Mouse Facts

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

- Mice and humans have lived together for over 10,000 years.
- The word "mouse" comes from a Sanskrit word that means "thief."
- Mice are rodents whose teeth can grow up to 5 inches a year.
- A mouse's tail is covered in tiny scales that help when climbing.
- Domestic mice exhibit about 700 different color and coat varieties.

Mice are playful, social, and intelligent animals. They were originally found in central and southern Asia. Today, mice can be found all over the world. Pet mice are also known as "fancy" mice. They are the domesticated (which means they can live in a human environment) variety of the common or house mouse. Their scientific name is *Mus musculus*. This name roughly means "little rodent." The tail of a pet mouse should be equal in length to the length of his body. Like other rodents, mice have teeth that continually grow throughout their lifetime. Your pet mouse should be offered hard chew toys to help wear down his teeth. Mice are herbivores (plant-eaters) and granivores (seed- and grain-eaters). Pet mice should be fed a diet of nutritionally-balanced pellets or blocks. To vary their diet, small amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables can be offered. They are mostly nocturnal, which means they are active at night.

What Is It Called?

Common Name	Technical Name
Father	Buck
Mother	Doe
Baby	Pup, Pinkie, Kitten
Group	Horde or Mischief

Mice Around the World

Language	Name for Mice
French	souris
German	maus
Spanish	raton
Dutch	muis

The Most Common Question About Mice

What style and size home is the best for my pet mouse?

Pet mice need a home suited to their instincts. Just because a mouse is relatively small, it does not mean his home should be. In fact, as with any pet, the bigger

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the home the better your mouse will be. Choose a cage or habitat that affords your mouse enough room to move about, climb, and nest. If you have multiple pet mice, make sure their home is big enough to accommodate each comfortably. As a general rule, if you have four or five pet mice, the cage should be at least 12" wide x 14" long. Multiple level homes are a plus, because your mice can get away from each other when they want.

The best style of home is a wire cage with, at most, 3/8" spaced wires. Unlike traditional screen-covered aquariums, wire cage homes allow your mouse to climb and play. In addition, wire cages offer adequate ventilation. It is also important that your mouse's home includes ramps, climbing platforms, ladders, or exercise wheels. Mice are very active animals who require physical activity. Regardless of how large your pet's home is, however, make sure you regularly clean it on a daily and weekly basis. Contrary to popular belief, mice don't like messes. Dirty cages are harmful to both you and your pet's health.

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