

**Name:** Rodent Identification  
**Number:** FSU-SOP-130.01  
**Category:** General Procedures

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**Author(s):** T. Schoenfeld

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to identify acceptable methods for identifying individual rodents.

### 2.0 Policy

- 2.1 Animal housing ID cards (see SOP 120) are sufficient to label a rodent cage that houses a group of rodents for which no individual rodent must be distinguishable, e.g., by status, treatment, or experience.
- 2.2 Individual markings are required where the cage houses individuals that need to be uniquely identified by their different status, treatment or experience.

### 3.0 Materials

- 3.1 Non-toxic, indelible marker (e.g., Sharpie)
- 3.2 Ear punch (1-2 mm punch)
- 3.3 70% ethanol

### 4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 Temporary markings
  - 4.1.1 Temporary markings are suitable for short-term identification, considering that the marker ink will eventually fade and disappear.
  - 4.1.2 Use of non-toxic, indelible ink is the only choice for rodent pups younger than 14 days of age.
  - 4.1.3 Use the marker to write numbers or other distinguishable, established symbols on the tail, ear, or fur.
  - 4.1.4 Color is a distinguishing feature in such a code.
  - 4.1.5 The markings may need to be renewed every few days.
- 4.2 Ear punching
  - 4.2.1 Ear punching is suitable for longer-term, semi-permanent identification in rodents at 14 days of age and older.
  - 4.2.2 Disinfect the ear punch with 70% ethanol.
  - 4.2.3 With the animal restrained by grasping the scruff of the neck and the tail with one hand, use the punch to place holes or notches in a pattern that gives the animal a number according to a previously established numbering code.
    - 4.2.3.1 One such code has been posted by the Jackson Laboratories (<https://www.jax.org/jax-mice-and-services/customer-support/technical-support/breeding-and-husbandry-support/mouse-identification>)

- 4.2.3.2 The virtue of this code is that it limits the number of punches/notches to no more than 2 per ear.
- 4.3 Other techniques such as ear tags or microchips are also common, and could be considered in a revision of this SOP.
- 4.4 However, toe clipping is not acceptable under any circumstance.

**5.0 References**

- 5.1 Rodent identification (McGill University) [http://www.mcgill.ca/research/files/research/616\\_-\\_rodent\\_identification\\_-\\_march\\_2016.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/research/files/research/616_-_rodent_identification_-_march_2016.pdf)
- 5.2 Mouse identification (Jackson Laboratory) <https://www.jax.org/jax-mice-and-services/customer-support/technical-support/breeding-and-husbandry-support/mouse-identification>

**SOP REVISION HISTORY**

VERSION #	APPROVED	DETAILS
130.01	12/20/17	Authored by T. Schoenfeld