



Your Free Guide to Basic Rat Care



Nibbles

Rodent and Rabbit Rescue



Rats Require

- A lifetime commitment of between 2-3 years
- Spacious Accommodation
- Plenty of toys to play with
- A varied diet
- A friend in the form of another rat

Rat Facts

- Rats are active both during the day and at night
- Rats are friendly sociable creatures with other rats and with humans
- Rats are easy to train and can learn their names and come when called
- Rats rarely if ever bite
- Rats are omnivores and they love cooked chicken bones!
- Rats make great pets for people of all ages

About Rats

Rats make great pets due to their friendly and inquisitive natures. While many people are put off by the reputation of their wild cousins, the domestic fancy rat is a sweet and endearing creature, who enjoys the company of humans as much as he enjoys the company of other rats.



Two are better than one

Rats are social creatures, and therefore need to be kept at least in pairs. Both males (bucks) and females (does) live happily as same sex groups if introduced as youngers. Male rats can be neutered allowing them to live with females. So if you are thinking of becoming a rat owner you will need to prepare for two additions to your family.

Diet

Rats are omnivorous and therefore require a varied diet. We recommend mixing your own rat diet to ensure your rats are getting all that they need. Rats also require a good mix of fresh veg, fruit, cooked meats and cooked fish. They also enjoy boiled eggs, cooked rice and pasta.

The general rule of thumb when feeding rats is very similar to a healthy human diet. Avoid foods high in sugar, salt, and fat. Rats also have a flap of skin which covers their oesophagus which means they can't be sick or burp. So no fizzy drinks or spicy food.

As they grind their food they are also able to eat cooked bones.

Super Sweet & Super Clever

Rats are the brains of the rodent world, they can easily be trained to do tricks, learn their names, come when called and even be trained to complete obstacle courses. For this reason they need a lot of mental stimulation to prevent them from getting bored. They also love to ride around on their owner's shoulder. Providing electrical wiring is covered, they are also able to free range in a secure room.

Make Your Own Rat Diet

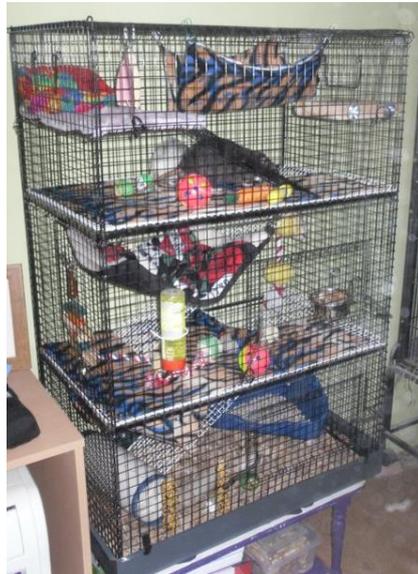
2 scoops of good quality rabbit muesli mix with a copper content of at least 12.5mg – **Dr Johnsons Supreme Rabbit Mix** is ideal.

1 scoop of good quality dried dog kibble which lists meat and/or fish as a main ingredient – **James Welbeloved Ocean Fish** is ideal.

2 scoops of human breakfast cereals with a low sugar and salt content – **Bran flakes** are ideal.

Housing

As like with all animals, the bigger the better. You can never give rats too much space but like so many small pets it is all too easy to give them too little. The bare minimum for a pair of rats is 70cm (l) x 40cm (w) x 70cm (h). If the cage you have chosen has wire shelves these need to be covered with lino or fleece to protect their feet.



Toys

Rats love to climb about and therefore you need to provide them with plenty to do within their cage. They also love hammocks which can be bought from many online pet shops or you can simply make your own.

Treat balls are a great way of keeping your rats entertained and busy during the day and you can also hide treats around the cages encouraging them to forage.



Learn More

There is far more for you to learn about these wonderful little creatures so check out www.ratz.co.uk for some more advice on how to keep your little friends happy and healthy.



Rat Check List

- **Large spacious cage**
- **Litter Tray with a paper based cat litter**
- **2x food bowls – one for dry and one for fresh foods**
- **Water bottle**
- **Suitable bedding such as finacard or carefresh**
- **House to sleep in**
- **Plenty of toys to climb on**

Common Health Concerns

Respiratory Problems

Rats are prone to suffering from respiratory problems. Should you hear your rat snuffling or excessive sneezing get them checked by your vet, who will prescribe a course of antibiotics.

Lumps and Bumps

Not all lumps are cancerous, many are benign fatty lumps. Make an appointment to see your vet who will advise on surgical options for removal depending on age of the rat in question, and position of the lump.

Dental Issues

Swelling on the side of the face can be an indication of dental issues. Providing your rats with a varied diet will help to combat potential issues arising in the future. If you suspect dental problems, book an appointment with your vet.

Head Tilt

Once again get your rat booked in for an appointment with your vet who will prescribe antibiotics to help combat any infection. Rats with head tilts generally go on to lead happy fulfilled lives after treatment.