

Can Pet Rats Drink Out of a Bowl?

Rats are an odd choice for a pet. But they can be real bundles of joy. These affectionate and intelligent creatures are very easy to look after, and they're a real treat to have around. Of course, you're not going to find as much information on these animals online as you would of dogs or cats. And new owners will definitely have questions about their pet rats.

So, can pet rats drink out of bowls? **Yes, pet rats can drink out of a bowl. However, this isn't necessarily the best way to give water to your pet rat. Bowls are great for larger animals like dogs and cats. But for a small animal like a pet rat, it just becomes downright impractical.**

So, what exactly is the best way to provide water to your pet rat? And how often should you provide water to your rats? Do rats even need water at all? How long can they survive without any water? These are some of the questions that we will be exploring in this article. By the time you're done reading this, you will be totally clear on your pet rat's water needs.

What happens when you use a water bowl with a pet rat?

Like we've already mentioned, rats are more than capable of drinking out of water bowls. In the wild, rats will drink out of ponds, streams, rivers, puddles, and pretty much any other source of water. But when it comes to pet rats living in a cage, providing water in a bowl isn't necessarily the most practical option.

With bigger animals such as cats or dogs, you can simply place the bowl in one corner of the house/room, and the animals will walk up to it and drink from it without moving or flipping the bowl over. This isn't necessarily the same with rats.

If you use a bigger bowl to provide water to your rat, it can be difficult for them to access the water. And if you use a smaller bowl, there's a very good chance that your rat will flip it over, in turn creating a mess.

Fortunately, there is a better alternative to water bowls.

What is the best way to provide water for your rat?

Water bottles are a great way to provide water to your pet rats. Not only will your rats enjoy drinking water out of a bottle, but this will also keep their cage free from any impending mess that flipped bowls can cause.

Water bottles for rats have an interesting mechanism. Most come with a ball bearing at the drinking end, locking the water in. On some bottles, the rats will move this ball around directly, and in others, they will move it via some sort of a lever mechanism. You open the bottle, pour some water inside, and then close it. Then when your rat moves the ball bearing, this lets out some water for it to drink.

If you're switching from a bowl to a bottle, your rat might have trouble figuring the mechanism out at first. Simply carry your pet rat and gently force the mechanism onto him/her. If you have to push or move something for the water to come out, simulate this for your rat. They are intelligent creatures. After one or two demonstrations they'll figure this out.

Water bottles are cheap to get and very easy to install and maintain. As long as you're changing the water daily, you should be good. While it's not absolutely necessary that you change the water daily, this habit will ensure proper sanitation and keep your rat healthy in the long run.

How often and how much do rats drink water?

There really should be no question about how often. Your pet rats should have access to water at all times. This is one of the reasons why it is important to consider how you provide water to your rats.

Technically speaking, rats can survive without water for as much as 30 days. But these are under extreme circumstances. You don't want your furry little baby to experience anything like this.

Under normal circumstances, rats will drink [10 ml \(0.3 oz\) of water per 100g \(0.22 lb\)](#) of body weight. On hotter days, this intake will increase. The bottom line is, your rats will need 24/7 access to water. Unlike food, with which there is a risk of overeating, there isn't a risk of your rat over drinking water. And when you start considering that they'll need 24/7 access to water, you'll start seeing why a water bowl isn't necessarily the best choice.

Other ways rats stay hydrated

In the wild, there are basically two different ways rats consume water to stay hydrated. The first way is the direct way. They will drink water from puddles, streams, rivers, ponds, or any other natural sources they can find. This is the method we're trying to emulate with bowls or water bottles.

And while it is still recommended that you install a water bottle into your rat's cage, there is another way rats can stay hydrated in the wild. Rats have a greater ability to derive water from fruits and vegetables than we do. So they can indirectly consume water from the driest of fruits and vegetables. So you can try to meet some of your rat's water needs from fruits and vegetables.

You need to be careful with fruits. While rich in water, they also contain a lot of sugar. So you should only give your rats fruits in moderation. Apples and blueberries are a great choice. Stick to small slices of apples and one large or a couple of medium-sized blueberries at a time.

Vegetables, on the other hand, are things you simply can't go wrong with. They are a great way to keep your rats both well fed and well hydrated. Besides being rich in all the nutrients that your rat needs to maintain good health, their crunchy texture also makes vegetables a great treat for rats. You can't go wrong with green vegetables like kale and broccoli. Carrots are a great treat too. They might normally be associated with rabbits, but rats dig them too! A couple of slices at a time should do.

Conclusion

Pet rats can technically drink out of a bowl. But that doesn't mean that that's the best way to give water to your rat. Rats, unlike bigger pets, will have trouble drinking from a bigger bowl. If you opt for a smaller bowl, they tend to flip it over and cause a mess. For this reason, a water bottle is the preferred choice for providing water to your pet rat.

Rats can go on for days without water. They are able to take water from the driest of foods, and so are able to keep themselves hydrated. But that doesn't mean you should restrain your pet rat from water. Adult rats need at least 10ml of water per 100 gm of body weight on normal conditions and more on hotter days.

Alternatively, you can feed vegetables and juicy fruits to your rats. Rats are more than capable of deriving all the water they need from fruits. One problem, however, is that most fruits tend to be high in sugar. And that's not good for your rats. Vegetables, on the other hand, are both healthy and full of water. They are great for keeping your rats hydrated.

Sources

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