Budgie/Cockatiel Checklist

Budgerigars (also called Parakeets or Budgies) make wonderful pets for people of all ages. Budgies are small, and when purchased at a young age, are friendly and easy to train. They can become finger trained and can learn to talk with their wonderful ability to imitate sounds. Over the years they have evolved from green to a large variety of colors. The most popular are shades of blue, green, violet and yellow.

Cockatiels are native of Australia. Cockatiels are very well suited to life as a pet. They are relatively easy to care for, hardy, friendly and intelligent. They are also long-lived-the average life span is approximately 10-12 years.

The following is a checklist of suggested items for the well being of your bird.

☐ **Housing:**
The cage should be in place before the budgie/cockatiel arrives. It should be made of metal and large enough to allow freedom of movement. Your budgie/cockatiel should be able to spread its wings and turn fully without brushing them on the sides of the cage. The door, perches, and cups must be large enough for the bird.

☐ **Cage Paper:**
Specially coated gravel paper, which is available in a variety of sizes and pre-cut to fit your cage, should be placed on the bottom of the cage for easy clean up of droppings. Gravel paper contains grit, which is essential to a bird's digestion. Cage liners should be changed daily to maintain cleanliness.

☐ **Cage Covers:**
Dark and quiet contribute to a good night's rest for your bird. A cage cover is helps birds sleep, keeps them quiet and protects them from drafts. A cage cover is also a good tool when trying to calm your bird.

☐ **Perches:**
Three perches measuring different diameters are adequate. These should be spread out throughout the cage to allow for adequate exercise.

☐ **Food:**
There are several good brands of food found in a Petland Discounts. Be sure you are feeding a complete, well balanced diet for your pet bird species. It is important to feed your bird a good quality seed mix or pellet food or the two mixed together. In addition to this, birds also need fruits and vegetables. Birds eat small amounts all day long, so make sure fresh food and water are always available.

☐ **Treats:**
There are several brands and types of treats that will give your bird some variety in his diet. Honey sticks, seed treats, and fruit treats add not only variety but also fun to your birds diet.

☐ **Vitamins:**
A good vitamin is recommended to ensure that your bird is getting the proper nutrition. Vitamin A is a particularly important vitamin that promotes new cell growth to help maintain healthy eyes, skin and feathers, as well as respiratory and intestinal tracts. These vitamins supplement the needs of the birds, and are especially valuable to older or breeding birds for optimum health.

☐ **Mineral Beak Conditioner:**
A mineral block, or cuttlebone is essential to the health of a bird. Calcium is especially important for bone formation as well as molting. It is aids in the prevention of beak overgrowth.

☐ **Toys:**
Birds are intelligent animals and need mental stimulation to prevent boredom. Offer a variety of toys in different shapes, color and sizes to keep your bird busy. Rotate toys often to keep your bird from losing interest.

☐ **Spray bottle:**
Lightly spraying a bird with warm water from a spray bottle, on a daily or weekly basis, will stimulate preening and keep feathers clean and healthy.

☐ **Books:**
There are several books about budgies/cockatiels that can give you good insight into the care and habits of your particular bird.