# Mouse Inspection Guide

## Learn Where Mice Live, Hide, Nest, & When They Come Out

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## OVERVIEW

### Mice Live Near Humans

The house mouse lives most often in close proximity with humans, including in and around homes, barns, granaries, and fields, or any place where food is readily available. Typically a mouse nest is made from soft materials like rags and shredded paper or cardboard. Damage to any of these materials in your home is probably a sign that mice are present. Nests within your home may be found in walls, ceiling voids, storage boxes, drawers, under major appliances, or within the upholstery of furniture.

**What do Mice eat?**

In the wild, House mice feed primarily on plant material but will also accept dairy and meat products. In human habitation, House mice will eat any available human foods as well as glue, soap, and paper.

**When do Mice come out?**

Since house mice are nocturnal and are averse to bright light, house mice usually come out after sunset.

## STEP 1 Signs of Mice



House mice live up to their name and are most often found indoors in homes, barns, storage buildings, and inside other structures. Mice are very opportunistic nesters and can be found in a wide variety of places inside. You can most often find mice nesting in these common areas:

- Inside or beneath kitchen and bathroom cabinets
- Inside or behind cabinet or desk drawers
- Under or behind kitchen appliances
- Under furniture or inside upholstered furniture voids
- In secluded corners of cluttered rooms, garages or attics
- Inside stored cardboard boxes
- Voids in walls or ceilings, usually near heat sources
- In water heater closets

When inspecting these areas you will be looking for evidence or signs that the mice have taken up residence:

- **Droppings** - The most obvious sign of house mice will be the presence of droppings, which are about 1/8-1/4 inch long and rod shaped
- **Gnaw marks** - House mice gnaw small, clean holes about 1-1/2 inches in diameter. You may find gnawing damage from House mice on cardboard boxes and paper which they have shredded for nesting material.
- **Gathered nesting material** - Mice construct nests from various soft materials which could include shredded paper, cardboard, insulation or cotton.
- **Squeaking or gnawing sounds** - While mice like to hide as much as possible they can be rather noisy at night. They squeak quite loudly while socializing with each other. Following the sounds can help locate the nesting areas.
- **Food tampering** - Mice are scavengers and will eat most foods they can get access to, including fruits, vegetables, grains, meats and pet food. Mice will gnaw through food packages to obtain the food inside. Check food packages in pantries and pet food containers for evidence that mice have gnawed into the package or otherwise tampered with the food.