

# Are Ferrets Banned in Your Country?

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## Why Are Ferrets Banned in Some Areas?

It is believed that most domesticated ferrets came from the polecat in Western and Eastern Europe. Therefore, they are not native to many other countries. Canada has a native species—the black-footed ferret—but these were not the type that became domesticated as pets.

Since domesticated ferrets were imported to most countries, they may be seen as pests. Unfortunately, many people would set them free, and in some areas, ferrets overpopulated. It is because of this that some areas decided that banning ferrets was the best option.

Other areas and cities feel that these are exotic pets that are potentially harmful and vicious. This is a misunderstanding of ferret behaviour. Yes, ferrets can bite, but so do cats and dogs. Many people have come together and are working on having these laws changed; they are hoping to educate people about ferrets.

## Are Ferrets Exotic Pets?

Even though they are easily available, ferrets are [considered exotic pets](#). An animal is considered exotic if they are not native to the location—regardless of if they have been born and raised in captivity. However, the term is used loosely, as even some native species are considered exotic. The ferret has become a very popular pet for many people, but now countries, states and provinces feel that they shouldn't be kept as pets.

Pet ferrets can be found all over the world, but it is important to know whether you can legally keep them or not. This is an overview of some countries' laws, but please check your local laws before getting your fuzzy little friend.

## United States

In the United States, each state is allowed to govern its own laws about owning a ferret. The regulations are quite varied across all the states. These can range from no regulations to vaccine requirements to straight-up bans.

Keep in mind that just because there are no regulations on ferrets in some states, they will likely still have regulations on cats, dogs and other pets.

Finally, New York City has banned ferrets as pets, even though New York allows them.

## Ferret Laws and Regulations by State

No Regulations	Minor Regulations	Banned
Alabama	Colorado	California
Alaska	Florida	District of Columbia
Arizona	Georgia	Hawaii
Arkansas	Idaho	
Connecticut	Illinois	
Delaware	Indiana	
Louisiana	Iowa	
Mississippi	Kansas	
Missouri	Kentucky	
Montana	Maine	
New Mexico	Maryland	
North Carolina	Massachusetts	

*This information is current as of 2021. It's always important to check with your city and state before making a ferret purchase.*

No Regulations	Minor Regulations	Banned
North Dakota	Michigan	
Oregon	Minnesota	
Pennsylvania	Nebraska	
South Carolina	Nevada .	
Tennessee	New Hampshire	
West Virginia	New York (excluding NYC, which has banned them as pets)	
	Ohio	
	Oklahoma	
	Rhode Island	
	South Dakota	
	Utah	
	Vermont	
	Virginia	
	Washington	
	Wisconsin	
	Wyoming	

## Australia and New Zealand

The ferret is not native to Australia and New Zealand, so their regulations are tight. Locations that allow ferrets have strict licensing requirements.

New Zealand is a bit different. It is now illegal to sell, buy or breed ferrets there. However, individuals who had ferrets before these laws went into place in 2002 were allowed to keep them. In addition, a select group of people is given a special permit that [allows them to keep pet ferrets](#) for hunting rabbits.

## Recommended

**60 Cute and Funny  
Ferret Names**

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Banned	Minor Regulations
Queensland	Victoria
Northern Territory	New South Wales
Western Australia	Australian Capital Territory
New Zealand	

## Around the World

It can be tough to find where ferrets are allowed in other countries. From my current research, I've been able to make this list of where ferrets are allowed:

- Canada
- Germany
- Hungary
- Japan
- Peru
- Singapore

- United Kingdom
- Venezuela

Good places to get more information about ferrets in your area are your local government and bylaw offices or your local SPCA/animal rescue. These places should have the latest information or be able to point you in the right direction.

## Want to Help Legalize Ferrets?

- [Ferret Organizations & Shelters](#)  
Index of ferret clubs, shelters, and other organizations in the US and elsewhere.
- [Legalize Ferrets in California](#)  
Want to help get Ferrets legalized in California? Check out information here.

## Sources

- [Nature Canada: Black-Footed Ferret](#)
- [Facts About Ferrets](#)

*This article is accurate and true to the best of the author's knowledge. It is not meant to substitute for diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, prescription, or formal and individualized advice from a veterinary medical professional. Animals exhibiting signs and symptoms of distress should be seen by a veterinarian immediately.*

## Comments

**Cats** on October 27, 2019:

I don't see how they justify banning ferrets, but not cats that do more damage to wildlife.

**ferret** on October 23, 2019:

ferret

**Adrian** on May 17, 2019:

I LOVE FERRETS

**Ethel Smith** from Kingston-Upon-Hull on October 15, 2018:

Interesting. As I am in the U.K. I had not realised ferrets were banned in some places.