

Keep Mice & Rats Out

A Rodent Prevention Checklist for Businesses

Walk your property with this list once a month and after any renovation or delivery change.



A mouse can squeeze through a gap about the size of a dime, and a young rat through one about the size of a quarter. Once inside, rodents contaminate food and surfaces, chew wiring and insulation, and can lead to failed health inspections and lost customers. Most infestations start with a small opening and an easy meal. Use this checklist to close the doors rodents use and take away what attracts them.

1. Outside the Building

- ☐ **Trim vegetation.** Keep shrubs, ivy, and groundcover at least 18 inches away from walls, and trim tree limbs that touch the roof.
- ☐ **Create a clear strip.** Maintain a gravel or bare strip along the foundation so rodents have no hidden path to the building.
- ☐ **Remove clutter.** Clear stacked pallets, scrap, old equipment, and debris that give rodents shelter near the building.
- ☐ **Store materials off the ground.** Keep anything stored outside on racks at least 12 inches up and away from exterior walls.
- ☐ **Fix drainage and standing water.** Repair leaking spigots, clogged gutters, and low spots where water collects.
- ☐ **Check for burrows.** Look for holes along foundations, sidewalks, and landscaping, especially after heavy rain.

2. Seal Entry Points

- ☐ **Inspect the full perimeter.** Look for any gap 1/4 inch or larger at the foundation, siding, and where walls meet the roof.
- ☐ **Seal utility penetrations.** Close gaps around pipes, conduit, gas lines, and HVAC lines with copper mesh, steel wool, or metal flashing plus sealant.
- ☐ **Screen vents and openings.** Cover dryer, attic, crawl space, and exhaust vents with sturdy 1/4-inch hardware cloth.
- ☐ **Repair damaged materials.** Replace cracked foundation sections, rotted wood, and damaged soffits or fascia.
- ☐ **Use the right materials.** Avoid foam, caulk, or plastic alone in rodent gaps. Rodents chew through them quickly.
- ☐ **Check the roofline.** Inspect roof vents, rooftop units, and where the roof meets walls. Roof rats are excellent climbers.

3. Doors, Docks & Deliveries

- ☐ **Install door sweeps.** Every exterior door should have a sweep or threshold with no visible daylight underneath.
- ☐ **Keep doors closed.** Do not prop open back, side, or dock doors. Consider self-closing hinges on high-traffic doors.
- ☐ **Seal loading docks.** Maintain dock seals, bumpers, and leveler gaps, and add brush strips where trucks back in.
- ☐ **Inspect incoming shipments.** Check boxes, pallets, and produce for gnaw marks, droppings, or nesting before bringing them inside.
- ☐ **Close overhead doors when not in use.** Check rubber bottom seals on roll-up doors for gaps and wear.

4. Trash & Dumpsters

- ☐ **Keep lids closed.** Dumpster and trash can lids should stay closed at all times, and drain plugs should be in place.
- ☐ **Move dumpsters away.** Place dumpsters and compactors as far from doors as practical, on a hard, cleanable surface.
- ☐ **Clean the area.** Pick up spilled trash daily and power wash dumpster pads and grease bins regularly.
- ☐ **Schedule enough pickups.** Trash should never overflow. Increase pickup frequency if bins are full before collection.
- ☐ **Use lined, lidded indoor bins.** Empty indoor trash at the end of every day.

5. Inside: Storage & Sanitation

- ☐ **Store food in sealed containers.** Use metal, glass, or heavy plastic containers with tight lids for food, pet food, and seed.
- ☐ **Lift and space storage.** Keep products at least 6 inches off the floor and 18 inches from walls so you can inspect and clean.
- ☐ **Rotate stock.** Use first-in, first-out rotation and do not let boxes sit untouched for long periods.
- ☐ **Clean behind and under equipment.** Remove crumbs and grease from under ovens, fryers, coolers, shelving, and vending machines.
- ☐ **Clean break rooms nightly.** Do not leave food, dirty dishes, or open snacks in desks, lockers, or break areas overnight.
- ☐ **Fix leaks.** Repair dripping faucets, condensation lines, and floor drains. Rodents need water as much as food.
- ☐ **Reduce cardboard.** Break down and remove cardboard quickly. It is a favorite nesting material.

6. Watch for Warning Signs

- ☐ **Droppings.** Small, dark pellets along walls, in cabinets, or near food. Mouse droppings are about the size of a grain of rice.
- ☐ **Gnaw marks.** Chewed packaging, wood, wiring, or plastic.
- ☐ **Rub marks and tracks.** Greasy smudges along walls and baseboards, or tracks in dust.
- ☐ **Nests.** Shredded paper, fabric, or insulation tucked in quiet corners, wall voids, or behind equipment.
- ☐ **Sounds and odors.** Scratching in walls or ceilings, especially at night, or a strong musky smell.
- ☐ **Sightings.** Seeing a rodent during the day often means a larger population is already present.

7. Make It a Routine

- ☐ **Assign responsibility.** Name one person to complete this checklist monthly and report problems.
- ☐ **Train your staff.** Make sure employees know the warning signs and how to report them right away.
- ☐ **Keep records.** Log inspections, sightings, repairs, and service visits. Many health and food safety audits ask for them.
- ☐ **Use professional monitoring with U.S. Pest.** Tamper-resistant exterior bait stations and interior monitoring devices, placed and serviced by a licensed professional, catch problems early.
- ☐ **Act quickly.** Rodent populations grow fast. Call a professional at the first sign of activity.

Spotted signs of rodents? Don't wait.

A professional inspection can find entry points and activity you may miss.

615-590-1260 ** U.S. Pest Protection Inc.