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How to Get Rid of Mice Naturally

Here's how to identify mouse poop and dispose of it safely.

Sharing a home with mice isn't nice, no matter how much of a soft spot you may carry for them. They make terrible roommates, given their tendency to hang around with friends in a big group. House mice can also ruin your things with their chewing and gnawing, not to mention their habit of staying up late, making noise, and eating (or contaminating) your food. While it's important to remove mice from your home, we understand you may not want to harm them in the process. Luckily, there are plenty of natural ways to get rid of mice and keep them from coming back

Understand the Habits of Mice

Mice are a lot of things: determined, habitual, and resourceful. So, when it comes to knowing how to get rid of mice naturally, it can help to know how they think and behave. Mice value two things most: their nest and their food source. They spend much of their time scurrying between the two, usually in a range of about 10 to 50 feet.

In homes, they nest mostly in walls and voids, or other dry, quiet, and cozy places like closets. As for food, mice love grains and fruit, but they'll eat what they can find, chewing through cardboard and even lightweight plastic to get at it. As nocturnal animals, mice come out at night to nibble, sticking close to walls and corners as they go. You may even notice oily smudges from their fur or droppings along a well-frequented travel zone. Not only are these signs a pretty good indicator that you have a mouse problem, but they're also key to getting rid of r

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Get Rid of Mice Using a Catch-and-Release Mouse Trap

Catch-and-release traps are practical, effective, and humane. These are easy-to-use devices that let you capture and contain a live mouse so that you can relocate it somewhere else.

How they work is pretty simple: Most catch-and-release traps have a closed end with a removable compartment. That's where you put bait, like [Tomcat® Attractant Gel](#) or peanut butter (wear rubber gloves to keep your human scent off the bait). The trap has a spring-loaded door at the other end that you set to an open position—that's where the mouse will enter to go after the bait. Depending on the trap, you may need to push or pull a portion of the device to set the trap.

Once the trap is set, place it in the travel zone where you suspect mice. Keep in mind that while mice love food, they won't often deviate from their usual route to go looking for it. So, once the trap is baited and set, place it where they can't miss it. (Not sure where they've settled in your home? Try placing one trap each along a wall in the kitchen or pantry, attic, and garage.)

A curious mouse will smell the bait and crawl inside. As it enters the open end of the trap to retrieve the bait, the spring activates, the door closes, and the live mouse is captured inside. This often scares the mouse and causes it to urinate, so be sure to put on rubber gloves before handling up the trap. Once ready, you can relocate the mouse or take it to a vet who will put it down humanely.

While straightforward to use, not all catch-and-release traps are created equal. Some can trigger too soon, leaving the mouse outside the trap, or catch a tail or limb. For a natural way to get rid of a mouse with fewer false triggers, try [Tomcat® Live Catch Mouse Trap](#).

Never let a mouse stay in a catch-and-release trap too long, since it won't have access to food and water. Check the trap often, at least every 24 hours, but twice a day is best. Then take the trap with the live mouse inside to an outdoor location far from your home. Open the trap door, let the unharmed mouse go, and reuse the trap (but don't forget to clean it thoroughly).

Remember, mice value their food source so they can, and often do, find their way back to it. If possible, release mice at least 10 miles from your home, or ask a vet for their recommendations.

Natural Remedies to Repel Mice

One of the best, most natural ways to get rid of mice is to "inspire" them to leave on their own. How? By taking their strongest trait—their sense of smell—and making it work against them. Though mice can sniff out food, garbage, and bait, there are a few scents they really can't stand.

Ammonia:

Assuming you can tolerate the smell of ammonia, mice cannot. Besides being stinky to humans, it likely reeks of predator urine to a mouse. Ammonia's odor can repel and naturally get rid of mice.

Capsaicin:

Mice have a natural aversion to capsaicin, the ingredient found in cayenne, jalapeño, and other chili peppers. Sprinkle the peppery powder of your choosing along the zone where mice travel. But be extra cautious in using this natural repellent; it can cause eye irritation, and kids and pets may be curious about it as well.

Dogs and Cats:

The mere scent of the family pet can signal the presence of predators to help repel mice. While both are more effective in preventing a mouse infestation than eliminating a current one, keep in mind that when cats do get their paws on mice, they often like to leave their kill as "gifts" at your door.

Peppermint:

Mice absolutely detest the smell of peppermint. Cotton balls dabbed with peppermint oil can work well to repel mice, as can dried mint sachets. Just place oil-soaked cotton or mint-scented sachets in problem areas, refreshing as often as needed. For a longer-lasting solution, try a ready-to-use repellent with essential oil technology. A good one to use around entry points, under sinks, and around garbage cans is [Tomcat® Repellents Rodent Repellent Continuous Spray](#). For larger areas outdoors, such as around the garage, deck, patio, grill, or shed, use [Tomcat® Repellents Rodent Repellent Granules](#). Both of these products deliver a double-whammy of taste and smell that mice naturally hate.

Tips to Mouse-Proof Your Home

Want to keep mice from coming around in the first place? Here are 7 tips to help you do just that.

1. **Secure food.** Mice can eat through cardboard, so store pantry items like grains and cereals in sealed containers.
2. **Fix leaks.** Mice can subsist on the teensiest bit of water, about 1/20 oz. per day, most of which they get from food. To be on the safe side, check any water pipes and drains for drips or leaks and make repairs.
3. **Tidy up.** Pet food and tasty morsels of your favorite snack can make it onto a mouse's meal plan. Clean, sweep and wipe up spills, drops, and crumbs. Take out the trash. Make daily trash removal a priority. Put it in sealed bags, then place those outside in a covered bin secured with an elastic cord. Rinse garbage cans regularly to reduce mice-attracting odors.
4. **Stow securely.** Mice like to nestle into soft, fluffy things like clothing, bedding, and blankets. Invest in heavy-duty containers so you can store seldom-used and seasonal items inside rather than leaving them loose on shelves or in easily chewed cardboard boxes.
5. **Seal cracks and gaps.** When the cold weather hits, mice like to winter where it's warmer—like inside your home. If a mouse's nose can fit, it can pretty much squeeze the rest of itself through. Look for tiny openings (some no bigger than a dime), then fill them in with caulk, steel wool, or weather stripping.

6. **Clean up outside.** Mice will find food, water, and shelter outside, too, so be sure to pick up and dispose of fallen fruit and nuts. Remove trash, cardboard, and debris, and move woodpiles well away from your home to prevent mice from nesting.

While there is no sure-fire way to completely get rid of mice—naturally or otherwise—with a little ingenuity and these tips, you can humanely remove them and mouse-proof your home.

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