



RSPCA Rat Care Advice

RSPCA COMPANION ANIMALS PET CARE FACTSHEET



FREE-RANGING BEHAVIOUR

ONCE YOUR RATS ARE WELL-HANDLED AND RELAXED, CONSIDER ALLOWING THEM TIMES FOR SUPERVISED 'FREE-RANGING' BEHAVIOUR

- You can do this by letting them explore outside of their cage in an area where they cannot hurt themselves or escape;
- Choose a room that you are happy to be explored by your rats (including contents as they may chew things) OR
- You could provide a large exercise pen with lots of objects for the rat to explore, and space for them to run, climb, hop and play, including providing them with a digging arena (see our advice on [Digging behaviour in rats](#)), water bath (see our advice on [Rats and Swimming](#)), and foraging tray (see our advice on [Foraging behaviour in rats](#));
- Remember rats will chew, gnaw and scent mark;
- Always supervise free-ranging behaviour. This will not only form a close bond between you and your rat, but will also prevent the rat from escaping or coming to harm;
- Remember any area you use should be designed to encourage natural behaviour.



This pet care sheet has been produced by the RSPCA Companion Animals Department (V1 CAD/KW 11.08.11). This leaflet is provided for general information only and is not intended to be relied upon as specific advice. Whilst we try to ensure that the information is correct, we cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information, nor for any reliance on or use of the leaflet.