

## **Making Your Own Guinea Pig Toys**

Making your own guinea pig toys is fun and cheap. You don't have to spend a fortune on guinea pig toys so why not try the homemade variety.

When it comes to making or buying toys for your Guinea pig, always put safety first. Make sure all items have been washed and disinfected before your little furball gets them. Never give your pet anything with sharp edges, or anything that has been treated with toxic stains or dyes. You'll also want to make sure not to give your piggy anything with small pieces, as these can be choking hazards. Plastic can be dangerous as well. Keep a close eye on any plastic playthings, and remove any with cracks or sharp edges. If your piggy tries to eat plastic, avoid it and give him something different.

### **Plain Is Preferred**

Your guinea pig won't insist on high-priced toys with all the bells and whistles. For your little rodent, simpler is better. Empty toilet paper rolls, crumpled wads of paper and even an old sock - laundered, if you please - will provide enough entertainment to keep him occupied and out of trouble.

Create paper bags that your guinea pig can hide in. Design such a bag using a regular paper and making a few small holes that the pig can peek through. Cut the tube of the paper bag open to allow your tiny pig to run through the makeshift tunnel. Start by hiding a few treats in the tunnel to start the game.

Crumple up a paper into a ball and let the guinea play when it gets out of the cage. The pig will enjoy the noise the paper makes.

Use an old sock stuffed with clean animal bedding material. Tie the hose on one end and cut off the other until it looks like a pillow. The cavy will enjoy chewing it for minutes.

Tennis and ping pong balls are easy ways to keep your guinea up and running around the cage. They allow the cavy to entertain itself when you're not around.

Tie a small treat to a cord and drag it across the floor a bit faster than the speed of your running guinea's pig. Don't let it get stuck on the wire or chew parts of it. Guineas enjoy food hunts. Hide the treat somewhere, untie it and let the pig find it.

### **Paper Ball Surprise**

Simply find a blank piece of paper (ink may be toxic to your guinea pigs). Place a small treat in the middle and scrunch the paper up into a ball. This homemade guinea pig toy will be an instant hit - your pigs will roll it around, chew it and pull it apart. It shouldn't take long for your guinea pig to reveal the magic treat inside!

### **Hay-Stuffed Fun**

Try stuffing a paper bag, a sock, or even a cardboard tube with hay or herbs. Your piggy can stay occupied for hours getting the hay out!

### **Paper Bag Snug**

Making your own guinea pig paper bag toy is very quick and the results are fun. Just find a paper bag, remove the handles, stuff some hay inside and lay on its side in the cage. Your guinea pigs will love hiding in and darting to and from this snug little toy.

### **Tunnel Time**

Using cardboard boxes, old cardboard tubes or old plastic plumbing pipes, you can create a network of tunnels for your guinea pigs. Using your imagination you can vary the layout to help make it stimulating and exciting. Your guinea pigs will love this mini-maze of homemade guinea pig tunnels!

### **Cardboard Box Playhouse**

A simple cardboard box can provide hours of fun for your guinea pig, who will chew on the cardboard and hide in it. Cut out small "doors" in a cardboard box. Get more creative by using cardboard containers with the ends cut off, such as oatmeal canisters, to create "tunnels" leading from one box to another. Cut out "windows" in the boxes so your guinea pigs can burrow inside the box and have a window to look out of. Turn over the cardboard box and a cardboard palace awaits.

### **Surprise Bag with Treats**

Give your guinea a treat toy that requires a bit of effort. Fill a brown paper bag with hay and a few treats. Fold the paper bag down to keep the hay and treats in. If your guinea pig is extra smart, he may figure out how to fold the flap up and get inside the bag. Cut small holes in the bag and allow your guinea pig to have at it. He will be intrigued with what's inside the bag and will work his way to it.

### **Hanging Kabobs**

Some guinea pigs just can't resist yanking and tugging on things with their teeth. Hanging toys from the top of their enclosure provides something fun and entertaining for them to do. Get some twine and hang it from the top of the cage. String a few toys, such as wooden blocks of different shapes with holes in the middle. Add a bell or two to the end of the toy for extra intrigue.

### **Obstacle Course**

Guinea pigs aren't known for their athletic prowess, but they enjoy a challenging obstacle course or maze now and then. Allow your cavy some free time to romp and roam after you set up an obstacle course to explore. Put one together for your cavy using boxes, toy blocks, sofa cushions and cardboard tubes. Your little guy won't be able to climb or jump over the obstacles, but he should be able to find his way around them. Use your guinea pig's favourite treat to entice him from starting line to finish line. When food is at stake, he'll readily learn the path, and for months will be able to recall the quickest way to the treat. Once your guinea pig has mastered one course, change it up and make it more intricate to for a new challenge. The mental stimulation and fun this activity will provide will help keep your cavy content while giving him a bit of exercise.

## **Cardboard Boxes**

You can cut little doors and windows in a cardboard box, and make your pet a cute little castle. Of course, your cavy may eat his home, but that's half the fun! You can also turn a soda carton into a cute little tunnel for your furry buddy.

## **Bells and Balls**

Many toys that are made for cats or birds are safe for Guinea pigs. Your furball may really love pushing a ball around or playing with a little bell!

## **Vitamin C Tablets**

Cavies must have Vitamin C in their diets. They can't make their own, but it's very crucial to their health. An occasional chewable Vitamin C tablet can make a great fun treat!

## **Chew Toys**

Guinea pigs need to chew to keep their teeth from overgrowing. Give your pet lots of chewing options, such as wood or wicker objects. You can fold paper into rings or other shapes, or get your little buddy chew sticks.

## **Stuff It**

Make a homemade toy for your guinea pig by stuffing one item with another. He'll be happy to spend a whole afternoon removing the stuffing and strewing it around. Stuff some shredded paper into a sock or a small box, or pack an empty toilet paper roll tightly with hay to keep your guinea pig busy for hours.

## **Hideouts**

Give your guinea pig a few places to hide out and he'll be delighted to explore and take cover over and over. Empty shoe boxes, tissue boxes, paper bags and oatmeal containers are ideal havens for guinea pigs. Cut a hole big enough for your guinea pig to fit through easily, then put some shredded paper in the box or bag. Your guinea pig will be thrilled with his new playhouse and be even more pleased to tear the paper and move it in and out of his hideout.

## **Guinea Pig Treats**

Any pet enjoys treats, and guinea pigs also do. You can reward the cavy with a treat once in a while and also make sure their menu is diverse.

- Hang carrots or apples on strings around the cage to offer your guinea some healthy treats.
- Place the small treats in hard to reach areas to help them stand on hind legs to grab the gifts. This exercise is proper muscle stimulation.
- Think about surprises. The food smell engages guinea pigs to play and explore. Place a few small bits of carrots at the end of a cardboard tube or inside a paper bag. Let the cavy explore and discover where his or her favourite food is.
- Appletree wood is safe for the guinea pig. You shouldn't build cages out of it as they love to chew them. However, if you add small wood pieces to the cage once in a while, you keep their teeth healthy.