

Rat Housing Basics

Learn the basics of rat housing.

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Rats Danru, Ripley and Spritz/© Courtesy Amanda Beal

Proper ventilation is just one of the requirements of a rat habitat. "Ideally rats should be housed in an escape-proof enclosure that has adequate ventilation," said David Hannon, DVM, of Vet Pets Animal Hospital in Cordova, Tennessee. Bedding is required, so talk to your veterinarian about what's best for your rat. The cage also should include items that the rat can chew and explore, as well as exercise wheels that will not entrap their tails. Rats like cages with several levels.

Kerry Kraemer, DVM, of Blum Animal Hospital in Chicago, noted that rats generally do best if housed with another same-sex individual of their species. If this cannot be done, the rat owner should spend a lot of time with the rat to provide it with the social interaction the animal craves, said Dan Johnson, DVM, of Avian and Exotic Animal Care in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Click For Info "The cage should be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water only at least once weekly," Kraemer said. "Rats should also be provided with chew toys, tubes and even sleeping hammocks or beds appropriate for their species."

Dale Taylor, also known as Hattie McRattie, vice president and public relations manager for the American Fancy Rat and Mouse Association, said a variety of toys should be used and rotated in a rat's habitat.