

Cages suited to Melbourne climate



PIC 1

Outdoor enclosures

The first two designs are most suited for keeping under sheltered sites away from strong drafts, such as the patio or verandah.

Pic 1 is commercially available but note that many of these are far too small. If the internal floor space is *less than 1.1m long and less than 55cm deep*, then it is too small. Do not measure the size of these hutches externally as it is the available/internal floor space that is most important. All wooden hutches are recommended to at least have the inside painted with a gloss paint to reduce the problems you can get with fungal spores and mites living in the wood grain and gaps. Some designs have an open ground floor—these must NOT have a wire base.



PIC 2

Pic 2 is very large hutch—each floor is 1.2m x 0.6m floor space! - and is made by ACS Melbourne. This can also be made in a single storey design suited to no more than 2 piggies. You will need to paint this hutch inside and out with a gloss paint. The shelter can make and supply corflute trays as well—these will make the cage last longer, make it easier to clean and will also keep all the bedding inside the cage!



PIC 3

Pic 3 is a huge cage—as a lawn hutch, these are still not acceptable as they have open floors and thus not predator safe. But used as a daytime grass-run, these are great. The cage is stable and can't be blown over by a strong wind or be pushed over by dogs. But as a permanent home, they would need to be placed on a solid surface such as a patio or deck. The entire floor space is sheltered by a roof so the ground will remain dry. The ramp should have sides put on it to prevent injury from piggies falling off the edge. The bedroom area (2nd floor) is open and airy but will need smaller hideys inside, and lots of hay as bedding, to make sure the piggies stay warm in winter. These cages, though, are not the easiest to keep clean and so, not ideal.

Indoor enclosures:

There are two main methods of keeping guinea pigs indoors.

Pic 4 shows a very large plastic based enclosure—these must be at least 1.2m long x 0.6m deep (internal space) for two piggies. Some of these enclosures come with a mesh or a solid 2nd floor—the mesh ones MUST have a tray put on them (easily made from corflute) to prevent piggies injuring their legs or feet on the mesh.



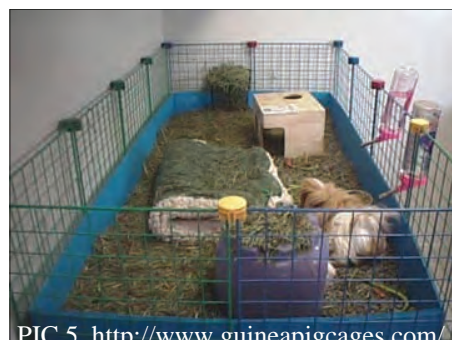
PIC 4

Pic 5 shows the most cost-effective way to provide huge spaces for indoor guinea pigs—c&c grids. You can create any size or shape you like. The grids are readily available from places like Bunnings and the corflute is obtainable either through signwriters or hardware stores. You may even find it free-of-charge from real estate agents or bottle-shops but these will be old signs and have writing on them.

However, you are only limited by your imagination when you look for an indoor enclosure.

Consider converting an old cupboard! Use corflute trays to keep the bedding in and make it easier to clean!

A child's wading pool (or several!) can make a great enclosure too.



PIC 5 <http://www.guineapigcages.com/>