

Opening extract from

# **My First Pet Dragon**

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## Chapter 1

# Dragons as Pets

If you are reading this you and your family have most probably decided to keep a pet dragon. This is a brave decision. Dragons make challenging and unusual pets. They can provide hours of entertainment and make very good guard animals. You will never be burgled if you have a dragon.

However dragons are not easy pets. You will need to show courage and determination. But,



if handled firmly and given clear boundaries, your dragon can become a very interesting pet. So persevere. The first years are the hardest and there is nothing like living a little dangerously. But at all times remember to follow the safety instructions carefully.

Before you bring a dragon into your life there are a few things you should think about:

### **Do you have the time to look after your dragon?**

You will need to feed your dragon every morning and evening and give it daily flying and petting. The den will need to be cleaned out twice a week.



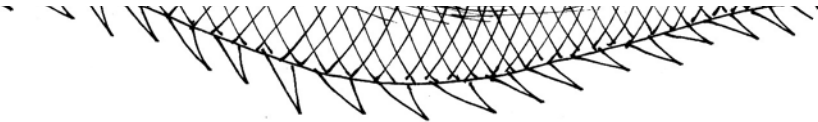


## **Can you afford a dragon?**

Dragons are not cheap to keep. There are considerable set up costs – especially for larger breeds.

Remember your dragon will always want the best – their tastes in food and entertainment are expensive. It will also want fresh changes of jewellery and you must not skimp on fire extinguishers.

There will also be vet bills, pet insurance fees, and the costs of training and anger management courses.



Do not forget the hidden costs. Your parents will need to budget for repairs – even with the best disciplined dragons, there will be some degree of fire damage.

Dragon droppings can be sold at a premium, so it is worth investing in a dropping's jar for easy collection. This will go some way to offsetting other costs.

## **Do you have many visitors?**

Remember that dragons do not like strangers and can lash out. You will need to put up warning signs at the front door. If you live in a flat, you should get the consent of neighbours.





Bon Voyage

## Going on holiday

Only very rarely will you be able to take your dragon with you when you go on holiday. Airlines and train companies will refuse to take dragons on board for safety reasons and most campsites and bed and breakfasts are not at all dragon friendly.

Are there local dragon kennels? Do you have brave relatives living nearby who are not house proud and would enjoy the chance to dragon sit?



There are all sorts of hazards to travelling with dragons. Every year I receive hundreds of letters from owners who get into trouble abroad. This letter should be a warning to us all...



*Cairo Central Prison*

*Dear Professor Blink,*

*We couldn't find a kennel for simpkins, our Carpathian Schlange dragon. So when we flew to South Africa last year, for a short winter break, I gave her a sleeping pill, wrapped her in aluminium foil and we snuck her through security and onto the aeroplane.*

*Everything was fine for the first couple of hours but then simpkin's sleeping pill must have worn off. Suddenly sirens started to blare. The flight attendants ran up and down the aisle in a panic. It turned out that simpkins had*



crept out of the overhead luggage compartment and made her way to the toilets. Here she had, naturally, been breathing fire and had set off the alarms.

We did an emergency landing in Cairo where Geoffrey, Simpkins and I were arrested. We have been in prison here ever since. The food is horrible and we are getting very thin. Poor Simpkins has lost her spark.

Please don't be tempted to stowaway your dragon or you might end up like us.

Sad Regards, Penny Bunstead,

PS Simpkins asks if you could please send him some caviar.





## Chapter 2

# Things you will need

**B**edding Treasure: jewellery, aluminium foil, marbles, gold drawing pins, sturdy Christmas decorations, silk and velvet.

**Bicarbonate of Soda**—in case of emergencies

**Cleaning materials** (paint scraper, dustpan and brush, scourer, bucket and cloth)



## Collar and Extendable Lead.

**The Den** — Two well made ovens or metal boxes lined with fibreglass insulation, or for larger breeds a custom – made den.

**Deodoriser** — a must!

**Droppings tray (preferably metal) and droppings collection jar.**



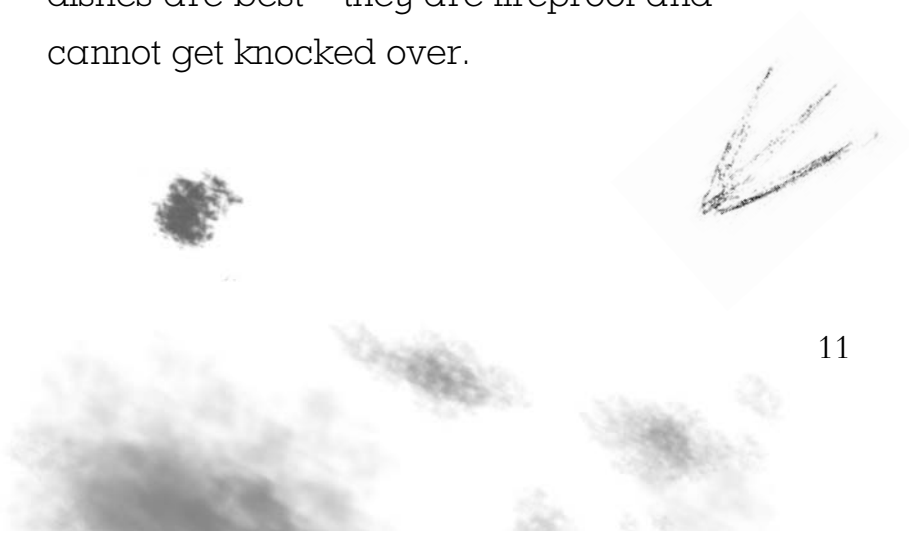
**Extractor Fan**


**Facial shield**

**Fire blanket, fire bucket and water or foam fire-extinguisher:** do not use carbon dioxide or wet chemical fire-extinguishers.

**Food** — dragon biscuits as the mainstay. But dragons enjoy any food as long as it is expensive: white and black truffles, olives, caviar, raspberries, lobsters, Parma ham, lychees and other tropical fruits, etcetera.

**Food Dishes** — heavy earthenware food dishes are best – they are fireproof and cannot get knocked over.





**Grooming Aids** — tweezers, cotton buds, scale polisher, buffing cloth, grooming brush, dishcloths, clippers.

**Padlock and Chain**

**Oven Gloves**

**Travelling cage**

**Treats** — fizzy water, smelly cheese.

**Toys** — pink princess dolls, plastic knights, spinning tops, a trombone.



## **DRAGON DON'TS**



- ***Never use sequins or tinsel.***


Your dragon may choke on tinsel.

Sequins get caught under the dragon's scales and cause infections.

- ***Never clean with pine scented disinfectant.***

Your dragon will find the smell disturbing and will not settle at night.

- ***Never give your dragon rubber balls —***  
your dragon will choke on them as they melt in its throat. Dragons do enjoy



catching – games so why not try a fireproof  
Frisbee? They are available from some high  
street toy stores.

