

Rat Travel Tips

Be prepared for safe travel with pet rats.

By Audrey Pavia

Tip 1: Keep a travel carrier on hand to transport your rat to the vet or for emergencies. Small plastic or wire carriers designed for small mammals are best. Line the carrier with shredded paper towels so your rat can hide under them to feel secure.

Tip 2: When traveling with your rat, keep the carrier door securely closed. Resist the urge to take your small pet out of the carrier before you reach your destination. If your rat escapes, it's unlikely you'll ever get it back.

Tip 3: If you are traveling in hot weather, keep the air-conditioner on in your car so your rat doesn't become overheated. Never leave your rat in a parked car in warm weather as rats are very susceptible to heat exhaustion.

Tip 4: If you are going on vacation, leave your rat at home under the care of a trusted friend or pet sitter. Have the caretaker visit your rat once or twice before you leave on your trip so your small pet feels comfortable with him or her.

Tip 5: Leave plenty of food and bedding so your pet sitter has the supplies he or she needs to care for your rat. Provide detailed instructions on how to care for your rat in your absence, as well as telephone numbers where you can be reached. Leave your veterinarian's phone number and address as well, and instruct your pet sitter to take your rat to the vet right away if your small pet seems under the weather.