



Reproduction

Although it is not advisable, some female rats can be capable of breeding at 6 weeks. In rare circumstances breeding has occurred as early as 5 weeks. This is why it is best to separate the sexes when a litter reaches 5 weeks of age.

Never assume that a rat is too old, or too young, to reproduce. The only time you can safely mix your colony is when one or both sexes have been neutered or spayed.

Neutering

We do not routinely recommend castration and spaying of rates or mice. Instead it is best to keep them in same sex groups.

We would only advised neutering if there was a medical reason to do so—for example mammary tumours in females and testicular tumours in males.



Cullompton:

College Road
Cullompton
Devon
EX15 1TG
Telephone: (01884) 35558 (Small Animal)
Telephone: (01884) 32228 (Large Animal)
Facsimile: (01884) 831941
E-mail: valecul@btconnect.com

Tiverton

The Laurels
Tiverton
Devon
EX16 4LF
Telephone: (01884) 258585 (Small Animal)
Telephone: (01884) 253355 (Large Animal)
Facsimile (01884) 257050
E-mail: valereception@btinternet.com

Honiton:

Duchy Road
Heathpark Industrial Estate
Honiton
Devon
EX14 1YD
Telephone: (01404) 44095
Facsimile: (01404) 46243
E-mail: valehoniton@btconnect.com

Uffculme:

7 Fore Street
Uffculme
Devon
EX15 3AN
Telephone: (01884) 841317
E-mail: valeuffculme@btconnect.com



Serving the Mid Devon Community since 1918.

Rats and Mice



Where your animal's health is our top priority.

www.valeveterinarygroup.co.uk



Great Children's pets

Domesticated rats and mice make excellent pets for children and adults alike. They are highly intelligent, clean and very sociable.

They interact with their owners the same as dogs and cats do and may be easily trained.

Although rodents are nocturnal (sleeping during the day and active at night), they will quickly learn to adjust their schedule and be ready to come out and play when you get home from school or work.

Rats and mice bite rarely and only then out of fear and not anger.

Mice only live on average to 1 year old, rats live until 2-2.5 years old. They enjoy the company of other rats/mice, so consider getting more than one.

Where should your Rat or Mouse live?

A simple, gnaw-proof cage, terrarium, or screen-topped aquarium of good size is ideal.

Wire cages can be too draughty, they allow the bedding to fall out, are harder to clean and disinfect, and corrode after long exposure to urine. (The powder-coated wire rat cages with shelves and a plastic bottom are easier to clean, and the rats love the levels to climb on.)



Bedding

NO cedar or pine as they contain toxins and cause organ damage and respiratory disease. Use hardwood shavings, paper products, pelleted beddings made from hardwood, paper, or other non-toxic substances. Fill the cage with ½–1 inch of bedding at each cleaning. Clean the cage and bedding no less than once a week as rodents like to keep clean.

Accessories

A good quality water bottle to provide clean water at all times.

Food dishes should be easy to clean and sturdy to prevent tipping.

Sleeping boxes can be made from a variety of non-toxic household containers (washable or disposable): jars, cartons, cardboard boxes or can be bought from pet stores.

Nesting material will most often be used by mice. This can be shredded napkins, etc. If you have access to fresh, clean hay, your mice will love this as nesting material.

Exercise wheels provide plenty of exercise and fun. Wooden gnawing blocks are great chew toys. Rawhide chew sticks or dog biscuits can also be used.



Handling and playing with your Rat or Mouse

Allow your new pet at least 48hrs to settle in before you handle him. After this time start by placing your hand inside the cage and letting your pet approach on its own, smelling and walking around. Be gentle and talk softly to him. Offer treats or hand feed.

Call him by name whenever you take him out to play and give a treat. Rats will soon learn their name and most will shoulder sit and make that their second home when out of their cage. Rats should be socialised so they are not frightened when let out of their cage. Sit on the floor with your rat & he will naturally want to explore the surrounding area. As he gets braver he will wander farther from you, but if something startles him, he will come running back to the safety of your lap! Remember, rats should always be supervised when let out to run in the house. Not only will they find inappropriate things to chew on they could also get injured.

Mice should not be allowed on the floor as they become too easily frightened and will try to run to a safe hiding place.