**Hamster Supply Shopping List**

1. **A Suitable Cage**
   
   Get the biggest possible cage that you can fit in your home. Remember that a cage must never be smaller than 60 x 40cm. Bin cages, DIY cages, converted furniture, aquariums and terrariums are all alternative options for hamster cages. Avoid cages such as habitatrals, crittertails and rotastaks which are designed for the enjoyment of small children and are not appropriate homes for a living animal.

2. **Safe Substrate**

   Safe substrates include:
   - Aspen shavings
   - Paper based substrates
   - Hemp based substrates
   - Beechwood
   - Children's play sand
   - Wood-based cat litter pellets (not clay or clumping cat litter)
   - Paper based cat litter

   Unsafe substrates include:
   - Pine shavings
   - Sawdust
   - Cedar shavings

3. **Hamster Food**

   When looking for a food make sure you read the nutritional information on the back of the bag before purchasing. The general rule is that a good food mix should contain 19% protein, 6% fat and 8% fibre but it can be hard to find foods with these exact amounts. If you are having trouble finding foods with these amounts you can opt for a mix with less protein or less fibre and supplement these with other safe high protein or high fibre foods.

4. **A Wheel**

   The wheel must have a solid floor, barred and mesh wheels are not safe for hamsters.

   **Hamster wheel size chart;**
   - Roborovski 6" - 8"
   - Winter white/Campbells/Chinese hamsters 8"
   - Syrians 8" - 12"

5. **Toys**

   If you have a dwarf or Chinese hamster you can buy products sold for hamsters but if you have a Syrian hamster you will need to buy products sold for rats so that they are big enough. Buy lots of different toys, hammocks, dig boxes, climbing frames, tunnels, see saws, wicker toys, etc

6. **Travel Cage (Traveller)**

   Buy a good quality traveller - it can either be one made for rodents, a fish traveller, small hamster cage or a bin-traveller.

7. **Safe Bedding**

   AVOID THE FLUFF! Fluffy bedding is always sold with the same 'safe bedding' claim but it is the most dangerous bedding on sale for rodent owners. It resembles cotton wool and feels very soft but kills and injures many hamsters each year. The safest bedding you can use for your hamsters nest is toilet paper torn into strips. Place this inside the cage and leave your ham to build their bed. The toilet roll is clean, safe, easy to digest and absorbent. You can also use commercial paper based beddings which are safe and cosy.

8. **Water Bottle or Bowl**

   You will want a leak proof bottle that holds at least 15ml of liquid. Optionally you could also use a water bowl which is the more natural choice, this should be small enough that your hamster cannot climb inside it to prevent them from becoming soaked.

9. **Wooden Pet Chews**

   Flavoured chews are often more favoured by hamsters. You can also buy hard treats or edible cage decor.

10. **An Exotic Pet Vet**

    Before you buy your hamster ring around your local vets and find one that has training in hamster medical care.