



## A FEW THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE BUYING A CHAMELEON

We chameleons are fantastic animals. Our husbandry is full of learning, fascination and positive energy **IF DONE PROPERLY**. It can turn into a valley of tears, if you make mistakes in the beginning, which will cause our suffering and death.

The aim of this material is to prevent this. Please, take it seriously and act accordingly. We are here to assist you.

GO SAFE

ENJOY

SAVE MONEY

SAVE TEARS

IF YOU DECIDE  
TO GO VIA  
PET STORE...

**NOT  
RECOMMENDED!**

Aka  
What some pet stores  
don't want you to know:

### BEWARE

You cannot keep the chameleon as it is displayed in the store!

Do not buy the chameleon kit!

Do not believe, keeping chameleons is cheap!

Do not buy two chameleons to keep together!

Chameleons do not enjoy handling and human interaction!

Chameleons are insectivores!  
DO not believe you can feed it with veggies!

Do not buy a chameleon because you believe it is suffering in the pet store!

Do not buy a tiny baby!

Do not trust the first hand info from a pet store associate. They simply are not trained to know the proper care of captive chameleons.

### CONSIDER

Chameleons need large, airy cages full of live plants.

It is only temporary suboptimal housing for a very small chameleon. Most chameleons suffer and die in that kit.

Plan to spend \$500–\$800 for proper cage, lighting, hydration system, plants, and supplements to provide optimal caging for your chameleon.

There are no “bonded pairs”. Chameleons must be kept separately to avoid deadly stress.

They may learn to trust you to bring food, but they cannot tolerate excessive handling or cuddling.

You must feed the chameleon with a variety of insects. Plan to spend as much time caring for insects as you do for the chameleon.

You may end up with costly veterinary bills and broken heart, when the chameleon that you “rescued” does not make it, which is very likely. The pet store will simply order another one to fill the empty space.

Increase your chance of success with a healthy juvenile chameleon around 3-4 months of age, and 3-4 inches snout to vent. Although very cute, they are easily overheated and need tiny insects, that are not readily available.

Search in social media forums and internet resources, order books and ask for referrals.  
When new, come to us on FB: Chameleon Care 101.  
When advanced go to: Life with Chameleons.  
Refer to [www.chameleons.info](http://www.chameleons.info)



WHAT TO ASK THE BREEDER	CONSIDER
Ask for the exact chameleon species and local form.	Individual species have very different conditions to provide, as they originate from different regions and climates. Be sure you can provide the climate needed (especially night time drop).
Ask for good quality photos of the chameleon from all sides.	Do not accept excuses, blurry photos or “examples”, insist on getting the exact animal shown on photographs.
Ask if the chameleon is male or female.	A female chameleon may lay eggs whether with a male or not, and will need a lay bin, which is exciting but risky for a newbie. A male is simpler in care.
Ask whether the chameleon is laying eggs or delivers living young.	Some chameleons give birth to live young, some lay eggs! You need to know exactly what your chameleon is like.
Ask about lineage.	The breeder should have photos of the sire and dam, to give an idea of what colors and patterns are in the genetics.
Ask if the chameleon is captive bred or wild caught (taken from its natural environment).	Abscond from buying an adult wild caught chameleon, as it may need to be treated for parasites, and may not transition well into captivity. Go for captive ones.
Ask to see photos of the cage where the chameleon is kept.	Do not accept excuses, every breeder has tons of photos of his enclosures, or he can easily make some. The equipment and look of them must be consistent with the science-based care sheets of Chameleon Care 101.
Show photos of your cage and ask for feedback.	You can judge the professionalism of the breeder based on the advice, which must be consistent with the science-based care sheets of Chameleon Care 101.
Ask which UV lamps and supplementation is being used, and compare to care sheets on Chameleon Care 101.	If the animals did not receive UV from a recommended source or sun or has been supplemented wrongly, go away.
Do not buy an egg to hatch at home!	Do not support this unethical, risky and fraudulent way of business with chameleons. Go for a healthy juvenile chameleon.
No rush! Do not accept being forced to decide quickly, do not get manipulated!	Take your time and seek advice of a specialist, approach the trained and certified team of Chameleon Care 101 and her sister-groups, who will provide online assistance.

IF YOU DECIDE  
TO GO VIA BREEDER  
OR ON THE REPTILE SHOW

RECOMMENDED

Aka  
What to look for  
in a healthy  
chameleon:



## GOOD

## BAD

Eyes open, clear and alert without swelling

Eyes closed, passive, swollen

Feet with nails intact and strong grip

Feet with missing nails, weak grip

Tail without kinks that wraps easily around a stick or finger

Tail with kinks or limp, not wrapping around anything, unfunctional

Skin that is elastic and free from injury

Skin warty or wrinkly, with injuries and discolorations

Legs with straight bones and no swelling around joints

Legs with U-shape with bent or broken bones, swollen joints

Mouth that closes completely, and when open, it has clear saliva and consistent color of jaws and gingivae

Mouth open, lots of saliva or not transparent ones or thick or sticky, discoloration of jaws and gingivae

Cloaca clean and fully closed

Cloaca dirty, partly opened with something stuck in it

Spine flexible and free from kinks

Spine kinky, with burns and injuries

**Disclaimer:** There are, of course, serious and professional pet stores, as well as competent and trustworthy breeders. All of them will respond to your curiosity and preparedness with praise to all your questions and will have the correct and friendly answers immediately. Any arrogance or tendency to hide information is extremely suspicious, rather withdraw from such interactions quickly.

