

## Prevent Rat Problems

Rats are destructive pests that can damage structures and electrical wires. They can also contaminate food and water and spread diseases. Protect yourself and your family from rats by removing attractants and sealing any entry points into your home.



Rats can enter homes through holes and openings as small as a quarter. Mice can enter through holes and openings as small as a dime. Find and seal all openings to exclude rats and mice.

## FREE inspection

We offer free educational rat inspections to San Diego County residents. During a rat inspection, we will:

- Look for signs of rat activity and entry points
- Give advice on how to prevent and trap rats
- Provide a rat prevention starter kit (shown here)



The Vector Control Program is not a pest control company and does not trap, bait, or remove rodents as part of the inspection, and does not provide poison bait.

## TOP TIPS!

- 1 Remove attractants such as pet food, fruit, and vegetables
- 2 Seal all entry points larger than a quarter
- 3 Trap where you see rat activity



## Learn More!



Learn more about  
rats at  
**SDVector.com**

And follow us on social  
media as @SDFightTheBite



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# Rats

Prevent • Exclude • Trap



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## Don't Attract Rats!

### Look For Signs of Rat Activity

- Rat droppings and nests
- Greasy rub marks along walls, fences and entry points where rats travel
- Holes and gnaw marks on wood, cardboard, plastic containers, and wires
- Piles of gnawed fruits, nuts, or empty snail shells

Rat dropping



Actual size



Rats hollow fruit and leave "rub marks" along their travel path

### Remove What Attracts Rats

- Pick ripe and fallen fruits, nuts, and vegetables
- Cover garbage cans and compost bins
- Place food in lidded metal containers when storing in garages and sheds
- Remove uneaten pet food and birdseed daily



Throw away fallen fruit in lidded containers to keep rats out

### Remove Rat Habitat

- Raise wood piles 12 inches off of the ground
- Keep heavy vegetation, such as bougainvillea and ivy, away from buildings and fences
- Remove trash and debris from your yard

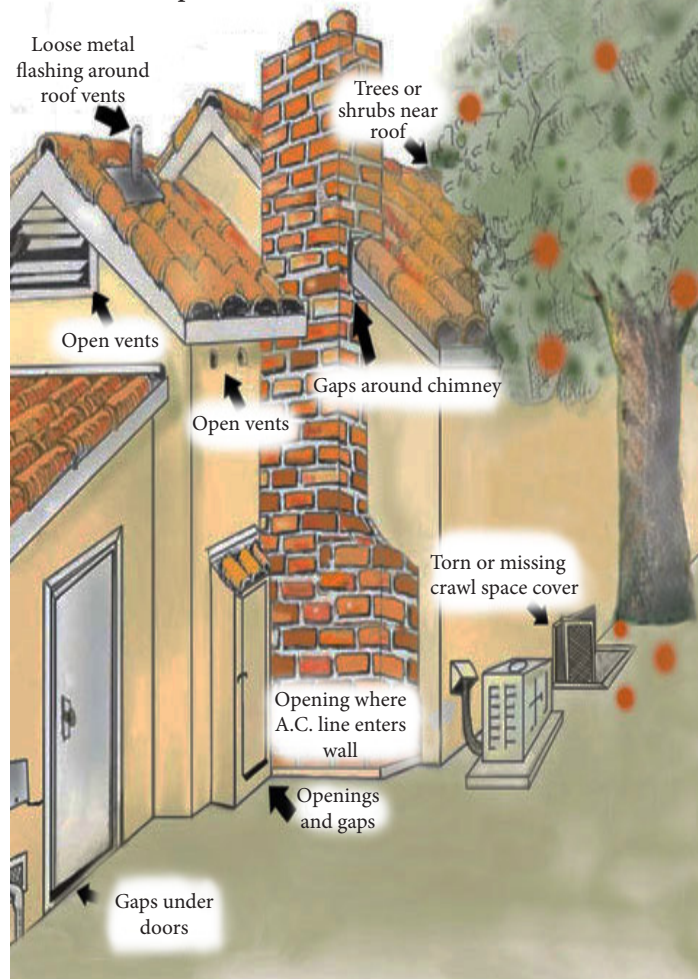
## Keep Rats Out Of Your Home

### Identify Entry Points

Look carefully for any gap wider than a quarter. Check along the edges of floors, doors, and walls for openings.

### Remove and Seal Entry Points

- Repair openings using 1/4 inch 18-22 gauge wire mesh
- You can also seal openings with a combination of steel wool and expanding foam
- Close gaps under doors using metal door sweeps



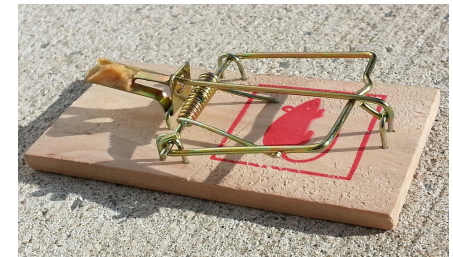
- Make sure crawl spaces and attic vents have no gaps and are properly screened
- Trim trees and bushes at least 4 ft from the roof to prevent rats from jumping onto your roof



Using a flashlight can help check for small gaps

### Trap Where Rats Are Active

- Place traps along walls, behind objects, in dark corners, and where you see rat activity
- Secure snap traps with ties or stakes to prevent traps from being dragged away
- Bait with food for a few days before setting the trigger; rats learn traps are "safe" and become easier to catch



### Safety Tips

- Spray rat droppings and nests with a mild bleach solution (9 parts water to 1 part bleach) before cleaning
- Be careful when placing traps or using poison bait around children, pets, or wildlife
- Don't use poison baits inside homes because rats may die in walls, which will smell and attract flies
- Follow all directions on rodent bait labels