Quick Tips

House Mouse

House mice are well adapted to living in close contact with humans and thrive where food and shelter are abundant.

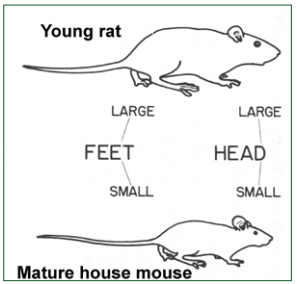
They eat and contaminate food supplies and can also transmit disease. Their gnawing activities can damage structures or property. Manage them by cleaning up debris, removing food and shelter, eliminating entryways into buildings, or using traps or baits. High frequency electronic devices aren't effective.

N Quinn, UCCE

Adult house mouse.

Prevent house mouse problems.

- Good housekeeping within buildings reduces shelter and food for house mice.
- Mice can enter through openings as small as ¼ inch. Seal all small structural cracks and openings using wire screen or coarse steel wool that mice can't chew through.
- Ensure all doors, windows, and screens fit tightly.
- Feed pets only the amount of food they will eat at a single feeding.
- Keep all food storage and garbage containers sealed.
- Thin or remove plants next to or climbing up buildings, since house mice are excellent climbers.



Bjornson BF, Wright CV.

Compared to rats, the head and feet of mice are proportionally smaller.

How to detect a house mouse infestation:

- Look for droppings, fresh gnaw marks, and tracks, which indicate areas where mice are active.
- Search behind boxes, in drawers, in garages, or around woodpiles for nests made of finely shredded paper or other fibrous material.
- A musky odor is commonly associated with mice.
- Mice are most active at night, but you might see them during daylight hours.

Remove mice by trapping.

- For most situations, snap traps work well and is a great first step in controlling mice, especially when enough devices are placed in strategic locations near rodent activity.
- Place traps in secluded areas along walls, behind objects, in dark corners, and in places where droppings have been found.
- Dispose of dead rodents by burying or placing them in plastic bags and putting them in the garbage. Don't touch mice with your bare hands, and wash hands thoroughly after handling traps.

CA Reynolds, UC IPM

Snap traps are a useful management tool.

What about pesticides?

- Rodenticide baits generally take several days for effective control.
- Place rodenticide baits in tamper-proof bait stations out of reach of children and pets and wildlife. All rodenticides are toxic.

What you do in your home and landscape affects our water and health.

- Minimize the use of pesticides that pollute our waterways and harm human health.
- Use nonchemical alternatives or less toxic pesticide products whenever possible.
- Read product labels carefully and follow instructions on proper use, storage, and disposal.

For more information about managing pests, visit ipm.ucanr.edu or your local University of California Cooperative Extension office.

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