AN EASILY CONSTRUCTED RAT LEVER¹

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Verhave (1958) has described how a standard lever switch can be modified for use as a rat lever. In a somewhat similar manner a simple, convenient, and inexpensive rat lever can be made from a relay. The components, shown in the diagram, are (a) the frame of a short telephone relay, (b) a flat T-iron, which serves as the manipulandum, (c) a wooden block shown coupling the relay frame to a wall of an enclosure, and (d) a wood screw, to limit the travel of the bar. The stem of the 4 in. by $\frac{3}{4}$ in. T-iron is cut to allow the bar to extend the desired distance into the cage. It is then bolted to the underside of the armature with a single machine screw, affording easy removal and placement of the bar without removing the switch assembly. The actuating force is adjusted by bending the contact springs, and travel is adjusted by means of the wood screw. The lever can be made more silent by cementing a piece of soft material, such as cork, to the part of the T that touches the wood screw. If a cylindrical bar is needed to prevent chewing, a length of nylon or metal pipe can be bolted to the T-iron, with the ends closed by hole plugs.

REFERENCE

Verhave, T. A sensitive lever for operant-conditioning experiments. *J. exp. Anal. Behav.*, 1958, 1, 220.

Fig. 1. Rat lever made from T-iron bolted to relay armature. Relay frame mounts on wooden block, which is attached to a cage wall.

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