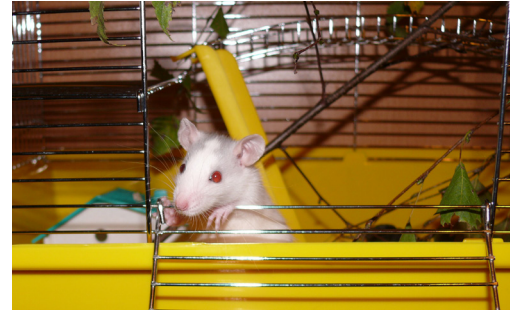


Rat Socialization & Enrichment

Rats are incredibly smart animals that need both mental and physical stimulation in order to avoid pacing, appetite loss, obesity, aggression, or even self or companion mutilation (fur chewing, whisker biting, etc). Enrichment helps keep rats mentally and physically stimulated through foraging, positive social behavior, and increased physical activity. Mental stimulation can be achieved through foraging, tunnels, mazes, and hide boxes. Physical stimulation can be achieved through toys, exercise wheels, climbing tools, and chew toys.

Socialization Space

While rats can be socialized and have bonding time in most places, the ideal location will have ramps, tunnels, plenty of toys, chewing or shredding material, and hide boxes. A good habitat can be made with cuddle spaces (pockets, pouches, hammocks), climbing materials (ramps, ladders, ropes), a nest box (tissue box, paper bag, plastic igloo), and nesting material (cotton bedding, fabric). Rats can also benefit from a simple run or maze made out of boxes clipped together.



Enrichment Tools

Listed below are enrichment items along with the supplies needed to make them and the benefit they can provide your pet rat.

Wading Pool

What you need:

- Peas or corn
- Midsized pebbles (optional)
- Water
- Shallow bowl or container

Why:

- Allows for foraging in a close to natural environment

Rat Cubbie

What you need:

- Flower pot, tissue box, or plastic igloo

Why:

- Hide boxes and tunnels provide mental stimulation and security



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Ping Pong Ball Pit

What you need:

- Ping pong balls
- Cardboard box

Why:

- Physical and mental stimulation via pushing, carrying, foraging, and exercise

Cardboard Roll Treat Toys

What you need:

- Toilet paper or paper towel roll
- Treats
- Scissors
- Sticks

Why:

- Provide mental and physical stimulation that encourages chewing and activity

Paper Woven Carpet

What you need:

- Recycled paper, newspaper, or cloth

Why:

- Helps grind down teeth through chewing and shredding
- Once shredded, allows for nesting material

Cheerio Garland

What you need:

- String
- Cheerios

Why:

- Allows mental and physical stimulation through manipulating objects and reaching

Milk Cap Foraging Tool

What you need:

- Milk caps or peanut butter jar lids
- Treats
- String or yarn

Why:

- Provides an advanced foraging opportunity

Digging Box

What you need:

- Tissue box or plastic container
- Newspaper or planted grass
- Rat treats

Why:

- Allows for foraging and exercise close to their natural environment
- Perfect for physical and mental stimulation

Soft Tunnels

What you need:

- Box
- Tubes (cardboard, plastic, or large PVC pipe)
- Fleece or old shirt sleeves

Why:

- Provide mental stimulation and security

Rat Ladder Jungle Gym

What you need:

- Wood or popsicle sticks
- Nails or screws (or non-toxic glue, if using popsicle sticks)
- Hanging treats toy

Why:

- Physical and mental stimulation via pushing, climbing, and exercise

Cardboard Hanging Toy

What you need:

- Cardboard strips
- Non-toxic glue
- Wire
- Paper rings, string, or accessories

Why:

- Allows mental and physical stimulation through stretching and chewing
- Helps teeth grind down through chewing and shredding