1. Purpose

This document provides guidance for the appropriate housing density for cages used to accommodate rodents.

1. Scope

This guidance applies to all rodent species listed.

1. Guidance

The [*Guide*](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/Guide-for-the-Care-and-Use-of-Laboratory-Animals.pdf)defines the recommended minimum space for commonly used laboratory rodents housed in groups. If they are housed singly or in small groups or exceed the weights in the table, more space per animal may be required, while larger groups may be housed at slightly higher densities.

1. Species
2. Mice

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Weight**  **(g)** | **Max # mice**  **(81 in2 )** |
| Mice in groups | <10 | 12 |
|  | Up to 15 | 10 |
|  | Up to 25 | 5 |
|  | >25 | 5 |
| Female + litter  Or Breeding Group –(harem or trio) |  | 1 |

Breeding Schemes and Management: See [Mouse Breeding Guideline](https://www.montana.edu/orc/iacuc/policies/mouse-breeding-policy.html)

1. Rats

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Weight**  **(g)** | **Max # rats**  **(286 in2 )** |
| Rats in groups | <100 | 16 |
|  | Up to 200 | 12 |
|  | Up to 300 | 9 |
|  | Up to 400 | 7 |
|  | Up to 500 | 4 |
|  | >500 | 3 |

1. Guinea pigs

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Weight**  **(g)** | **Max # guinea pigs**  **(286in2 )** |
| Guinea pigs | Up to 350 | 4 |
|  | > 350 | 2 |

1. References

*Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, National Academy of Sciences, 2011

Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations, March 15, 2022