

# Mice

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Mice are curious active pets who can be enjoyed in or out of their cage. They can be more fun to watch than TV as they play on their toys and interact with each other. When they are properly socialized to people they can also make good interactive pets, learning to search for treats in their owner's pocket.

Mice come in a wide range of colors such as Siamese and spotted, and several coat types which can be mixed and matched including satin, long-haired, and frizzy, and even hairless.

Mice are fun to watch for people of any age, and also make good interactive pets for adults and older children.

## **One mouse, or more? Male or female?**

Female mice are very social and do best in-groups. Male mice are aggressive among them and must be kept one to a cage. Male mice also have noticeably pungent urine.

Males are easily identified by their large testicles.

## **Feeding**

The basic mouse diet should be a commercial rodent block or fortified grain mix. It is also good to give mice a wide variety of fruits and veggies and other healthy foods. Treats are great for training and strengthening the bond between you and your mice and can comprise 10% of their diet.

## **Housing**

Mice like to climb, making a wire cage a good choice, but the bars must be less than 1/2" apart to keep them from escaping. Aquariums can also be used. A mouse cage should be at least 18" X 12" X 10" tall, and the bigger the better to provide room for lots of fun toys. For bedding you can choose from aspen shavings or pet litter of recycled paper or organic pellets. Do not use clay litter or cedar shavings. Mice must be kept at temperatures below 90 degrees F.

## **Accessories**

Mice need a water bottle, a dry food dispenser, a dish for moist food, and a house made of plastic, wood, or grass. They need an exercise wheel, and also enjoy tubes, climbing toys such as ladders, ropes, and branches, and chew toys.

## **Sanitation**

Clean the cage and accessories weekly. Be sure to scrub all parts of the water bottle.

### **Maintenance**

Mice are easy maintenance pets and do not need special care. They appreciate fresh fruits and veggies daily. If you let your mice play on your couch or bed, a washable throw cover will help protect your furnishings.

### **Health care**

The most common health problems in mice are respiratory infections and mammary tumors. Veterinary Pet Insurance ([www.petinsurance.com](http://www.petinsurance.com)) now offers health insurance policies for mice.

### **Life cycle**

Mice live an average of 1 1/2-2 years, although it's possible for them to live 5 years. Mice can breed as early as 4 weeks of age but should not until 3 months. The gestation period is 19-21 days and the average litter size is 6-10. The babies are called pups and their eyes open at 12-14 days. The pups can be weaned at 4 weeks.

### **Expert Help**

If you have questions about your mice, do not hesitate to contact us. We will be happy to help you choose a mouse care book for more complete information. You, your veterinarian, and the staff here at the store will form the team, which will be responsible for your mice's well being.

### **Supplies Checklist**

Cage	Mouse food
Bedding and/or litter	Treats
House	Exercise wheel
Water bottle	Activity toys
Moist-food dish	Chew toys
Dry food dispenser	

