

Rats (*Rattus norvegicus*)

Description

Rats are larger than mice. They are typically grey in colour and grow to 200 to 270mm long. A rat's tail is shorter than its head and body.



Where and how do they live?

Rats live in drains and sewers and can also be found in compost heaps, on rubbish dumps and in overgrown gardens or wasteland. Rats are most active at night, but may be seen searching for food and water during the day.

Why are they a problem?

Rats are a health hazard as they carry and spread diseases. They can also cause physical damage to buildings by gnawing through woodwork, electrical wires, pipes and even aluminium sheeting.

What can I do to prevent rats in my home?

The smallest scraps of food or liquid are attractive to rats looking for food. To avoid attracting rats into your home:

- Wash kitchen surfaces before and after preparing food and clean up any left-over mess
- Sweep and mop all food and liquids from the floor regularly
- Keep food stored in air tight containers
- Empty bins regularly

Medical advice

Always seek medical advice if you have been bitten or stung by a mouse, rat or insect. Where a product is used to treat an infestation in your home, our officer will leave you with written information about the chemical. This also contains instructions on what to do in case of an emergency. All pesticides are applied by our qualified and experienced staff to ensure the safety of the public and to minimise damage to the environment.

How can I get rid of rats?

You can try to get rid of rats yourself however we recommend you seek professional help. If you do choose to use a rat trap please follow the instructions carefully and wash hands after use – rat traps contain poison.

How we can help

Call pest control on 0800 952 4444. If you have tried to get rid of rats in your house but without success, we can visit and carry out a survey to advise on the best control measures.

This could mean we visit and treat a number of nearby homes at the same time, (block treatment). If poison baits are used, they should be left undisturbed. We will return to check these, and refill them if necessary. They will be removed when you no longer have a problem.

If you have a problem with rats and there is already a private pest control contractor treating our home or block, please do not contact us.

Contact

If you are a council tenant and you are having a problem with rats please contact your area housing office or call 0800 952 4444.