



Rats

Rats are smart, friendly, highly trainable and playful. They can be a fantastic addition to any family because they desire human companionship. Rats are nocturnal and live between two and for years of age. Caring for rats can be a little trickier than other small animals because they need quite a bit of enrichment. Rats do enjoy being housed in same sex familiar pairs.



Health

Rats are relatively short-lived animals to begin with but can develop a variety of health issues. They do not require vaccinations. The most common ailments that effect rats are chronic pneumonia, respiratory infections, bumble foot and tumors. It is important to get veterinary care if you notice a decrease in appetite or energy level, trouble breathing or weight loss. These can be symptoms of serious illness.

Housing

Rats require plenty of ventilation. Therefore, large aquariums are not suitable for rat cages. Rats enjoy climbing and enjoy large multi- layered cages with a hard bottom. Cages with wire flooring have been linked with cuts that can cause bumble foot. Rats enjoy hammocks, nesting boxes, flowerpots and other places to climb and hide.

Cages should be located in a quiet but still social area of the home. Use caution around other pets because rats can become fearful of dogs and cats.



Substrate

Rats prefer absorbent-pelleted litter underneath a layer of loose bedding. Rats will choose a bathroom area that should be scooped out daily. All new bedding should be provided at least once a week.

Diet

Rats should always have fresh water available to them. Rats are omnivorous and can eat a variety of foods. Pelleted or blocks are available at the pet store to ensure a balanced diet. Small amounts of fruits, vegetables, and grains should be given on a daily basis. Do not feed your rat junk food. High fat diets can be bad for rats.

Fun facts

A group of rats is called a mischief

Rats clean themselves on a daily basis and do not need baths, but they may enjoy swimming.

There are many different species and color varieties of rats.

Rats need mental stimulation to help them avoid boredom

Rat nails can become very sharp and need to be trimmed.



For more information or additional support, please contact the adoptions department at (856)424-2288 ext. 100 or adoptions@awanj.org. (June 2020)

