

Mouse Housing

Cage Type

Mouse enclosures should be easy to clean, escape proof, and have good ventilation. Aquariums, homemade enclosures, or bin cages are the best options for mice. You want to avoid housing them in wire cages, unless they are large enough and have small gaps in-between the bars. Avoid using small plastic cages with tubes that are often sold in pet stores. These cages are not large enough to house mice in.

The minimum cage size for two mice is a 40 gallon tank. The bigger the cage the better because mice love running around and exploring.

Bin Cages

Bin cages are an easy, cost effective choice for their enclosure. There are many tutorial videos on YouTube that show you how to make a bin cage. Supplies include:

- 70 quart or larger plastic storage bin
- 1/4 inch fence wire
- Box cutter or dremel blade
- Wire cutters
- Zip ties
- Duct tape (optional)

Bedding

The best types of bedding to use for your mouse is paper pulp, shredded paper, aspen shavings, or hemp shavings. Make sure the bedding is dust free and absorbent. Mice have very sensitive respiratory systems so it's best to stay away from scented bedding as well. The minimum amount of bedding is six inches so your mice can have plenty of room to burrow.

Do not use pine or cedar bedding because this can cause respiratory issues for your mice. It's also important that you stay away from cotton or wool bedding because these can get

tangled around their limbs and they are not digestible.

Set Up

When you are setting up their enclosure there are a few essential items that you'll need. These items include: an 8-inch or larger running wheel, a water bottle or water bowl, hideouts, and chew toys.

Do not use wire running wheels. Lots of pet stores will sell wire or mesh wheels, but these are unsafe for mice to use. Their paws can get stuck in the gaps, and they can get what is called bumblefoot, which is a bacterial infection or abscess caused by a cut or scrape on the foot. Only use solid surface running wheels, these are the safest options for your mice.

Be sure to fill their enclosure with lots of clutter and hiding spaces so they feel comfortable and safe. Hideouts such as cardboard boxes, wooden houses, or wood bridges are great options for your mice to explore.

Maintenance

If you have a large tank you can clean their enclosure once or twice a month. Keep the top half of the bedding by placing it in a garbage bag or bin and clean out the bottom half of the bedding. Place the top half of the bedding back into the enclosure and add new bedding. You want to keep some of the "old" bedding so your mice can continue to have their scent in their enclosure. Cleaning out all of the bedding and replacing it with new bedding gets rid of all of their scent, as if your mice are in a whole new environment which can be stressful for them.

You can also spot clean their enclosure weekly including wiping down their wheel if necessary and changing out any spots of bedding where they regularly go to the bathroom.

