

Rats



Norway rats favor basements, woodpiles and the ground floor of buildings.

Rats are some of the most troublesome and damaging rodents.

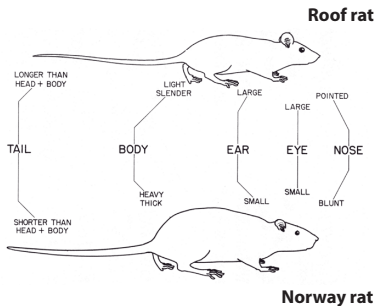
They eat and contaminate food, garden produce, and fruit, and can transmit diseases to humans and pets. Manage rats by removing food and shelter, eliminating entryways into buildings, and trapping.

Indications of a rat infestation:

- Rat droppings in garages, storage buildings, or attics, or around pet food containers.
- Rodent feeding damage on tree fruit or nuts in your yard.
- Rat nests behind boxes, in garage drawers, or in woodpiles.
- Burrows beneath garbage cans and compost piles or among garden plants.
- Rats traveling along utility lines or on fence tops at dusk.

Is it a Norway rat or a roof rat?

- The stocky Norway rat builds burrows along building foundations, beneath rubbish, or in woodpiles. Indoors they tend to remain in basements or on the ground floor.



- Roof rats are agile climbers with a tail longer than their head and body. They usually live and nest above ground in shrubs, trees, or dense vegetation. Indoors they favor attic spaces, walls, false ceilings, and cabinets.

For more information about managing pests, visit ipm.ucanr.edu or your local University of California Cooperative Extension office.

To get rid of rats, seal entryways and remove food, water, and shelter.

- Feed pets only the amount of food they will eat at a single feeding or bring food inside at night.
- Keep garbage, trash, and garden debris in containers with tight-fitting lids.
- Thin dense vegetation and create at least a 2-foot space between each shrub as well as between shrubs and buildings.
- Thin or remove climbing hedges from buildings.
- Remove tree limbs that are within 3 feet of a roof.
- Seal all cracks and openings in the house's foundation that are larger than ¼ inch.
- Make sure doors, windows, and screens fit tightly.

Remove rats from the home by trapping.

- Snap traps are the safest, most effective, and most economical way to trap rats.
- For Norway rats, place traps close to walls, behind objects, in dark corners, and in places where you have found rat droppings.
- For roof rats, place traps in off-the-ground locations such as ledges, shelves, branches, fences, pipes, or overhead beams.
- Ensure traps are out of reach of children and pets.

What about pesticides?

- When using rodenticide baits, avoid using them indoors, because dead rats create bad odors.
- Seal buildings before baiting outside to prevent poisoned rats from coming inside to die.
- Tamper-proof bait stations are available but can only be used within 50 feet of a building.
- All rodent baits are toxic to nontarget species, pets, and humans. Always keep away from children and pets.

What you do in your home and kitchen affects our health and water.

- Minimize the use of pesticides that pollute our waterways and harm human health.
- Use nonchemical alternatives or less toxic pesticide products whenever possible.
- Read product labels carefully and follow instructions on proper use, storage, and disposal.



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