

**No** one is certain how the guinea pig got its name, but it is not really a pig and it does not come from Guinea.

Guinea pigs are mammals that belong to the "Caviidae" family. "Cavies" are small, tailless rodents that are native to South America.

**A PIG's Life**

Domestic guinea pigs live for about 5 to 10 years.

Guinea pigs often make a loud whistle-like sound when they are frightened.

Guinea pigs do not like food that is too sweet or too bitter.

Guinea pigs are very vocal and make a variety of noises.

Guinea pigs eat for about six hours each day.

Wild guinea pigs were domesticated hundreds of years ago by the Inca Indians of Peru.

This cartoon is gnawing at my patience.

What do students call a report about guinea pigs? A pet project.

In South America, guinea pigs are often raised as a source of meat.

Unlike some other pets, guinea pigs can see color.

A guinea pig's head is about 1/3 the length of its body.

Guinea pigs have been used as research animals in many biological and medical experiments.

Guinea pigs are social animals and prefer to be around other guinea pigs. When kept as pets, they often lead happier and less stressful lives when they have at least one other guinea pig as a companion.

Guinea pigs do not have tails.

Where do cavies keep their money? In a piggy bank.

For more information on guinea pigs, go to your local library and check out these books: "My Guinea Pig and Me" by Immanuel Birmelin (Barron's Educational Series) or "Guinea Pigs" by Mark Evans (Dorling Kindersley).

Another name for a guinea pig is "cavy" (cay-vee).

Guinea pigs need to eat foods that contain vitamin C or they will become sick.

Why did the boy buy 1,000 guinea pigs? He wanted to be in the guinea book of world records.

There are about 20 different species of guinea pig.

Special thanks to the kids in Mrs. Katzwer's class at Manhattan Day School in New York, NY, for their help in creating this issue.

Guinea pigs were brought to Europe by traders during the 1500s.

A guinea pig's teeth continue to grow throughout its life. Guinea pigs control the length of their teeth by gnawing on wood or other hard objects.

This edition of Shortcuts is sponsored by Guinea Weasley.

I'm not Harry, but I'm furry.

Word Search

Can you find the hidden words? Search carefully because some words are backward or diagonal.

AMERICA	SOCIAL	CAVY
MAMMAL	INCAN	PUPS
RODENT	WOOD	BOB
TAILLESS	GNAW	PETS
GREENS	SOUTH	PIGS
GUINEA	TEETH	FUR

ALBERT E I N S T E I  
N O S E Y I N C A N E U P  
P U P S D S U M M E R C I  
E D P O E M T A E W A N G  
A R O C K L M G R E E N S  
A W E I A M L O I P N F S  
A R F A A V D I C P I U G  
S E A L C E Y T A E U R B  
S H O W N H T E E T G O P  
S O U T H A T A P S B O P

**CaGE MaTCH**

Can you spot all six differences between these two scenes?

Answers: 1. Rope is missing. 2. Shape is missing. 3. Chin is different. 4. Mouth is different. 5. Letter is missing. 6. Hand is moved.

**FRee LiTTle PiGs**

Wild guinea pigs live mainly in the grassy plains of South America. Some live along the edges of forests or in rocky areas.

Wild guinea pigs sleep in burrows during the day and are active mainly at night.

In the wild, guinea pigs live in social groups of about five to 20 animals.

Guinea pigs make great pets because they are awake during the day, like to be held and tend not to bite.

Why don't you hear fables about guinea pigs? Because guinea pigs don't have tales.

Baby guinea pigs are called "pups."

Baby guinea pigs are born with open eyes and a full coat of fur. They can run within a few hours of being born.

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Email us at: [info@jeffharris@gmail.com](mailto:info@jeffharris@gmail.com)

**Shortcuts**  
by jeff harris

GETTING ALONG WITH  
**Guinea Pigs**