



# Love the skin they're in

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## Gorgeous Guineaes Top 5 Skincare Tips

### 1. Bedding

The kind of bedding that you choose for your guineas can affect their skin. Wood shavings / sawdust are not recommended. Whilst shavings are great for absorbing urine, they can also absorb the natural oils from your guinea's skin, leaving them more prone to skin problems. Dust / oils in the wood can also lead to respiratory disease that can be fatal. So what else can you use? Various types of horse bedding:

- **Equisorb, Jopack or Hippofan** (horse bedding) are all made from Flax and great for guineas.
- **Dengie MediBed** (horse bedding) and comes in large bales (Russel Bedding in 2kg pillow packs is the pet shop equivalent). Short-chopped straw is fine for guineas, but **DO NOT USE STRAW DESIGNED FOR RABBITS** (usually Barley straw) as it can cause eye poke injuries to piggies.
- **Hay** – use lots of fresh meadow hay on top of newspaper.
- **Vet Bed** - hygienic, easy to wash, and ideal for use after operations, or for sick guineas who can't move around much. Vet Bed wicks away urine and keeps your piggy dry and comfortable. Available from [Planet Guinea](http://PlanetGuinea.com) (known there as Happy Soles Bedding). Use over a thick layer of newspaper and change regularly.

### 2. Cleaning

Cages need to be cleaned and thoroughly disinfected at least twice a week, especially when it is very hot or very cold. Damp bedding should be removed and replaced once or twice a day - depending on the number of guineas in the cage. When the weather is hot, bacteria, fungi and viruses can grow very fast, and in cold weather, damp bedding can freeze. Recommended cleaning products include Pet Virkon, Conficlean 2 or Formula H. These are available from SPH Supplies: <http://www.sphsupplies.co.uk> (01363 866177). All of these products are far more effective than the usual "pet shop sprays" and work against a wide variety of bacteria, fungi and viruses. *If you order anything from SPH Supplies, please mention Reading Guinea Pig Rescue and they will receive a small donation.*

### 3. Environment

If your guinea is kept outside in a cage during the winter without any protection from the cold (not recommended), damp bedding can freeze. We recommend that as a minimum, guineas are kept in a shed / outbuilding and protected from the elements. Keeping them indoors or in a heated shed is even better. Guinea pigs are originally from Peru where the climate is warm and dry. Here in the UK they can suffer from skin / respiratory problems in particular, mainly due to the climate which is always humid.

### 4. Inspection

Regular inspection of your guinea's hair, skin, ears, nose, mouth, and an awareness of what "normal" scratching is will help you to catch any skin problems sooner rather than later. Look for any signs of redness, dry / flaky skin, hair coming out in clumps with dead skin on the end, cuts, bites, open sores etc. If you find anything suspicious, take action straight away – skin problems can kill guineas if left untreated.



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## **5. Shampooing**

We recommend that you shampoo your guineas every 4 - 6 weeks with one of the range of Gorgeous Guineas shampoos. This can help to prevent skin problems from occurring in the first place. Unless your guinea has a skin problem, they do not need shampooing more often. Too much shampooing can cause their skin to become dry and irritated. Gorgeous Guineas have designed a range of shampoos for piggies of all ages, all hair types, and for common skin problems such as Lice and Fungal infections, so why not start pampurring your piggy?