often find shelter in the space between the exterior and interior walls. If you hear scratch-



ing noises or find evidence of mouse trails in your kitchen, get an expert to solve the problem. Remember, no mice, no snakes!

Leaving out your pet food can also attract mice which will, in turn, attract snakes. Cover up your pet food when they aren't eating, or bring the food inside

A mouse can easily get through a hole the size of a pencil. If there are holes in your walls, fill them immediately. High-pitched sound devices are now becoming a popular way to discourage vermin from entering homes; evidence shows some positive results. Remember, snakes always follow their food source.

Reduce the number of nesting birds in your yard. Whether or not you are attracting them intentionally, birds inhabiting your yard will attract snakes. Bird feeders will not only attract birds into your area, but also mice and rats, who will feed on any fallen seed. While snakes might not be interested in the seed itself, they will be interested in the animals that feed on it.



Natural bird repellents are rarely effective, and you don't want to be poisoning any birds or snakes in your area. If you want to remove birds from your

yard, you should start by filling any vents or holes in your home that might attract them to roost. Bird netting or sticky pads can repel certain species from setting up their nests in your yard. Scare tactics, such as audio recordings of their species in distress or predator decoys, can often be helpful. Just know that you'll have to cycle through a few options, as birds are intelligent and will adapt.

**You might also want to consider trimming your grass or shrubs,** as small predators like snakes love to hide in these shaded, overgrown areas.

Use mortared rocks instead of freely stacked stones, as snakes will hide within your rock walls.

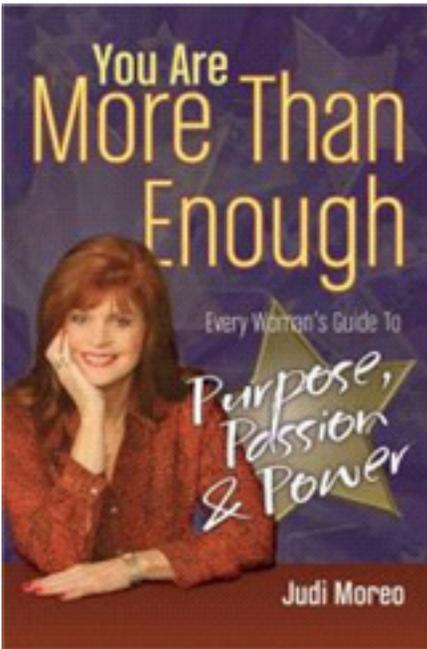
If you're concerned about your children or pets, you can build a small fenced off area for them to play in, minimizing the risk of them coming across a snake.

If you are concerned with a snake potentially getting in your home or yard, have the phone number to your local wildlife rescue organization or Herpetological Society that will safely remove the snake from your property on hand. You'll be prepared if a problem prevents itself.

Do not try to kill the snake as it may bite you, and if the snake is venomous, it could be fatal. It's always best to call animal control if you see a snake or believe there may be a snake in your home.

**COURTESY: Ray Pawley**





## You Are More Than Enough

For more than 20 years, Judi Moreo has traveled around the world, speaking each day to audiences from 50 to 3000 people. She asked the participants if anyone ever felt that they were meant to be more than they were or achieve more than they had accomplished so far. More than 75% of the audience raised their hands.

In this high pressure, high stressed, fast paced world, most of us set our dreams aside just to get by. In this powerful book, Judi shares the ideas and techniques she used which clarified her path and made easier her journey to becoming the person she knew she could be.

The life you've always dreamed of is within your reach. This is a heart warming, myth shattering personal development course filled with practical techniques and illustrated by real life situations.

## Achievement Journal

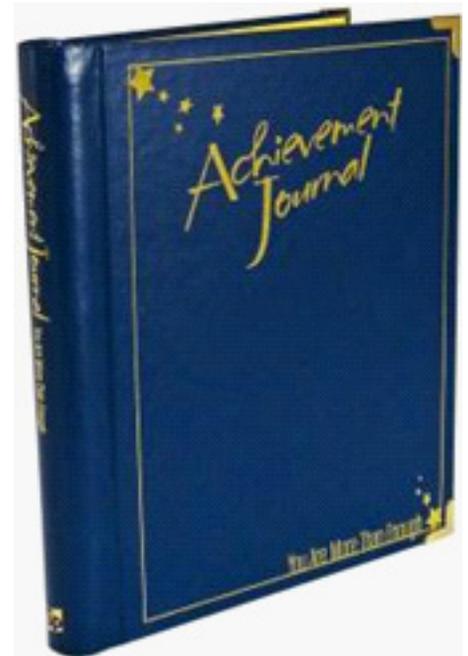
If you have ever felt as though you were created for “something more”, but just didn't know where to start, this is the journal for you.

It's actually much more than a journal! It is a step-by-step process of achieving your goals and making your wants, hopes, and desires come true. It gives you ways to make your life work as well as a proven technique for setting and achieving goals in the eight major areas of your life:

- Career
- Relationships
- Financial
- Health
- Spiritual
- Education
- Community Involvement
- Recreation

In addition to a place for daily writing, there is a measurement tool for you to stay aware of how you are doing in each of those areas of your life.

And you might know, Judi has included 2 pages of peel and stick gold stars in order for you to easily reward yourself. These and other books by Judi are available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and on Judi's website.



**COURTESY: Judi Moreo**  
Turning Point International  
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**K**eeping your pet healthy is not easy with dry, commercial pet foods. Dogs and cats are naturally carnivores, so it's imperative to feed them a diet rich in animal protein, but devoid of plant-based protein or over-processed dry food. Hound & Gatos is dedicated to producing grain free dog food and cat food that will help your pet avoid painful conditions like cat urinary tract infection or dog upset stomach. Our "Paleolithic pet food" will keep your pet feeling their best.

Cats and dogs naturally get most of their water from their food, so feeding them commercial dry food is unnatural and leads to conditions like cat urinary tract infection. Dog upset stomach can be avoided with our grain free dog food that helps give your canine companions the nutrients and water-rich diet they need, along with the flavor they crave. With human-grade meat that satisfies your cat or dog and keeps them out of the vet's office, Hound & Gatos pet foods will help your furry friends live long, happy lives.

It is estimated that, across the country, we have some 70 million dogs and 86 million cats. That pet population supports a massive pet food industry. However, most people don't give a lot of thought to the pet food they buy, often making purchases based on advertising or price. The consequence of doing this can be dire for pets. The more one knows about pet food, the better off they will be in keeping their animals healthy.

There are numerous problems with the pet food industry, including that liver is not being properly labeled so that buyers know which source it originates from. Therefore, pets that are allergic to chicken or beef may end up getting it in their food without their own knowledge. There are many things to know about pet food, beyond the colorful package and flashy advertisements. Here are 5 things to know about pet food:

## 5 Things to Know about Pet Food

1. **FDA Regulated.** The pet food industry is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which

is the same government body that watches over the human food supply in the country. As such, pet foods must follow FDA preparation guidelines to help keep them safe for pet consumption.

2. **Lots of recalls.** Even though the FDA regulates the industry, plenty of recalls still occur. News headlines from time to time warn of pet food that has made it to the shelves that may be potentially harmful if consumed, potentially causing illness or even death. One big issue that may lead to a pet food recall is the threat of salmonella.

3. **Big industry.** The pet food industry is a massive industry, with Americans spending over \$21 billion annually to buy food for their pets, according to the American Pet Products Assn. Walk the aisle of any grocery or pet store and it is easy to see that there are many choices available to the consumer.

4. **Beware of ingredients.** Many pet food brands put out food that is filled with ingredients that people should steer clear of because they can cause digestive and health problems for their pets. These include things like meat by-products, corn, soy, rendered animal fats, wheat, sugar, and artificial anything. These are ingredients that cats and dogs would not eat, in nature, and they will prevent pets from thriving.

5. **There is something better.** Everyone with a pet should become a label reader, avoiding those foods that include the above-listed ingredients. They should opt for foods that contain high-quality sources of protein for optimal health.



## Common Cat Health Problems

According to the American Veterinary Medical Assn., common reasons for pet owners to visit a veterinarian include an injured pet, routine vaccination, to be spayed or neutered, flea or tick medication. In 2012, the Banfield Pet Hospital's State of Pet Health report stated that cat obesity has risen over 90 percent since 2007, and people are beginning to look at their pet food as the source of their health problems.

Here are some of the most common cat health problems:

**Obesity.** Excess weight is a common condition in cats today, but the amount of pet food isn't to blame. Cat food that contains carbohydrates, such as corn and wheat, are fattening for your cat.

**Hyperthyroidism.** The most common glandular disorder in cats, hyperthyroidism, includes symptoms such as a weight loss or an increased appetite. It is most common in older cats, but treatable if diagnosed.

**Dental disease.** It's important to keep your cat's mouth clean; damage to a cat's gums, teeth, and tongue can lead to many health risks. Some pet foods create plaque build-up due to the unnatural, foreign ingredients.

**Skin problems.** Some pet food contains known allergens, such as corn and any type of gluten which can cause skin rashes, redness, bald spots and/or dry, flaky skin. Vets recommend feeding your cats a healthy, balanced food without fillers or artificial ingredients to prevent skin problems.

**Feline lower urinary tract disease.** Cats can develop FLUTD from stress, bladder infections, hyperthyroidism, or diabetes mellitus. Ingredients in your pet food, such as fish, which is high in calcium, can cause urinary tract disease in cats. To treat FLUTD, your vet may recommend dietary changes or antibiotics.

Hound & Gatos Pet Food Corp. specializes in providing consumers with high-quality pet food options. Dubbed as the original Paleolithic pet food company, their recipes are 100 percent protein and zero percent plant protein, with the number one ingredient being meat. They only use top ingredients, providing pets with pure nutrition and avoiding all by-products, fillers and artificial ingredients. To learn more about Hound & Gatos, including where to buy products, visit their website.

**COURTESY: Will Post**  
**Hound & Gatos Pet Food Corp.**  
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FLOWER WORKSHOPS

## Jeweled Tone Flowers in Jewelry Box or Treasure Chest

**Design Principles:** We'll be creating a jewelry box or treasure chest full of flowers that will represent diamonds, rubies, emeralds, gold and more!

**First:** Paint the boxes so they look like real jewelry boxes and treasure chests.

**Next:** Line the box with heavy duty foil or cellophane and add floral foam. Place the foam inside to fit. If using foil, it will be easier to wrap the foil around the foam and then place in the box.

**Decide on your design:** Will you do a color-block where all the flowers are in little compartments – like flowers are together in blocks of color? OR – Will you spread the flowers around making a jumble of color in your box?

**Add flowers:** Be sure to cut each flower just before you place them in the box. You don't want the stem to seal up too soon.



Jewel Toned Flower Ideas: Deep purple lisianthus, gladiolus blooms, purple Vanda orchids, dark red, yellow or purple freesia,

### Flowers & Greenery used in this floral design:

#### Button Mums



Green button mums can represent emeralds where yellow mums like these pictured above can look like gold coins or large pieces of gold.

#### Statice



Purple statice can be amethyst. Statice is a great option for jewelry boxes because it's small.

#### Hypericum Berries



Hypericum berries come in such a variety of colors now. Green hypericum = emeralds  
Red hypericum = rubies  
White hypericum = diamonds

#### Delphinium Blooms



Because delphinium blooms can be cut and kept on little stems of the main stem, they can be perfect as large sapphires!

**COURTESY: Casey Schwartz**  
Flower Duet  
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# Miscellaneous Guests

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