

HANDLING

Handling your mice often will help them build a relationship with you. Some mice can become very tame with regular handling but always concentrate when holding your mice as they're notoriously quick and can slip out of your hands.

When you first get your mice home, leave them to settle in for 24 hours to allow them time to get used to their new surroundings. Let your pets sniff your hands before handling them; this will get them used to your smell.

To handle your mice, gently but firmly hold the base of the tail between the thumb and forefinger, then lift your mouse into your cupped hand. REMEMBER – never pick up your mice by the end of their tails. A hollow tube can also be used to scoop up the mouse until confidence is gained.

PET CODE OF PRACTICE

Never release a pet (companion animal) into the wild. It is illegal and for most species this will lead to an untimely and possibly lingering death, as they are not native to this country. Any animals or plants that do survive might be harmful to the environment. This includes the need to properly dispose of soiled substrate, so that eggs and live food can't escape into the wild.

SHOPPING LIST

- cage
- nest box
- dust-free floor cover
- bedding
- solid exercise wheel
- mouse food
- mineral block
- food bowl
- toys
- treats
- water bottle and bottle brush
- pet-safe disinfectant
- odour-control spray
- fancy mice care book



THE FIVE ANIMAL WELFARE NEEDS

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 means all pet owners have a legal duty of care to their pets. Anyone who is cruel to an animal or is found not to be providing the five animal welfare needs, as listed below, can be fined and sent to prison.

- 1 Environment:** pets should be given the correct housing according to its size, this includes shelter, space to exercise and a secure, comfortable place to rest.
- 2 Diet:** pets should be offered the correct type and volume of food to cover all their nutritional needs alongside access to clean, fresh water.
- 3 Behaviour:** all pets should be allowed to exhibit normal behaviour patterns and should be provided with the facilities to do so.
- 4 Company:** some animals require the company of their own kind, whilst others should be kept on their own.
- 5 Health:** all animals should be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease, and given veterinary treatment if they become sick or injured.



This leaflet is produced by The Pet Charity, a national charity which promotes the joy and benefits of pet ownership.

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These organisations support the aims of The Pet Charity to promote the welfare and responsible keeping of pet animals.



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GUIDE TO CARING FOR FANCY MICE

the
pet 
charity
For joy, health & companionship



Fancy mice are relatively inexpensive to house and feed, and they take up little space. They are clean, rarely suffer from ailments and can live for up to two years.

THE PET CHARITY GUIDE TO CARING FOR FANCY MICE

Mice are social animals so it is best to keep them in single sex pairs or small groups.

Fancy mice have been selectively bred for generations to produce exotic strains of coat colour, type and length. Over fifty colours are available although the white mouse still remains a favourite.

GENERAL CARE

Mice normally stay healthy throughout their lives, but they can suffer from sneezing and breathing problems. Be sure to use appropriate dust-free bedding in the cage to help prevent these problems occurring. If sneezing and breathing problems persist, seek the attention of a vet.

Your mouse's front teeth constantly grow and need to be worn down. You can help them do this by providing them with a mineral block or wooden chews. Overgrown teeth will result in weight loss and must be burred by a vet.

If you are concerned about your pet's health seek veterinary advice. It is recommended to find a vet that has experience with mice.

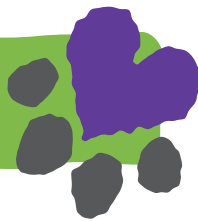
CHOOSING YOUR MICE

A healthy hamster:

- should be bright and alert
- should have no signs of discharge from eye, ears, mouth or nose
- should have a clean anal area
- should have a glossy coat with no bald patches or sores on the skin
- should have no sign of breathing problems
- should move around the cage easily without stiffness or staggering
- should not feel too skinny or bony

DID YOU KNOW?

A temperature above 30°C could cause your mice to suffer from heat stroke.



HOUSING

A plastic cage with a removable base tray is ideal for keeping mice. The cage should be escape-proof but well ventilated. Beware of large gaps between bars as juvenile mice may be able to escape through them. A glass aquarium is also suitable provided it has a secure, well-ventilated lid.

Fancy mice are indoor pets so they should be kept in an even temperature, ideally between 15 – 27°C.

You should avoid putting the cage in draughts, direct sunlight or in damp or humid conditions. The cage should be furnished with a nest box, ladders or climbing frames and hiding places to keep your pets entertained and exercised.

Mice are inquisitive and active, so they should be provided with as much stimulation as possible. Their cage should include a solid exercise wheel and a selection of toys to avoid boredom.

The floor should be covered with a layer of shavings and suitable bedding in the nest box. You can also place small tubes inside the cage to offer your mice a safe place to hide.

Soiled litter and food needs be removed daily. The cage should be thoroughly cleaned out once a week, disinfected with a pet-safe disinfectant, and litter and bedding replaced.

Mice can leave an odour and there are a number of products available to help to absorb this. Your pet shop can advise on a suitable product.

FOOD AND WATER

Mice are omnivores so they will enjoy a varied diet. A complete mix suitable for mice should be the basis of the diet and will be available from your local pet store. This can be supplemented with small amounts of fruit and vegetables as treats. Check daily for uneaten fresh food and remove it to prevent it rotting inside the cage.

Most mice will enjoy a mineral block and this should be available for their use. It will also help to keep their teeth at a healthy length. Food bowls should be sturdy, gnaw-proof and easily disinfected. It is important to clean these daily.

Do not feed your mice cheese as it can upset their stomach.

Fresh drinking water must always be available for your pets. It should be provided by a gravity-fed water bottle suitable for your chosen cage.

