



About California Desert Tortoise Permits...

Your California Desert Tortoise requires a Permit!

A desert tortoise may be legally possessed in California only under the authority of a permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The department may issue a permit for the possession of a desert tortoise provided the tortoise was legally acquired.

State of California—The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DESERT TORTOISE PERMIT APPLICATION				
NO FEE				
SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE BEFORE COMPLETING APPLICATION. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY				
FIRST NAME	MI.	LAST NAME	DAY TELEPHONE ()	
MAILING ADDRESS			PRIOR TAG NUMBER (if applicable)	
CITY	STATE CA	ZIP CODE	DATE ACQUIRED MM/DD/YYYY	
PHYSICAL ADDRESS WHERE THIS TORTOISE IS LOCATED, IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE				
NOT FOR USE PROVIDED FOR DISPLAY PURPOSES ONLY				
SPECIES	AGE (Circle One) HATCHLING JUVENILE ADULT	SEX (Circle One) M F	UNIQUE FEATURES (if applicable)	HEALTH (Circle One) POOR GOOD EXCELLENT
I certify that all information contained on this application is true and correct. I understand that, in the event this information is found to be untrue or incorrect, the permit issued will be considered invalid and must be surrendered where issued and that I will be subject to criminal prosecution. I declare under penalty of perjury that I lawfully acquired and possess the tortoise(s) listed above.				DATE
SIGNATURE				DATE MM/DD/YYYY
FOR DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME USE ONLY PERMIT TO POSSESS DESERT TORTOISE				
The person whose name appears above is hereby known as the permittee and is authorized by this permit to possess the tortoise identified herein. The permittee shall attach the tag accompanying this permit to the tortoise and shall not thereafter remove such tag, nor sell, barter, breed, transfer or release this tortoise without prior permission from the Department of Fish and Game.				
TAG NUMBER	ISSUED BY		DATE MM/DD/YYYY	
LAS 9048				FG 1531 (Rev. 5/06)
BLUE - PERMITTEE PINK - LRB YELLOW - REGION				

To request a DESERT TORTOISE PERMIT APPLICATION form, [contact the Society](#) or write to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife:

Postal Address:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE
License and Revenue Branch
3211 S Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

San Diego Turtle & Tortoise Society has a collection of these permit applications available at our monthly meetings and at our annual July Show.

Fish and Wildlife will send you a numbered tag to affix to your tortoise. The tag can be placed at the rear end of the animal on the carapace or plastron, or on the inside of the shell behind one of the back legs. Unfortunately the tags can wear out within a few years. Because there is less wear and tear, placing the tag on the inside of the shell seems to work best. However, this site may not be accessible in smaller tortoises. SDTTS Care Coordinators can help you with your tagging decisions.

The law requires that the tag be attached to the tortoise that it was issued for at all times. Some owners wait until the animals are 2-3 years old before registering them. Owners must use their judgment as to best time and place to put the tag. Remember, a healthy juvenile tortoise will put on significant growth each year. Because growth occurs at the edges of the scutes, a tag that overlaps the edge of a scute may loosen and fall off. If a tag becomes lost or wears out, fill out a new permit application form if needed. Be sure to state on the form that this is a request for a replacement tag and provide the number of the old tag.

Reasons for obtaining a permit: There are several good reasons for obtaining a permit and tagging your tortoise. First, it is against the law to keep a desert tortoise without having a permit, and the permit tag must be fixed to the tortoise. On several occasions California Department of Fish and Wildlife Officers have been forced to confiscate tortoises that have been kept without permits or lacking tags. Second, the permit offers a simple way to establish legal proof of custody should the animal wander away from its home and get turned into an Animal Control or Humane Society facility. Many Animal Control and Humane Societies will not turn over desert tortoises without evidence of a permit, and there have been several instances where tortoise owners were unable to reclaim their pets. Additionally, a found tortoise's owner can be traced by Animal Rescues from the DFW tag number.

Important legal details...

- Breeding of captive tortoises is not authorized in California. ALWAYS keep genders separated. If the gender of a tortoise is unknown, and you have more than one, you must keep them separated to prevent accidental breeding.
- It is illegal to take tortoises from the wild. The penalty for doing so can be up to \$5,000 and one year in jail.
- No tortoise that has been in human possession shall be released into the wild.

Desert Tortoise care sheets are on our website: www.sdturtle.org/care-sheets