



## RSPCA -Appropriate Company for Rats

**Ensure your rats have appropriate company!**



- Never house individually, they're social animals and can get depressed if alone
- Rats need other rat company at night when they're most active and when humans are asleep. They use their sense of smell to recognize others, finding out about where they've been/what they've been doing
- Rats can develop abnormal behaviours if left without company and nothing to do for long periods
- Even with lots of human contact, rats need to live with other rats. Rats kept with other rats are just as friendly with people

### **A dominance structure:**

When unfamiliar adults are housed together there will be a period of high aggression, however if they establish a dominance relationship, aggression levels should drop.

- Introducing new adults may cause fighting whilst they decide who's dominant. This usually doesn't last long
- Rats may suffer if they cannot escape from others they don't like

- Fighting between cage-mates is rare, but can be recognized when one rat hides from the other, if one rat injures another, or if the attacking rat has raised fur