

The structure of the enclosure – zones & levels:

ZONE	FUNCTION	SAMPLE DESIGNS / MATERIAL IDEAS
Digging area	Movement & Activity	Deep bedding area (at least 20 cm) with soil, sand, hemp or hay – ideal for hamsters, mice, rabbits
Resting zone	Safety & Sleep	Little house, hay nest, cork tunnel with visual cover – quiet, semi-dark corner of the enclosure
Gnawing zone	Occupation & Dental Care	Fresh willow branches, fruit tree wood, cork pieces or untreated wooden rolls
Feeding zone	Orientation & Nutrition	Solid, flat food bowl, vegetable plate or small herb bundles – easy to reach and keep clean
Climbing zone	Movement & Curiosity	Platforms, ramps, branches, hanging bridges made of sisal or tree roots – especially important for rats, mice, degus
Bathing zone	Care & Well-being	For chinchillas: fine pumice sand – for birds: shallow water bowls (2–3 cm deep, change regularly)
Observation zone	Parent-child interaction & Trust	Elevated platform or viewing window – children can observe without disturbing

Tip: The more varied the structure, the more behaviours the animals will display. Variety is not a luxury, but makes keeping animals lively, educational and healthy.