



Hides

It is important to provide your reptile with an environment which enables opportunities for natural behaviours. It is a natural behaviour for a reptile to find somewhere to hide and in the wild they will do this to protect themselves from predators. In captivity, this same instinct to hide will exist, therefore it is essential to provide your reptile with the ability to hide.

Hides should be placed in both the warm and cool ends of the vivarium and should be large enough that your reptile can fit their whole body within each hide. Snakes will need hides that are large enough that they can fit within them, but not so large that their body cannot touch the insides of the hide when they are coiled up.

Hides should be:

- Made from a durable material that can be easily cleaned.
- Solid and heavy enough not to move when the animal hides within them.
- Opaque so the animal feels secure and not easily seen from the outside.
- Have an appropriate sized entrance/exit point to allow the animal to get in and out comfortably without being easily seen from the outside.

You can buy purpose-built hides for your reptile or with a bit of imagination you can create your own using objects such as plastic tubs and terracotta pots with holes cut in the side, but make sure you file or sand down any rough edges.

Humid hides

Many species of reptile will also benefit from having a humid hide – also known as a moist hide – to replicate the humid hiding holes they would find in the wild, which can help with shedding their skin. The main difference between a humid hide and a normal one is that it will include a moisture-holding substrate in it such as damp moss. Spray the substrate with clean water daily to ensure the hide provides a localised area of higher humidity in the vivarium.

Cleaning your hides

It is important to keep your hides clean. Any animal waste should be spot-cleaned as soon as it appears and the hides should also be cleaned and disinfected regularly using a reptile-safe disinfectant.

