

BUYER'S **guide**

Computer Mouse Alternatives

The ubiquitous standard computer mouse isn't a good fit for everyone. For some it isn't ergonomically suitable. For others—including users with disabilities—it just doesn't work. To address those concerns, designers have developed scores of alternatives to the traditional computer mouse. It's best to consult with an ergonomic expert to determine which tool best suits each individual. For a good overview of available designs, equipment distributors such as The Human Solution (www.thehumansolution.com) and Fentek Industries (www.fentek-ind.com) are resources for information and vendors. In addition, some distributors offer reviews and recommendations to help consumers decide which mouse to try. Many offer a trial period, allowing users to test drive the device before committing to it.

These days there are designs to accommodate a wide variety of users. For example, the 3M Ergonomic offers a neutral, hand-shake style position for the wrist and hand, designed to reduce muscle load and discomfort. The Cirque Smart Cat PRO offers one-touch, no-pressure control for those who want to use just one finger to navigate and click using a mouse. The Evoluent has a shape that supports the hand in a relaxed position to eliminate arm twisting, and it comes in both right- and left-hand models.

Numerous mouse designs are controlled by the feet instead of the hands. The Bili Footime is a floor unit that also comes with a mouse pad. The No Hands has no mouse pad and only two floor pedals.

We identified two types of roller designs. The larger of the two, the Roller Mouse Classic, is for use with a standard keyboard. Its portable, diminutive counterpart is the Trackbar Emotion, which comes with its own mini USB keyboard.

There are also many pen-type designs available. The WoWPen allows positioning of right/left buttons and a scroll wheel to suit the comfort of the user.

The Zero Tension is a vertical, hand-shake-style design with a rubberized surface to minimize tension on the hand.

If you have already exhausted the standard types of mice offered by most computer and office suppliers, consider the hundreds of alternatives available through the Internet.

Product	Distributor	Price
3M Ergonomic 	Enable Mart www.enablemart.com	\$59.99
Cirque Smart Cat PRO 	Datavision Ergonomics www.datavisionergonomics.com	\$79.95
Evoluent Vertical 	Ergo Cube store.ergocube.com/evvemo2lesi.html	\$84.95
Footime 	Bili Footime www.bilila.com/footmouse_slipper_mouse	\$199.99
No Hands Mouse 	Hunter Digital, Ltd. www.footmouse.com	\$349.99
Roller Mouse Classic 	Ergocube store.ergocube.com/rollermousepro.html	\$229.95
Smartnav4 AT 	Natural Point www.naturalpoint.com/smartnav/	\$499
Trackbar Emotion 	Enable Mart www.enablemart.com	\$99.49
WoWPen 	Ergo Express www.ergoexpress.com	\$59.95
Zero Tension 	Ergo Express www.ergoexpress.com	\$79.95

Type	Dimensions	System Requirements	How It Works	Notes
Vertical grip, joystick-like design	2.75" × 4.5" × 2.75"	USB and PS/2 compatible for use with a PC or Mac	Offers a neutral "hand-shake" position for wrist and hand	Two-way rocker button fits thumb; programmable third-button, scrolling feature
Touchpad	Device area: 4" × 4.4" × 0.4" Touch area: 3" × 2"	Windows 98, 2000, XP (Windows ME not supported) or Mac OS 8.5-X	No contact pressure required; one-touch navigation by gliding finger along touchpad edges	Four programmable hotlinks; extra-large touch surface
Left hand	3" × 4.62" × 3"	PC or Mac running Windows XP, 2000, NT, ME, 98 Second Edition, OSX, Linux, or UNIX; USB or PS/2 port (includes USB-to-PS2 adapter)	Shape supports hand in a relaxed handshake position, eliminating the arm twisting required by ordinary mice	No retraining necessary; available in right- and left-hand models
Foot mouse with mouse pad	15.5" × 11"	Windows 98E, ME, 2000, XP and Vista; Mac OS X10.3 and later USB Port	Unit sets on floor: one foot goes into a separate "slipper" fitted with elastic strap and Velcro ends to fit any size foot	Definable pedal-buttons for frequently used key combinations
Foot mouse without mouse pad	10" × 4" × 1.5"	PS/2 mouse interface, USB adapter available; Windows 95/XP/Vista Mac OS X, Linux	Feet slide into two pedals; one controls cursor, the other is for mouse clicks	Allows simultaneous use with a standard mouse
Roller-type mouse for full-size keyboards; unit sits below both wrists, parallel to rectangular keyboard	5" × 19.875"	PC and Mac compatible (USB device with PS2 adapter included.)	Eliminates the need and risk of reaching for a mouse; designed for either left- or right-handed users	Includes Lycra wrist rest support that is removable for easy cleaning
Sight navigation	2.4" × 1.6" × 0.9"	USB 1.1 & 2.0 (Full-speed & hi-speed)	Uses infrared camera to track head movement	Infrared tracking dot can be placed anywhere for cursor control, such as on the head, hand, hat, glasses, or mic boom
Small, laptop-size roller mouse; sits below wrists, parallel to keyboard	11.7" × 6" × 0.7"	USB; 100% compatible with Windows 95/98/ME/NT/2000/XP and Office 97/2000/XP, Vista	Keyboard-area unit places hands closer to body; eliminates reaching movements; central pointing device; 6-button mouse with clickable roll	Includes free mini USB keyboard
Pen mouse	0.83" × 0.59" × 0.91"	PC and Mac compatible	Contoured grooves along the side and back guide user's hands into the right grip	No mouse pad required; works on any surface except glass
Vertical mouse with zero tension	3.5" × 2.75" × 4.75"	Compatible with all USB-enabled computers	Ergonomic, vertical design	Rubberized surface for ease of gripping and better hold