

# Tarantula

## A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

### Immediate Care and Handling

Tarantulas do best at warm temperatures, in the 24 to 27° C (75 to 80° F) range. Mist their terrarium daily. Although tarantulas will not thrive in damp conditions, they do need some humidity; 50 to 80% is ideal. They prefer live crickets, but tarantulas will eat most insects. Do not feed captured insects unless you are certain that they are pesticide-free.

### Habitat Setup and Maintenance

Since tarantulas are cannibalistic, each spider must be housed separately in a screen-covered container. Habitats can range from glass or plastic tanks, jars, plastic storage boxes, to custom-built tanks. The tarantula should have enough room to move about some; otherwise, container size is not important. There should be a place where the tarantula can hide. This can be a cork hollow or tube, ceramic molded products such as used in fish tanks, plants, floral foam, etc. We recommend plastic plants for greenery as live plants are often damaged. Add about 5 cm of soil as the substrate. A mixture of peat and vermiculite holds moisture well and allows easy burrowing. Avoid wood shavings and pure sand as substrates. Provide water in a petri dish-sized container, but add pebbles to the dish. This will help keep crickets and other live foods from drowning in the water. Check the cover to be certain your tarantula cannot escape.

### FAQ's

*Can I add a plant to the terrarium?*

Yes, sturdy plants with lots of leaves that create hiding places work best. Examples include sansevieria, philodendrons, *Epipremnum aureum*, bromeliads, ivy, and other vines.

*Why isn't my tarantula eating?*

Tarantulas are cold-blooded animals and don't need as much food as a cat or dog. Be patient. Adult tarantulas only need feeding every 7 to 14 days, and it is normal for them to skip several meals. Also, they may not eat for several weeks before molting. Spiderlings eat more often—2 to 4 times per week.

*I'm worried that the terrarium is too cool. Can I use a lamp to warm it?*

Tarantulas are nocturnal creatures and bright light may drive them into hiding. They are fine at normal to slightly elevated room temperatures. A better solution is to provide a heat pad made for reptiles.

*My tarantula is lying on its back! Is it sick?*

Your tarantula is molting. Leave it alone and it will be fine.

*Can I handle my tarantula?*

It is better not to. If you drop the tarantula or if it jumps, it may be injured. Some tarantulas are placid; some are more aggressive. Tap your tarantula lightly on its abdomen. If it turns to face you or rears up, it is aggressive and you should leave it alone. Tarantula bites are painful but not known to be dangerous; nevertheless, in the unlikely event you are bitten, seek medical attention.

The hairs that cover the tarantula's body are irritating to some people and can cause a rash. Never touch your face after handling your tarantula or the inside of its terrarium, and always wash your hands after

contact.

*How much space does my tarantula need?*

Tarantulas don't need a lot of room. At a minimum, the terrarium should be 2½× the leg span of the spider in length by 1½× the depth.

*Will my tarantula spin a web?*

Tarantulas are not web-weaving spiders. You may occasionally find strands of spider silk in the terrarium, but the tarantula will not create a web.

**Problems?** We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

**Orders and replacements:** 1-800-334-5551 then select Customer Service

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