



## Pest Control

### How to get rid of rats

---

Rats are dangerous! They can ruin your food, destroy things in your home and start electrical fires. Rats and their fleas can carry disease.

- [Where do rats live outside?](#)
- [Where do rats live inside the home?](#)
- [What foods bring rats into my yard and neighborhood?](#)
- [What do rats eat when they get inside the house?](#)
- [Keep rats away from your home!](#)
- [Keep rats out of your sewer pipes!](#)
- [To kill a rat, use a rat trap!](#)
- [How do I clean an area where rats/mice have already been?](#)

#### Where do rats live outside?

- Under wood piles or lumber that is not being used often
- Under bushes, vines and in tall grasses that are not trimmed or cut back
- Under rocks in the garden
- In cars, appliances and furniture that has been put outside and is no longer being used
- In and around trash and garbage that has been left on the ground
- In holes under buildings

#### Where do rats live inside the home?

- In the insulation of walls or ceilings
- Inside the crawl spaces
- Behind or under cupboards, counters, bathtubs and shower stalls
- Near hot water heaters and furnaces
- In basements, attics and wherever things are stored in boxes, paper or cloth

#### What foods brings rats into my yard and neighborhood?

- Garbage that rats can get into, like garbage cans with loose lids, plastic or paper bags, and litter.
- Food for pets and birds that has not been eaten. Birdseed on the ground, pet food in pet dishes, bread crumbs, etc.
- Fruits and berries that have fallen to the ground.
- Compost pile or worm bin that isn't taken care of the right way (do not put meat, fish, poultry, or dairy in the compost)
- Dog droppings

## What do rats eat when they get inside the house?

- THE SAME FOODS WE DO!
- Foods, fats, oils that have been spilled and left on counters, floors, appliances and tables
- Grains, like cereal, oats, rice and vegetables like potatoes and carrots that are in cardboard boxes and plastic bags
- Pet food in boxes or bags
- Any garbage that is not in a can with a tight lid

## Keep rats away from your home!

### Do not give food and shelter to these most unwanted guests!

- The time to act is before the signs (droppings) of a rat or mouse.
- Stack fire wood 18 inches off the ground and away from all buildings.
- Birdhouses and seed should be on poles and in trays rats can't get.
- Keep garbage can lids closed tightly.
- Plant bushes so they will stay at least 3 feet from your house.
- Keep yards and alleys clean. Take junk to the dump!
- If you feed them, they will stay. Pick up fruit and vegetables in your yard.
- Do not compost any animal products (fish, meat, chicken, cheese, butter). Keep lids tight.
- Use only rodent resistant composters.
- In basements keep any food in closed containers that rats can't chew through.
- Cover all openings to your house. Rats can get into very small places.
- Do not leave your pet food outside. If your pet doesn't eat it, the rats will.
- Roof rats get into your house from tree branches that hang over the roof. Keep trees cut back and cover any openings in the eaves.

## Keep rats out of your sewer pipes!

### Rats live in sewers and can follow the food in pipes up to your toilet.

- Keep your kitchen sink rinsed clean and use garbage disposals as little as possible.
  - Rinse out your kitchen sink once or twice a month.
  - Use 1 cup of bleach (an alternative to using bleach, 1 cup of baking soda followed by 1 cup of vinegar) and rinse with boiling water.
- Never throw grease down the drain.
- Keep your toilet lid down when not in use.
- If you find a rat in your toilet, flush it! (hint: squirt a little dishwashing liquid under the lid into the bowl, wait a couple of minutes then flush)

## To kill a rat, use a rat trap!

The best trap is the large, simple, cheap wooden "**snap trap.**" They are sold in hardware stores.

To use the trap:

- *BAIT IT* with pieces of apple, potato, raw bacon or with peanut butter spread on a cotton ball.
- *ATTACH IT* firmly to the ground or solid place to keep the rat from dragging the trap away.
- *PLACE THE TRAP* near where you have found the droppings. Make sure the trap is safe from people, children, pets or animals who could get hurt from it.

**POISONS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED** for rat control, because children or other animals may eat it by mistake. Also, poisoned rats can die in hard to reach places causing a very bad smell.

**DEAD RATS** must first be wrapped in newspaper, *or* placed in a plastic bag before putting it in a tightly covered garbage can. Injured or sick rats *must be killed*, then wrapped and put in the garbage can. Try not to touch the dead rat. Use gloves if possible.

**WASH YOUR HANDS WITH HOT WATER AND SOAP AFTER GETTING RID OF DEAD RATS!** (even if you used gloves).

## How do I clean an area where rats/mice have already been?

**If you are cleaning out a building that has been closed up, such as a cabin, shed, or garage, or areas where rodent nesting material have been found, follow these steps.**

1. Air out the building for at least 30 minutes by opening windows and doors. Leave the building while it is airing out.
2. Wear latex or rubber gloves and a dust mask while cleaning.
3. Avoid raising dust that may spread the virus through the air: Do not vacuum, sweep or dust. Carefully wet down areas with disinfectant before cleaning.
4. Use rags, sponges and mops that have been soaked in the disinfectant solution to wipe down counter tops, cabinets and drawers, mop floors and baseboards.
5. Mix a solution of 1 cup bleach to 10 cups water or use a household disinfectant.
6. Steam clean carpets, rugs, and upholstered furniture.
7. Thoroughly spray or soak any dead mice, droppings, or nesting areas with disinfectant or bleach solution.
8. Wash clothes and bedding in hot water and detergent. Set the dryer on high.
9. To dispose of contaminated items, including dead mice, put them in a plastic bag. Seal the bag and put it in another plastic bag. Seal the outer bag and put it in your outdoor garbage can.
10. When you are done, disinfect or throw away the gloves you used. Wash your hands or shower with soap and hot water.