

# Mice and Rats

There are many different kinds of **mammals**. Mammals are warm-blooded animals that have bodies covered in hair. The females nurse their young with their own milk. Mammals are also **vertebrates**, which means they have a skeleton and a backbone inside their body. We are mammals too!

**Rodents** are mammals that have large, sharp teeth called incisors for gnawing. Their incisors are always growing so they have to gnaw on things to keep their teeth from getting too long. Beavers, squirrels, mice and rats are some famous rodents. Can you think of any other animals that might be rodents?

The most common rodents that become pests to humans are **House Mice** and **Norway Rats**. These animals can spread diseases to humans. It is important for us to know about their habitats, diets and behaviors so that we can help keep our homes mice and rat free.

Some people think that a mouse is just a baby rat! This is false. Mice and rats are different species. Although they are different, they do have some similar characteristics. Both have poor eyesight. They cannot see well so they use their whiskers to feel their way around. They are **nocturnal**, which means they are active at night. They look similar too! They both have tails, whiskers and similar hair. However, they are also very different. Take a look at this chart to compare their differences.

### House Mice

### Norway Rats

<b>Babies</b>	Females can have about 140 per year	Females can have about 20 per year
<b>Habitat</b>	Like to live in warm places, typically inside, especially in the fall when outdoor food sources such as seeds and plants are less abundant	Like to make burrows, typically outside. Rats may try to move inside in the fall when food sources outside are less abundant
<b>Can fit through a hole this size</b>	Dime	Quarter
<b>Nose</b>	Pointed	Blunt
<b>Feet</b>	Small	Large
<b>Can they jump?</b>	Up to 1 foot	Up to 3 feet
<b>Behavior</b>	Curious	Cautious
<b>Diet</b>	Almost anything, love seeds and grains or sweets	Love to eat pet food and go through trash