

Fancy Mouse Care: The Complete Recovery Standard

1. The Enclosure: Space & Security

Mice are active explorers. Provide at least 24" x 12" x 12" for a small group; larger is always better. Multi-level cages with solid platforms are ideal. Use wire cages with bar spacing no wider than 1/4" to prevent escapes. **Avoid glass tanks** as they lack ventilation, leading to ammonia buildup and respiratory issues. Use paper-based, aspen, or hemp bedding (never cedar or pine).

2. Nutrition: Constant Foraging

A high-quality lab block or mouse-specific pellet should be available at all times. Supplement with a daily rotation of fresh, bird-safe vegetables and small amounts of seeds/grains for foraging. Provide constant access to clean water via a drip-free bottle.

3. Social Dynamics: Pack Behavior

Mice are intensely social. Females should be kept in groups. **Intact males are territorial and must be kept alone** to prevent aggressive fighting. While they can learn to trust their owners, handle them with care, as they are fragile.

***THE REALITY CHECK:** Mice are a 1.5–2 year commitment. High-energy and high-metabolism, they require daily observation and clean environments. Do not underestimate the need for an exotic-trained veterinarian, as standard clinics are often unprepared for their specific medical needs.*

4. Health: Recovery Red Flags

- **Respiratory Distress:** Clicking, wheezing, or labored breathing is a medical emergency.
- **Porphyria:** Red discharge around the eyes or nose is a sign of stress or illness.
- **Lethargy:** If a mouse stops moving, grooming, or eating, seek an exotic vet immediately—their metabolism is fast, and they decline quickly.

5. Enrichment & Sustainability

Mice love "destructible" environments. Use toilet paper rolls, egg cartons, and clean cardboard boxes to create foraging puzzles. **Sustainability tip:** Repurpose clean household cardboard to encourage natural chewing and building behaviors without waste.

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