

Safer Rodent Control Quick Guide

Keep people, pets, and wildlife safe from anticoagulant rodenticides and other poisons by using these safer methods for rodent control.

Provided by:



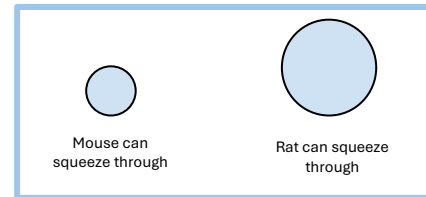
This guide is intended to help you learn how to control rodent problems without using dangerous poisons like anticoagulant rodenticides, which are often used by the pest management industry.

It focuses on principles of “**Integrated Pest Management**,” or **IPM**, which is defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as “an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of common-sense practices.”

We encourage you to do additional research to find the best approach that works for your property. You may also want to hire a pest control professional to help you. If so, we urge you to make it crystal clear that the dangerous products listed at the end of this guide should not be used anywhere on your property

#1 Keep Rodents Out

Blocking entry points is one of the most effective things you can do to control rodents. Rats can fit through holes as small as half an inch and mice can fit through holes as small as a quarter of an inch.



Step 1: Find the places where rodents can get in.

Look for signs of rodent activity (like droppings, gnaw marks, shredded material, gross smell) as you check the inside and outside of your home for entry points.

Indoors

- Check for cracks and holes in walls and ceilings, roof, attic, basement, and crawlspace, plus the garage and any sheds.
- Pay close attention to windows, closets, doors, corners, fireplaces, kitchen cabinets, sinks, appliance pipes (behind the kitchen stove, washing machine, under sinks, etc.), and where electrical wires and cables enter the wall.

Outdoors

- Check around the outside of your home for potential entry points. Pay close attention to where utilities are connected.
- Do vents (plumbing, dryer, crawlspace, etc) have screens?
- Do any doors leading outside have gaps underneath?

Step 2: Block those entry points.

- Use ¼" hardware cloth or copper mesh to fill holes and cracks. Seal with spray foam (*OSI Quad* is one brand) or (for outside) you can use an epoxy adhesive.
- Install rodent-proof door sweeps (*Xcluder* is one brand).
- Use a garage door guard or clip (like the *Xcluder* brand garage door seal kit) to close gaps.
- Cover vents with ¼" hardware cloth/mesh or use vent caps.
- If you have a chimney, install a chimney cap.
- For porches/sheds, dig a 1 to 2 ft trench around the perimeter, pack with ¼" hardware cloth or mesh, and recover with dirt.

#2 Keep Rodents Away

Removing food, water, and shelter sources will make your property an undesirable place for rodents. Remember that garbage is usually their main food source.

Step 1: Remove food and water sources

Indoors

- Keep kitchen surfaces clean and food (including pet food) in airtight containers. Do not leave food out on countertops for long periods of time.
- Repair leaky pipes.
- Do not leave pet food and water bowls out overnight.
- Rinse food and beverage containers well before discarding or recycling.
- Clean trash and recycling bins regularly and make sure they have secure lids.

Outdoors

- Use rodent-proof trash bins (metal or thick plastic) with secure lids, and if possible, keep them away from the building. Clean the bins regularly.
- Do not put garbage out for pickup early - if your pickup is in the morning, place your bins out early that morning.
- Keep the grill and outdoor eating areas clean.
- If you have a bird feeder, take it down at night and clean up spillage daily. Consider **not** having one.

- Do not leave pet food or water bowls outside for long.
- Clean up pet poop promptly.

Gardening and Compost

- Use raised garden beds lined with ¼" hardware cloth.
- Store seedlings inside or in a lidded container before planting.
- Harvest food from gardens and fruit trees as soon as possible. Do not leave fallen fruit and veggies on the ground.
- Fix leaks in garden hoses and sprinklers.
- Keep compost piles as far away from buildings as possible. Use a rodent-detering compost bin.

Step 2: Remove potential nesting materials and sites

- Declutter your home of papers, fabric, cardboard, and similar stuff that may be attractive to rodents as nesting material.
- Avoid clutter outside too, particularly near trash bins.
- Cut tree branches 3 feet back from buildings. (Do this in fall or winter when birds and wildlife are not nesting.)
- Do not plant ivy or similar ground cover.
- Use pebbles or rocks instead of plants to form an 18 to 24 inch border around your home.
- Regularly mow the lawn and trim overgrown vegetation.
- Keep firewood off the ground by at least 18 inches and as far away from buildings as possible.
- Elevate chicken coops by at least 18 inches.

#3 Remove Remaining Rodents

Remove any remaining rodents hanging around by using traps or other options listed. More than one method will probably be needed if you have a lot of rodents on your property.

Traps

Place traps where you've seen rodents or signs of rodent activity (such as droppings, shreadings, gnaw marks, etc.) Be sure to place traps where children, pets, and non-target animals cannot get them. Always read and follow the instructions provided with the trap.

Snap Traps

- Covered versions are available for better safety. You can also place them in an empty commercial bait station box.
- For best results, use a *small amount* of smelly bait (such as peanut butter, chocolate) in the trap.
- Place the trap against the wall with the bait toward the wall so that rodents must enter it head-first.
- Place traps in pairs next to each other.

High-Voltage “Zap” Traps

- Products such as *Owltra*, the *Raticator*, and the *Victor Electronic Mouse Trap* are examples of traps

that use a high-voltage shock to instantly kill rodents. Some traps can be monitored via smartphone.

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Traps

- The *Goodnature A24* rodent trap uses a canister of CO₂ to trap and instantly kill rodents. One canister can kill 24 rats and mice before a replacement is needed. The trap can be monitored via smartphone and resets on its own.

Fertility Control

Fertility control treatments for rodents (aka “rodent birth control”) can be a long-term solution for preventing rodent infestations. These treatments use natural ingredients and are safe for people, pets, and wildlife. In order to be effective, they must be used regularly. Several brands of products are currently available:

- The *Good Bites* product is available from *WISDOM Good Works*.
- The company *SenesTech* sells two different rodent fertility control products: *Evolve* and *Contrapest*. You can also check out the *Ratology* web site for these products.

Other Options

- *RatX* and *MouseX* brand products are naturally derived pellets of corn gluten meal. When eaten, it causes rodents to stop wanting water and they eventually die of dehydration.
- *BurrowRX* is a carbon monoxide sprayer system that can be pumped

