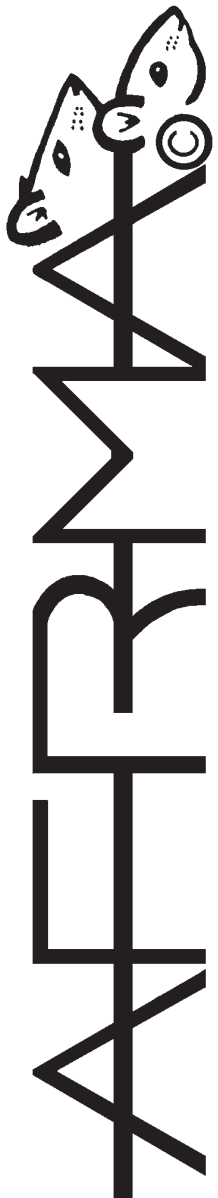


Q&A



10 Most Asked Questions About Rats and Mice

1 Do they make good pets?

YES! Mice are very entertaining, and watching them play is almost as relaxing as an aquarium of fish. Rats are like having a small dog that doesn't bark, need walks, or need shots.

2 Do they bite?

NO! The only time a rat or mouse will bite is to protect itself or its babies from a predator. Rats and mice are less likely to bite than the average dog.

3 How long do they live?

- Rats: 2–3 years
- Mice: 1–2 years

4 What kind of cage do they need?

The best cage for mice is an aquarium with a wire mesh lid. Rats also do well in aquariums (minimum 15 gallon size), but can also be kept in wire cages. Watch out for cages with 1 by ½ inch wire mesh floors or shelves, as they can cause rats to break their legs.

5 What do they eat?

The best basic diet for rats and mice is laboratory pellets (lab blocks). Rats and mice also enjoy an occasional treat of wheat bread, fruit, vegetables, pasta or any other people food that is not "junk food." Be sparing with oily seeds, nuts, and grain mixes.

6 What kind of bedding should be used?

Cedar and pine shavings are toxic! Use other alternatives such as Aspen shavings, CareFRESH™, and Sani-Chips®.

7 What is the gestation period, how many babies do they have, and when are they weaned?

- The gestation period for rats is 19–22 days; for mice it is 17–21 days.
- Rats and mice average 8–12 babies in a litter, but can have as few as 1 or as many as 20.
- Rats are weaned at 5 weeks, mice at 4 weeks.

8 Will moms eat their babies?

Not normally. The only time mothers will usually eat their babies is when they die from some other cause. Sometimes if a mother mouse is extremely disturbed she will eat her babies, but it is not normal. If a mother eats her babies, there is something very wrong. In most cases, handling the babies does not cause a mother to eat them.

9 What is a Fancy Rat or Fancy Mouse?

A fancy rat or mouse is an animal which has been bred to conform to a written standard. In other words, these animals are bred by breeders with a specific outcome in mind, and with the ultimate goal of producing the ideal show animal. Saying "Fancy Rat" or "Fancy

Mouse" is the equivalent of saying "Pure Bred Dog."

10 What do judges look for at a rat and mouse show?

A judge looks at an individual animal's coat, color, conformation (body type, head, eyes, ears, tail), condition, markings, size, and temperament and compares them to the written standard set by the association holding the show. The judge then places the animal based on how well its characteristics match the standard. The animal who comes closest to matching the standard wins the show. At a pet show, animals are judged strictly on temperament and condition.



AFRMA

American Fancy Rat and Mouse Association

If you would like additional information or have further questions, contact the Association.

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