



RSPCA Mouse Care Advice

RSPCA COMPANION ANIMALS PET CARE FACTSHEET



HANDLE YOUR MICE CAREFULLY

ALWAYS HANDLE YOUR MICE CAREFULLY AND CONSIDERATELY, IN A CONFIDENT BUT GENTLE MANNER

You can reduce the stress associated with handling by having positive interactions with your mice and allowing them to gradually habituate to you.

- Mice should be allowed to investigate your hands in their own time.
- If you need to momentarily restrain your mouse, always hold the mouse gently at the base of the tail as close to their bottom as you can and support their body, otherwise they could become injured. Do not restrain your mouse for any lengthy period of time as this can cause them distress.
- Never pick a mouse up by the tip of its tail, as this can be very distressing for them and can lead to injury.
- Never lift them high above a surface, as they can injure themselves if they fall or jump.



Cupped hands technique

- To pick up your mouse using the cupped hand technique, scoop them on one or both open hands, and allow them to sit or walk over your hands without any physically restraining them.
- If you find that your mouse attempts to escape by jumping off your hands the first time you try to pick them up, gently close your cupping hands loosely around them until their attempts to escape start to decrease (for a maximum of 30 seconds), you can then open your hands and allow them to sit or walk around on your hands unrestrained. This closed cupping should not be necessary after the first handling session.



Tunnel handling technique

- A home cage tunnel can also be used in combination with the cupped hand technique, to aid the picking up of a mouse. To pick up your mouse in this way, gently guide them into a home cage tunnel (one that is usually available in their cage and which has their cage scent on it) as you bring the tunnel forward. You can then allow them to crawl from the tunnel onto your cupped hands.





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- If you find that on the first time you handle your mouse they attempt to escape by jumping out of the tunnel, close your hands loosely around the tunnel ends until their attempts to escape start to decrease (for a maximum of 30 seconds). You can then open your hands and allow them to crawl out of the tunnel onto your cupped hands. Covering the ends of the tunnel in this way should not be necessary after the first day or two of handling.



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