

- Large plants/ large objects - For large plants, a clipped on, tightly woven screen, or large rocks placed across the pot should keep out little paws. It is very important to make large objects sturdy against pushing or tipping. Place a brick in the bottom of the trash can before adding the bag to make it weighty.

- Carpets under doors - get rid of carpet or secure a plastic runner, plexiglass, or linoleum under the door.

- Screens - Attempt to keep your ferrets away from any window or door screens. Their claws and teeth can rip through or they may be able to push through and fall or escape. It is best to keep windows closed or open at the top.

Ferretproofing is a task without end as our lovable pets will always find more ways to get into mischief.

ABOUT MD FERRET PAWS

MD Ferret PAWS strives to protect and improve the lives of ferrets in Maryland. We seek to improve the relationships between ferrets and humans through education and outreach. We promote legislation and research that makes life safer and healthier for all ferrets. Through our efforts the status and life of the ferret as a companion animal will be enhanced, legitimized, and more enjoyable for everyone. We need your help to accomplish these goals! Visit our website to see how you can become a member!



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FERRETPROOFING FAQ

WHAT IS FERRETPROOFING?

Ferretproofing is the act of keeping your ferrets out of places or away from things that you do not want them to reach. This means taking a definite course of action whether you are making your home safe **for** your ferrets or making your home safe **from** your ferrets. Sometimes it will be hard to tell one from the other.

WHY SHOULD I FERRETPROOF?

Ferrets are very intelligent animals, unceasingly curious and highly inventive when it comes to exploring their environment. Everything reachable, from the garbage, to the furniture, to your favorite knickknacks, to the top of your bookshelves, will be explored, eaten, knocked over, or taken somewhere else. It may be funny to watch, but you could lose your valuables, or worse, your ferret, to an accident if you haven't made the room safe for play.

WHEN SHOULD I FERRETPROOF?

Initial ferretproofing should start before your bundle of energy dooks through the door. Decide which room or rooms you will

allow your ferrets to enjoy. One room is fine, especially if you are inexperienced with ferrets. As you grow more accustomed to your new pet, you can add rooms if you wish. After your ferret is home he will probably let you know all of the things you missed while ferretproofing. Expect to have to do more ferretproofing. Do not be discouraged because this will happen for as long as you have ferrets. They will always be learning how to get into new things just to keep you on your toes.

WHERE SHOULD I FERRETPROOF?

Ferretproofing will need to be done everywhere your ferret goes - no exceptions. Some general tips to remember are:

- Anywhere the head fits so will the rest of the ferret- that crack underneath the door, behind the dresser, the open vent in the laundry room, between the sofa cushions, the list can be endless so if there is a 1 inch gap expect the ferrets to go through it.
- Anything lower than your knee is easily reachable to jump on or knock over - if you'd like to keep it in one piece, lock it up, or move it to higher ground. Anything above the knee is still reachable to the more determined ferret, just not as easily. Ferrets can and do open cabinets, drawers, and sometimes even refrigerator doors. Learn how to keep them closed tightly.
- Ferrets can jump and climb-- things that have been put higher up may not always be safe if a chair, small table, or cage can be used as a ladder. This can be

especially dangerous for your fuzzy because as inventive as ferrets are going up, they lack the skills to get down and will jump if no other way is available.

- Ferrets are natural diggers - plants, sofas, and carpeting under doors are the primary targets.
- Chewables- Most ferrets are not problematic chewers but soft rubbery things are hard to resist for some ferrets. Be wary of TV remotes, keys, covered cables, and shoe soles and inserts. The #1 hazard here is toys. Old worn out toys can start to break apart into small pieces that may be accidentally swallowed, so take away that mangy toy for something new before you have to make a trip to the vet.
- Remember all ferrets have different personalities. What may be attractive to one may not be to another. Ferretproofing should be adjusted to the individual actions of your own ferrets regardless of what Aunt Lulu's misbehaving ferrets know how to do. Unless, of course, they come for a visit, where things may degrade to the point of monkey see-monkey do.

HOW DO I FERRETPROOF?

There are many ways of ferretproofing and other ferret owners are often your best resource. In most cases you will only have to be slightly more inventive than your ferret. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- No soft rubber toys, no torn or damaged stuffed animals - inspect toys periodically for tears and replace any that are worn.

- Cabinets, doors, and drawers - magnets, Velcro, and bungee straps are cheap and easy to apply. Duct tape will work in a pinch if you do not mind ruining the finish. Child safety locks generally do not work because they still leave a small gap.
- Appliances - if your ferrets can get under or behind your kitchen/laundry appliances, think twice about letting them in this room. It is safer and easier to block total access than to ferretproof each appliance.
- Sofas - use slipcovers to keep ferrets from burrowing between cushions. Staple a sheet or nail a thin board to the underside of the sofa. If using a sheet check frequently for gaps that may have been dug. The same strategy can be used if a ferret is burrowing underneath a bed.
- Chairs - there are two dangers here the first being the chair itself - recliners are the root cause of a number of ferret deaths. If you have one, it is best to keep the ferret out of that room, or get rid of the recliner. If neither is acceptable then disable the reclining mechanism by removing the handle or binding the hardware. The second danger from chairs is their use as step stools. Make sure that whatever is accessible from the chair is safe for ferrets or move the chair during playtime.
- Small plants/small objects - the safest place is out of reach, put them on a shelf or hang them from the walls. Get a CD/Video stand or bookcase with doors if you do not want the contents rearranged on a regular basis. Consider stand lamps instead of table lamps.