

Handling Companion Animals

Student Notes

Content

This unit will help you to understand how a range of common companion animals should be handled.

You will consider what is happening in the animal's mind which causes it to behave in a certain way (psychology).

And you will think about 'Risk assessment' and the dangers involved.

To get the most out of this session you could read the 'questions to answer' section, that goes with the film clip you are about to watch. Then use the film clip to help you get the answers. Before moving on to the next clip complete the 'Tasks to do'.

The Aim of this session is . . .

To establish the industry accepted methods of handling a range of the most common companion animals.

Objectives – By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Interpret relevant aspects of animal psychology.
- Recognise the appropriate preparatory actions.
- Describe the most appropriate method for handling a range of companion species.



Introduction

Film Clip

Questions to answer (whilst watching)

Tasks to do (after watching)



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<p>Watch the film clip: Animal Psychology</p>	<p>As what do companion animals see humans? How does this cause them to respond?</p> <p>Some animals are prey and some are predators. How does this affect your approach to handling?</p> <p>Some well-camouflaged companion animals such as rabbits may freeze when a predator appears. How do they hope this will protect them?</p>	<p>Research predator/prey interactions.</p> <p>There is a range of ways in which animals can respond to a potential threat in order to avoid injury. Some of the most common responses are:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Fight/Flight/Freeze/Defecate</i></p> <p>Pick one species, and find out what response it might make to a potential threat.</p> <p>Why do you think it might take this approach? How effective and appropriate do you think this response is?</p>
<p>Watch the film clip: Attack / Bite</p>	<p>What happens when a stressed animal attacks? What is the correct course of action if you are bitten?</p>	<p>Why is it so important to remain calm?</p> <p>Compile a step by step schedule of actions. Justify your schedule.</p>
<p>Watch the film clip: Health and safety</p>	<p>What must you do before handling?</p>	<p>Write a step by step guide to handling.</p>
<p>Watch the film clip: Preparation of Enclosure</p>	<p>What must you do to the enclosure before handling?</p>	<p>Remember to consider the Health and Safety Act 1974.</p>



Ferret		
Film Clip	Questions to answer (whilst watching)	Tasks to do (after watching)
Watch the film clip: Ferret handling	What are the more robust areas?	Explain which are the robust areas of the body that can be handled.
	What are the more vulnerable areas?	Explain which are the more vulnerable areas of the body that must be avoided.
	What is the correct method of handling?	Describe the basic method of handling, and its purpose.
	How do ferrets tend to behave towards the handler?	Explain: Why the ferret may be more inclined to use its teeth than some other species. What action could you take in terms of Health and Safety and the use Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).
	What is the safe return procedure?	Describe the safe return procedure.
<p>An Interactive task is also included in this package –</p> <p>You can complete a risk assessment, associated with the task of handling this animal. A 'calculator' will indicate the overall level of risk. Complete the interactive risk assessment task via the link provided.</p>		



Rabbit		
Film Clip	Questions to answer (whilst watching)	Tasks to do (after watching)
Watch the film clip: Rabbit handling	What are the more robust areas?	Explain which are the robust areas of the body that can be handled.
	What are the more vulnerable areas?	Explain which are the more vulnerable areas of the body that must be avoided.
	What is the correct method of handling? What must be avoided when handling?	Describe the basic method of handling, and its purpose. Unless the rabbit's weight is supported it will tend to kick its back legs. Why does this pose a danger to the handler? (what are the H and S issues?) Why does this pose a danger to the Rabbit? (what are the animal welfare issues?) Many people say that a rabbit may be picked up by its ears. What is your opinion of this statement. Fully justify why you think this.
	What is the safe return procedure?	Describe the safe return procedure.

Guinea pig		
Film Clip	Questions to answer (whilst watching)	Tasks to do (after watching)
Watch the film clip: Guinea pig handling	What are the more robust areas?	Explain which are the robust areas of the body that can be handled.
	What are the more vulnerable areas?	Explain which are the more vulnerable areas of the body that must be avoided.
	What is the correct method of handling?	Describe the basic method of handling, and its purpose. Why is it usual to place a finger or thumb beneath the Guinea-pig's chin?
	How do G'pigs tend to behave towards the handler?	Explain: Why is the Guinea pig inclined to flee? Guinea pigs are not usually aggressive, so why might they bite? What action you could take in terms of H and S and the use of PPE?
	What is the safe return procedure?	Describe the safe return procedure.