

## DIY TOP TIP



## Watch out there's a mouse about

### Mice (*Mus musculus*)

There are two types of mice in Britain which can become pests: the house mouse and the field mouse. The house mouse (*Mus musculus*) is the most likely to become a domestic pest. It is about 90 mm (3 1/2 inches) long, excluding its tail. It usually has a brown back and is grey underneath. Its ears are fairly large in relation to its body, and its feet are small. Its tail is the same length as its head and body.

### Have you got mice?

- The most common way to detect mice is to see them or their gnaw marks or droppings. Sometimes you can hear them gnawing or scuttling behind walls, particularly at night.
- You may notice droppings in your cupboards – one mouse can do up to 80 a day.
- They build distinctive-smelling nests out of any available material, often somewhere you will not be able to check easily, such as under floor boards, or in wall cavities or lofts.
- Mice will live anywhere where their food and water needs are met, although they only need small amounts of water and often get enough from their food alone.
- If you can push a ballpoint pen under a door or through a hole, that means the door or hole has all the space a mouse needs to get in.

### How can you discourage mice?

The best way to deal with mice is to discourage them before they establish a breeding colony in your home, by ensuring your house is in good repair and that no food is left around it or your garden.

Above all, mice need food, although not much – three grams of solid food will feed a mouse for a day. They mainly eat grain, but will eat almost anything, including soap and candle wax if nothing else is available. Keep food out of reach of mice; don't leave food out unnecessarily, and check for damage to packets or cupboards. Mice are often attracted by poorly stored refuse.

### How can you get rid of mice?

Poisons and traps can be bought from DIY stores, but should only be used if you are confident with how they work. Instructions must always be followed.

Hexagon will provide tenants with two pest control treatments a year, one every six months. See website for more details [www.hexagon.org.uk](http://www.hexagon.org.uk) - repairs and improvements section.



# Pest Control