



Thank you for your interest in adopting a Desert Tortoise! Please review the 7 steps to adopting a Desert Tortoise before filling out the application for a Certificate of Registration.

1. Please note our adoption program restrictions:
 - Tortoises can only be adopted in Utah.
 - Tortoises cannot be adopted in Washington, Kane, or Iron counties.
 - You may only apply for a single tortoise.
2. **Read Utah's Desert Tortoise Adoption Booklet.** This document contains important information regarding the adoption program, as well as the ecology, behavior, and needs of a Desert Tortoise https://wildlife.utah.gov/pdf/desert_tortoise_adoption.pdf
3. Construct your tortoise enclosure by following the guidelines in the Desert Tortoise Adoption Booklet, and then send your application and pictures of the enclosure to tortoise@utah.gov.
4. **A \$10 non-refundable handling fee is required with the application.** This fee can be paid over the phone with a credit card (you will receive payment instructions after your application is received) or you can mail a check with a copy of your application.
5. Adopters are approved for a Certificate of Registration to care for a Desert Tortoise if their tortoise enclosure meets the required specifications and has been approved by the Division.
6. **If approved for adoption, a \$75 fee is required to obtain your Certificate of Registration (COR).**
7. Tortoises can live to be 60-70 years old, so adopting a Desert Tortoise is a long-term commitment. In this application, you will be required to provide a plan for what you will do if for any reason you can no longer provide care for your tortoise.

Please note that all veterinary costs are the responsibility of the adopter. Since tortoises are considered an exotic pet, veterinary care for them can be expensive.

Questions about this application or the adoption program?

Please send an email to tortoise@utah.gov.



Applicant Information

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____, _____, _____
Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____
Email _____ Alternate Email _____

Do you wish to adopt a tortoise for: Personal foster care ___ or Educational use ___

Please explain why you would like to adopt a Desert Tortoise:

A checklist for tortoise enclosure design and tortoise care

- Is the total enclosure area at least 150 square feet (for example, 10 ft x 15 ft)?
- Is the burrow built to specifications described in the adoption booklet? Burrow must be dug about 12 inches into the ground and soil must be mounded over three sides and the top of the burrow to provide insulation.
- Are all barrier walls at least 18 inches tall?
- Are all barrier walls buried at least 6 inches into the ground?
- Are there any cracks in the barrier wall that a tortoise could see through?
- If your enclosure has a gate(s), is a barrier in place across each gate opening (as described in the adoption booklet)?
- Does each gate latch and close securely?
- Is the water dish large enough that the tortoise can soak in it?
- Will you ensure the tortoise has fresh water available every day while it stays in its enclosure?
- Is a water dish shaded by a cover that you have constructed (see adoption booklet)?
- Is sunshine available to the tortoise at all times of the day in the enclosure?
- Will the enclosure protect a tortoise from predators (for example, stray dogs)?



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- If the tortoise is lost or injured, I will immediately notify the Division for assistance.
- Is there a pond or pool outside of the enclosure area? Ponds cannot be located within tortoise enclosures.
 - Is the pool or pond fenced?
 - Have you buried the bottom of the fence at least 6 inches into the ground?
- If you have a dog, have you considered careful introduction of the dog to the tortoise?
- Will you be available to watch for trouble from various hazards, especially during the first days after the tortoise arrives?
- Tortoises are subject to injury. Are you willing to educate and prohibit folks from handling the tortoise?
- Do you agree to:
 - Only use liquid fertilizer during the seasons the tortoise is active?
 - Not use herbicide/pesticides or other toxic materials in the yard?
- Have you eliminated the other hazards to tortoises that are mentioned in the adoption booklet?
- Due to severe winter in most of Utah, tortoises hibernate. Do you have a basement or other area where temperatures remain around 60°F where the tortoise can hibernate?
- Is the following always available to the tortoise: Grass ____, Dandelions ____, Clover ____
- If not, are you willing to plant a few square feet of: Bermuda grass ____, Dandelions ____, Clover ____
- Are you willing to feed the tortoise the prepared mixture recommended in the booklet?
- If you leave home for vacation, have you considered the provisions that you should make for the care of the tortoise during your absence?
- Are you willing to pay for all veterinary service your tortoise may need?

Indicate your long-term care plan for an adopted tortoise

If I am unable to care for a tortoise, for any reason, I will (check one of the two options):

Return my tortoise to the Division.

Transfer my Certificate of Registration to the following person:

*Name _____

Signature and contact information (for parent/legal guardian if adopter is under 18 years old)

Signature _____ Date _____

Email _____ Phone _____

*This person must agree to the transfer of the tortoise into their care by providing a signature. This person will need to have a tortoise enclosure approved by the Division before accepting the tortoise.



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If your tortoise dies, please contact the Division as soon as possible (tortoise@utah.gov).

Please indicate the final resting place for your tortoise (check one of the four options):

- Bury the tortoise
- Cremate the tortoise and keep its ashes
- Donate to a museum for scientific purposes (adopters are required to make arrangements with museums and notify the Division about the final plans)
- Keep the shell as a memento or for educational purposes (contact the Division to amend COR for possession of the shell)

Is Your Application Complete?

A complete application consists of:

- This application filled out completely and signed below
- Prepared to pay a \$10 non-refundable handling fee
- Letters of permission from local entities (if applicable)

Email completed applications to: tortoise@utah.gov and make your \$10 payment over the phone (payment instructions will be sent after the application is received).

If preferred, your application and a check can be sent to:

Wildlife Registration Office
1594 West North Temple, Suite 2110
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6301

I hereby certify that I have read and am familiar with the rules pertaining to the activities applied for and that I accept any and all liability resulting from the issuance of a Certificate of Registration. I further certify the information submitted in this application for COR is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand any false statements herein may result in the application being denied.

Applicant Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent or Guardian Signature (if applicant is a minor) _____