

New Rat Handling Tips

Allow a new rat to get to know you before picking it up.

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Posted: April 2, 2008, 5 a.m. EDT

Most tame rats are docile when held and won't jump out of your hands. If the rat doesn't know you yet, let it smell your hand and pet it for a few minutes before you attempt to pick the rat up.

To lift the rat, scoop your hand underneath its belly and let the rat rest its front and hind paws on your hand. If your rat is too big for one hand, use both.

When you hold your rat, always use two hands. Use one hand to support the front legs and shoulders, and the other to cradle the hind legs. Snuggle your small pet against your body to help it feel secure.

Never pick up your pet rat by its tail. The tail skin is delicate and can easily tear.

Rats are agile and can be taught to sit on your shoulder. Young rats learn to "shoulder ride" better than older rats. Be sure to wear clothes that protect your skin against the rat's sharp nails.

The first few times you put your rat on your shoulder it may climb down your arm and accidentally scratch you. Have your hand ready to steady your pet rat if it tries to climb down.