

1 Check cables for **gnawing damage**. Particularly important for kitchen appliances, but also in the lounge.

2 **Smear marks** will also be evident in the kitchen. These are marks along work surfaces or skirting boards which indicate where the mice like to travel on a regular basis. Rodents like to walk along the edges of a room as this is more secure.

3 If possible, check the gardens of **neighbouring properties** as well. If your neighbours are avid bird feeders, make sure they are not attracting rodents into the neighbourhood.

4 Check your back garden for any **nesting sites**. This is particularly important if the kitchen is at the back of the house. Typical nesting sites include **decking** and **compost heaps**. If rodents are nesting in your garden they are likely to come indoors to keep warm as temperatures drop. Make sure there are no creeping vines or overhanging trees touching your guttering. Also ensure that all outdoor drains are covered.



5 Have a think about what is above and next to your property. **Noises** such as scratching and rustling in the attic are a good indicator that rodents are nesting up there. Your new home will also be affected by what is next door, particularly if it is a terrace house. It is very easy for rodents to scurry from building to building via the attic and wall cavities.

6 The **kitchen** is the favourite room in the house for any rodent. It offers easy access via **plumbing and pipework** and allows them to live off crumbs and water from the back of your fridge. Best to make sure that all **holes** are sealed up and that you have good insulation around your back door.

7 **Droppings** are often spotted in the kitchen or anywhere that there is a regular food supply. Rubbish bins in other parts of the house are also attractive if they have food scraps in them.

8 Rats can easily get into unsecured **bins and bin bags**. Make sure all rubbish is placed in a secure bin with the top fastened, that the rubbish is collected regularly in your area and that your neighbours also correctly dispose of their rubbish.

Things to be on the lookout for:

1. Droppings: These are found around the main feeding areas. Keep this in mind when you are looking round kitchens and dining rooms. If there are rodents in the property, there will be evidence in rooms that have a food source.

2. Gnawing damage: Look for damaged electric cables and cupboard doors caused by rodents' teeth marks.

3. Smear marks: Rats and mice will always use regular routes to move around houses. Continual contact with the same surfaces causes grease marks to rub off their fur, leaving behind tell-tale 'smear marks'. These are most often found along skirting boards or entry points.

4. Noises: Listen out for scratching and rustling, particularly if it's coming from the attic or in wall cavities. Check the attic of a building with a torch. If there are lots of items up there, this could be where the rodents are nesting.

5. Nesting sites: Don't forget to check outside as well as inside the home. Mice like to nest in paper or foam. Rats like to live outside and will commonly burrow beneath the ground in the garden, in compost heaps, under patios and decking.

Notes: