

## Rat Out-of-Cage Options

**Spend time playing with your pet rat out of the cage.**

*By Audrey Pavia*

Your rat needs at least an hour of playtime outside the cage every day. Playtime should take place in a rat-proofed room.

Choose a room that is easy to secure by closing windows and doors. Cover electrical cords and telephone wires with plastic tubing sold at hardware stores (slice the tubing lengthwise to fit over cords and wires), and put them out of reach. Close off all heating and air-conditioning vents, and plug up any holes with towels. Cover carpet corners with plastic or hardware cloth and tack it down.

Cover furniture that you don't want chewed or urinated on. Remove rocking chairs and recliners, because these are dangerous for rats.

Supervise your rat during playtime to ensure it doesn't get into trouble.

If your rat escapes, confine cats and dogs for your rat's safety. Buy a humane trap used for catching wildlife (you can find these for sale on the Internet) and set the trap to catch your rat. The trap is designed for the door to close when the rat enters to get the bait. Place the trap near the last place you saw your rat and bait it with a piece of your small pet's favorite food. Check the traps several times a day.