

# RAT FACTS

- Rats can swim. Certain species of rats can even tread water for up to three days and hold their breath for three minutes! Additionally, some species can swim over a mile.
- Rats are revered in some cultures. A temple in Northwest India, dedicated to Hindu goddess Karni Mata, is home to more than 15,000 rats. These rodents are worshipped and protected by the humans.
- Their tails keep them cool. Rats don't sweat like humans, nor do they pant to relieve the heat like a dog. Rather, rats control their body temperature by expanding and contracting the blood vessels in their tails.
- Rats teeth never stop growing. Rats are known for gnawing on things and with good reason. Their teeth can grow up to 5 inches per year. They have to chew on things to wear them down.
- There are many different species of rats. Most people have heard of Norway rats (brown rats), pack rats, and roof rats (black rats). However, what many people don't know is that there are 56 known species of rats in the world.
- Some rats get pretty big! The species of rats most people are used to seeing are small compared to some of their more massive rodent relatives. The Sumatran Bamboo rat, for example, can weigh up to 8.8 pounds and measure 20 inches in total length. That's the size of a small housecat. While not as heavy at 3 pounds, the Gambian Pouched rat can measure as long as 3 feet from nose to tail.
- Rats can sense moods. It's always best to interact with your rat when you're in a good mood and feeling calm. Rats can sense tension, fear, and other negative emotions in the people who handle them and may respond accordingly. Try to give off good energy when you're spending time with your rat.
- Rats are social creatures. Most species live in communities, in which they groom each other, sleep together, and even play together. A group of rats is called a "mischief."
- Some rats are hairless. Hairless rats are often referred to as Double-Rex. This is caused by a mutation known as the rexing gene. Their skin is a bit thicker than normal and they work harder to thermo-regulate.
- Rats can laugh. When rats play, they experience a type of "social-joy." The result is they laugh, albeit not a hearty chuckle like you'd hear from a human, instead, they emit a high-pitched chirping noise.

