

Chinchilla Facts

- They are part of the rodent family and are closely related to guinea pigs. They originate from South America in the Andes Mountains.
- Chinchillas live an average of 10 years but can live as long as 15 years.
- As nocturnal animals, they are more active at night.
- They can release patches of their fur in big clumps to help them get away from predators (or from being handled to roughly) known as “fur slip”.
- They have extremely dense fur, in fact it is considered to be the softest fur in the animal kingdom. In a single hair follicle, there will be more than 50 hairs growing out of it, compared to humans which have only one hair per follicle!
- Because of their dense fur, they do not like to get wet. If they do get wet, the moisture gets trapped in causing mats, mold, and fungal infections. To keep clean, they take dust baths.
- Due to their dense fur, they are susceptible to heat stroke. Ideal temperatures range from 50–70 degrees Fahrenheit. They often enjoy sitting on a cool marble slab in their habitat on warmer days.
- In the wild, chinchilla fur was originally a yellow-gray color. Through selective breeding, chinchillas are now often gray, black, white, beige, and mosaic.
- Clothing made from chinchilla fur has been popular since the 1900’s, which made them almost extinct. Luckily many countries have since banned hunting chinchillas.
- There are two species of chinchillas: the short-tailed chinchilla and the long-tailed or Chilean chinchilla. Long-tailed chinchillas are most commonly seen as pets.



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