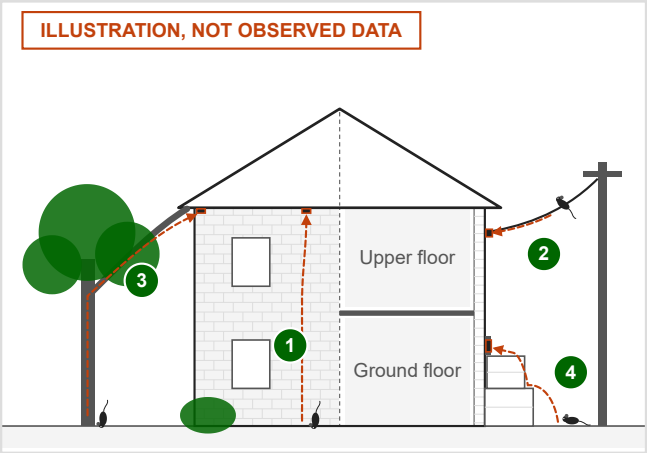


Can Mice Climb Walls? A Visual Guide

Yes, UC IPM calls house mice excellent climbers that can run up any rough vertical surface. Rats and mice can also run along or climb wires, pipes, vines, shrubs and trees to get into a building. So check for gaps up high, not only near the ground.



--- Route drawn from an ability a source describes.
■ Gap. Each route ends at one.

At the top of each route, a mouse only needs a small gap. UC IPM says a gap as small as 1/4 inch can let a mouse in.

The four routes

- 1 Up rough siding or brick**
Rats and mice can climb almost any rough vertical surface, such as wood, brick and concrete.
- 2 Along wires and cables**
House mice will run sideways along wire cables or ropes. Rats and mice also run along or climb electrical wires, cables, pipes and poles to get into a building.
- 3 Up plants and trees that touch the house**
Rats and mice climb or run along vines, shrubs and trees to get inside. UC IPM advises thinning or removing plants next to or climbing up a building, because house mice are excellent climbers.
- 4 From stacked objects by a wall**
UC IPM says house mice can jump from the floor onto a flat surface up to 12 inches high. Another source says 10 inches, so treat any number as a guide, not a limit. Two others say 18 inches, and our jumping guide shows each figure side by side. A 1994 building handbook places vents at least 40 inches above the ground, fences or shrubs. Boxes, bins or firewood piled by a wall can give a mouse the same kind of starting point.

Climbing-Surface Chart: the source's own words

Surface or route	What the source says	Who it covers
Any rough vertical surface	"can run up any rough vertical surface" [1]	House mice
Wood and concrete	"can walk up surfaces such as wood or concrete" [2]	House mice
Brick and weathered sheet metal	"climb almost any rough vertical surface, such as wood, brick, concrete, weathered sheet metal" [3, 4]	Rats and mice
Many plastic products	"and many plastic products" [3]	Rats and mice
Wires, cables and ropes	"run horizontally along wire cables or ropes" [1, 3]	House mice
Pipes and conduit	"crawl horizontally along or through pipes, augers, conveyors, conduit" [3]	Rats and mice
Fences and poles	"run along or climb electrical wires, pipes, fences, poles" [3]	Rats and mice
Vines, shrubs and trees	"vines, shrubs, and trees" [1, 3]	Rats and mice
Screen wire	"travel considerable distances crawling upside-down along screen wire" [3]	House mice
Gap beside an overhead door track	"can easily climb up the space between the door and the inner wall or track" [3]	Rats and mice
Surface with a slick finish	"unless the surface has a slick finish" [2]	House mice
Slick door surface	"if the door surface is too slick for rodents to climb" [3]	Rodents
Sheet metal band on a wall (a recommended guard)	"A sheet metal band attached to a wall will prevent rodents from climbing." [3, 4] Advice, not a guarantee. A band must be wide enough and placed so rodents can't reach the edges by climbing or jumping. The 1994 handbook says 14 to 18 inches wide, 30 inches above where a rodent can jump from, with examples such as barns, corn cribs, dock areas and pumping plants. UNL says 12- to 18-inch-wide aluminum bands, at least 36 inches above the ground or at floor level, and its drawing puts them at the inside corners of rooms.	Rodents

Some rows cover rats and mice together, not house mice alone. The last column says which. No surface in this chart is a sure barrier. The metal band is a recommendation, not a guarantee, and it must be wide enough and placed so rodents can't reach its edges.

Inspection checklist

- ☐ Look for trees, shrubs, vines or groundcover touching the walls or roof.
- ☐ Follow each wire, cable and pipe to where it enters the house. Seal around these openings with metal or concrete.
- ☐ Look for any gap of 1/4 inch or more, both low and high on the house.
- ☐ Check rough siding, brick and corners below upper-floor vents, eaves and the roofline.
- ☐ Check the sides and top of each garage or roll-up door track for gaps.
- ☐ Note any boxes, bins or firewood stacked against a wall near a gap or vent.
- ☐ Check that vent covers are whole. Cover openings with 1/4-inch wire mesh.
- ☐ Look near each opening for rub marks, droppings, tracks or gnawing.
- ☐ Mark any high or hard-to-reach gap for a professional instead of climbing a tall ladder.