

## A Solution To Rats Chewing Wallpaper

**The best solution is to setup a special play space.**

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**Q:** Do you know a safe and harmless solution to rats stripping wallpaper? My rats have plenty of toys, exercise, out-of-cage time and crunchy things for their teeth, so I don't understand why they ignore all these things and give their attention to the wallpaper.

**A:** Most rats love to shred paper. It's instinctual for them to gather comfortable materials, shred them and build nests. Unfortunately some wallpapers and adhesives could be harmful to your pets, so it's very good that you're addressing this issue.

If your rats play on the floor, and the area they play in is small, try to protect the wallpaper by covering it with a strip of aluminum foil, clear thin Plexiglas or some other non-chewable material. The covering needs to extend 8 to 12 inches above the floor.

If your rats reach the wallpaper from the back of the couch or a table, move the furniture slightly away from the wall so they can't reach it.

The safest option is to set up a special play space that provides extra exercise and entertainment but is free from the usual dangers that free-roam rats can be exposed to. A table of any size, from a card table to a large 30- by 60-inch folding table, can be put in a corner or along a wall and set up with boxes, toys and piles of paper to shred. Then hang thin Plexiglas sheets to protect the wallpaper next to the table. I use 1/8 inch thick sheets and drill small holes for tacks or small nails. A short Plexiglas "fence" can be added around the edge of the table, but this might not be necessary as rats tend to be homebodies and won't usually leave such a fun and comfortable space. Many people enjoy this play area so much that they simply allow their rats to live in this safe and entertaining space.