

Guide* Rat Housing Density Requirements



TABLE 3.2 Recommended Minimum Space for Commonly Used Laboratory Rodents Housed in Groups*

Animals	Weight, g	Floor Area/Animal, ^a in. ² (cm ²)	Height, ^b in. (cm)	Comments
Mice in groups ^c	<10	6 (38.7)	5 (12.7)	Larger animals may require more space to meet the performance standards.
	Up to 15	8 (51.6)	5 (12.7)	
	Up to 25	12 (77.4)	5 (12.7)	
	>25	≥15 (≥96.7)	5 (12.7)	
Female + litter		51 (330) (recommended space for the housing group)	5 (12.7)	Other breeding configurations may require more space and will depend on considerations such as number of adults and litters, and size and age of litters. ^d
Rats in groups ^c	<100	17 (109.6)	7 (17.8)	Larger animals may require more space to meet the performance standards.
	Up to 200	23 (148.35)	7 (17.8)	
	Up to 300	29 (187.05)	7 (17.8)	
	Up to 400	40 (258.0)	7 (17.8)	
	Up to 500	60 (387.0)	7 (17.8)	
	>500	≥70 (≥451.5)	7 (17.8)	
Female + litter		124 (800) (recommended space for the housing group)	7 (17.8)	Other breeding configurations may require more space and will depend on considerations such as number of adults and litters, and size and age of litters. ^d
Hamsters ^c	<60	10 (64.5)	6 (15.2)	Larger animals may require more space to meet the performance standards.
	Up to 80	13 (83.8)	6 (15.2)	
	Up to 100	16 (103.2)	6 (15.2)	
	>100	≥19 (≥122.5)	6 (15.2)	
Guinea pigs ^c	Up to 350	60 (387.0)	7 (17.8)	Larger animals may require more space to meet the performance standards.
	>350	≥101 (≥651.5)	7 (17.8)	

*Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, pg. 57

Floor Area (in.²) by FSU Cage Type
 Standard Rat Cage: 132
 Breeder Rat Cage: 304

Except where justified and approved in an ACUC protocol, the FSU ACUC will adhere to the widely accepted standard of weaning rats at 21 days of age. Delayed weaning, as described in an approved protocol, is in no way restricted by the cage density requirements above; however, at 21 days old, if delayed weaning is approved by the ACUC, rats must be transferred to a breeder cage, or all animals must be weighed with regular frequency to ensure space provisions outlined in the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals are met. Animal weighing will be the responsibility of research personnel.

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