



Mouse Care



Mice are bred for their looks and behaviour. Pet mice are happy active animals that make for enjoyable and inexpensive pets. They are quiet and take up little space. Mice enjoy each others company and watching them play among themselves is highly entertaining. Mice come in different coat colours. 'Fancy mice' describes mice that have been bred with unusual coats, colour or patterns.

Unless you want to breed keep same sex pairs (preferably from the same litter) or small groups and don't put two males in the same cage unless they are litter mates. Mice like the night life so are more active during the evening and night.

General care

The average lifespan is one to two years. Mice normally stay healthy throughout their lives. They can suffer from sneezing and breathing problems. Ensure you are using good quality dustfree woodchips in your mouse's cage.

Your mouse's teeth constantly grow and are worn down. You can help him do this by providing him with mineral blocks, and wooden chews. In the pet shop we give the mice, rats and guinea pigs small bottle brush branches to chew. Overgrown teeth will result in weight loss and must be treated by clipping.

If you are concerned about your mouse's health speak to your vet.

Checklist

- Secure cage with narrow bars & lid
 - Litter-woodshavings, paper litter, lucerne
 - Toys
 - Exercise wheel
 - Pet-safe disinfectant
 - Book on mouse care
 - Nest box for sleeping
 - Bedding-straw for nest box
 - Mineral block and wooden chews
 - Water bottle which attaches to outside of the cage
 - Heavy feed dish (ceramic) or a bowl that attaches to the side of the cage
- ### Food
- Commercial mouse pellets and mouse seed/grain mix
 - A mixture of fresh fruits and vegetables
 - Some fresh hay

Choosing your mouse

A healthy mouse should be

- Bright and alert
- have no signs of discharge from eyes, ears, mouth and nose
- Have a clean anal area
- Have a glossy coat with no bald patches and no sores on the skin
- Should have no signs of breathing problems
- Should move around the cage easily with no stiffness or staggering
- should feel well covered and not bony

Housing

The cage should be escape proof but well ventilated.

A glass aquarium or terrarium is also suitable provided it has a secure, very well-ventilated lid so the mouse does not get hot. An even temperature, ideally between 15-27 degrees. A temperature above 30 degrees could cause your mouse to suffer from heat stress.

Furnished with a nest box, ladders or climbing frames and hiding places. The floor should be covered with a layer of shavings (or cat litter made from paper products or lucerne) and suitable bedding should be provided in the nest box such as soft straw.

A cage can be a mouse adventure playground with a little imaginative use of ropes, ladders, wooden sticks, tubes and hidy-holes that can be changed to keep your mouse occupied.

Soiled litter and food should be removed daily.

The cage should be thoroughly cleaned out, disinfected with a pet-safe disinfectant, and new litter and bedding replaced twice a week, or more.

Mice can leave an odour and there are new products available that will help to absorb this: your pet shop will advise.

A mouse cage with two levels is preferable. The upper level serves as the bedroom and should have a sleeping box, while the food and water should be in the lower 'dining/rumpus room'.

Becoming friends

Handling your mouse often will help them build up a relationship with you. When you first get your mouse home allow him 24 hours to get used to his environment. Allow your mouse to sniff your hands before handling him: this will get him used to your smell.

Gently but firmly hold the base of the tail between the thumb and fore finger and lift your mouse into your cupped hand.

Never pick up your mouse by the end of the tail. Alternatively a hollow tube (like a toilet roll tube) can be used to scoop up the animal until confidence is gained.

Although mice are more timid than some of the larger rodents, they can become quite tame. If they are socialized and gently handled from a young age, pet mice will take food from your hand and allow themselves to be handled. Some people like their mice as pocket pets, letting them wander over them from pocket to shoulder and back.



Feeding and water

Mice are omnivores and so will enjoy a varied diet. A combination of commercial mouse cubes or pellets, seed and grain mix is the easiest way to feed mice. This can be supplemented with small amounts of fruit and raw vegetables. Over feeding may result in diarrhoea or obesity. Uneaten fruit should be removed the next day. Some hay is recommended for extra fibre, and your mouse will also love to play with it and will use it to build nests.

Most mice will enjoy a mineral block which should be available for their use. Food bowls should be heavy and sturdy, gnaw proof, easily disinfected and cleaned daily.

Fresh drinking water should always be available for your mouse. It should be provided by a water bottle designed to fit your mouse cage.



OPEN 7 DAYS
Phone 4151 7200
21 Woondooma St
Bundaberg