



In need of some assistance with a rat infestation?

# Call us today

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# RATS: Pest Advice

London Network for Pest Solutions Ltd provides information leaflets on the following pests:

Rats • Mice • Cockroaches • Squirrels • Bed Bugs • Wasps •  
Flies • Fleas • Moths • Ants • Foxes • Birds • Spiders

## What does a rat look like?

Part of the rodent family, the rat resembles a large mouse, with the most common being the brown rat. Characterised by a stocky body, brown or grey fur with lighter underside, small hairy ears, a blunt nose and a tail shorter than the length of the head and body, brown rats can grow up to 40cm in length, and that's not taking into account their long tails! As with most rodents, they also have a pair of sturdy incisors and claws which boast a strong grip!

## Where do rats live?

Brown rats can be found almost everywhere in the UK, in any habitat that provides food, water and shelter. Houses provide the ideal territory for rats, with cosy cavities for them to hide in such as in the walls, roofs or under floorboards. If you are a light sleeper then you might only hear them scurrying around at night when they are on the move. In the garden, rats burrow into grassy banks or under sheds and are often found rummaging around in bins looking for their next meal.

## What do rats eat?

The rat diet consists of almost anything that we eat. As omnivorous creatures, they are not particularly fussy and generally sniff out cereal products, fruit and berries, nuts and meat. If you store food that rats love, then be careful where and when they are left out, especially at night when rats come out to play.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The insurance sector has estimated that rodent damage to wiring is responsible for 25% of all electrical fires in buildings.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Rats are ready to produce their first litter at just three or four months old, and can reproduce every three weeks



## Are rats bad for my health?

Rats have a well-known and deserved reputation for being a significant health hazard; these uninvited guests can carry a number of nasty diseases which can be spread to humans through their urine, faeces and fleas. The most common disease is Weil's disease, with others including salmonella, tuberculosis and E.coli.

## What are the signs of infestation?

Gnaw marks on items such as cables, wood and even pipes are giveaways, as well as rat droppings roughly the size of a raisin or sultana. Rats have poor eyesight, so usually follow the same route while moving and leave dark marks on surfaces, known as 'smears'. You might also notice a foul-smelling odour lingering in your home, as rats mark their territory by urinating pretty much everywhere they go, and their nocturnal scurrying might wake you up at night.

## How can I prevent rats in my home?

There are some simple actions you can take to avoid a potential rodent infestation. Ensure rubbish bins are tightly closed and compost heaps are covered, as well as sealing any gaps around pipes, under sheds or anywhere around your home where rats can sneak in; they only need a gap of 15mm to gain entry!

## How to get rid of a rat infestation?

Known for their speedy breeding, a small rat problem can very rapidly turn into a severe infestation, making rats tricky pests to tackle yourself. Rat traps alone only kill a small number without getting to the cause of the problem and rats are increasingly becoming resistant to some poisons, making rats a pest best dealt with by professionals. A pest controller has the skills, expertise and equipment for proper de-infestation, with the experience to conduct the necessary inspections and treatment until the problem has been controlled and eradicated.

