

HOUSEHOLD PEST CONTROL

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Why Do I Have Pests in My House?

Pests often enter houses looking for food, shelter or surroundings having the right temperature or humidity. If your house provides any of these, you may have problems with pests.

What Are the Keys to Control?

The key to successful control is eliminating one or more of these factors. Sanitation, or good house-keeping, is very important. Cleanliness doesn't guarantee a pest-free house but can go a long way toward achieving that goal. Sanitation can be supplemented with household insecticides. The trick is to select the right product and apply it in the right way.

Quiz

1. You should clean your wool clothes before storing them for the summer.
True _____ False _____
2. The best way to control ants is to spray the worker ants you see in the house.
True _____ False _____
3. Pantry pests can be found in parts of the home other than the kitchen and pantry.
True _____ False _____
4. Flea larvae live on the pet.
True _____ False _____
5. Vacuuming carpet before applying a flea control product may aid in control.
True _____ False _____
6. Most spiders are poisonous to humans.
True _____ False _____
7. One way to control spiders is to control the insects they feed on.
True _____ False _____
8. Clothes moths are the most common fabric pest in West Virginia.
True _____ False _____
9. Waterbugs are found in hot, dry locations.
True _____ False _____
10. Carpenter ants eat wood.
True _____ False _____
11. House flies breed in garbage and animal manure.
True _____ False _____
12. Increasing the humidity in your home will help to control silverfish.
True _____ False _____

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Quiz Answers:
Questions 1,3,5,7, and 11 are true. The rest are false.

Common Household Pests

<i>Pest</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Prevention</i>	<i>Control</i>
Ants	1/16" to 3/4"; black, red, brown or yellow; winged or wingless.	Clean up food and beverage spills. Keep trees trimmed away from house, and remove bark mulch to discourage carpenter ants.	Baits are the best method of control for many species. Do not place baits on sprayed surfaces, do not spray near baits. Baits are not effective in controlling carpenter ants--you must locate the nest and treat it.
Fleas	1/8", dark brown, vertically flattened with well-developed jumping legs.	Fleas are difficult to prevent in homes with outdoor pets. Screen crawl spaces to keep out wild animals.	Vacuum to remove flea eggs and droppings, especially in pet sleeping and landing areas. Vacuuming before applying insecticide to carpet may improve spray penetration. Use flea comb to remove fleas from pets. Treat pet pathways and resting areas outdoors.
Spiders	Many species in many sizes and colors. Eight legs, no antennae, no wings.	Vacuum to remove webs and egg sacs. Use window and door screens and caulk cracks to control the insects on which spiders feed.	Sprays are not always effective. Spiders rest in their webs and do not contact sprayed surfaces. Some spiders eat their old webs before constructing a new one. A dust insecticide applied to web can be effective.
Waterbugs	1-1/4", dark brown to black. Males have wings 3/4 as long as body; females have short wing stubs.	Clean up spills, crumbs and dirt. Put away pet food after pets eat. Don't allow grocery bags or boxes to pile up. Screen floor drains.	Apply a household insecticide labeled for cockroaches to entry points, cracks and crevices. If you use bait stations, buy the type for large cockroaches. Place them according to package directions. Don't spray near bait stations.
House Flies	1/4", light gray with four dark lengthwise stripes, two wings and reddish-brown eyes.	Eliminate breeding places. Keep garbage cans covered. Rinse food containers before discarding. Scoop up and dispose of dog droppings.	Aerosol sprays and foggers. For a few flies, use a fly swatter. House should have window and door screens. Beware of insecticide-impregnated pest strips. The insecticide they contain can be very poisonous.
Silverfish	1/2", silver, wingless, flattened. Broad at front, tapering toward rear with three long tails.	Keep bookcases clean by vacuuming and shaking out books. Don't allow papers to pile up. Reduce humidity with a dehumidifier.	Apply a household insecticide spray to cracks and crevices, door and window frames, and edges of bookshelves. Or puff boric acid into cracks and crevices with a bulb duster or use silverfish bait packs.
Pantry Pests	Indian meal moth is 3/8", copper and gray. Several species of tiny (1/8") brown beetles. Caterpillar and grub stages are white.	Purchase only what you can use in 2-4 months. Don't buy damaged packages. Store foods in containers with tight-fitting lids. Vacuum cabinets-- don't clean them with water.	Locate and discard infested food. Vacuum shelves before installing clean shelf paper and replacing food. Use insecticides only as a last resort. If you must spray, use an insecticide labeled for pantry pests. Remove food from shelves, apply insecticide, allow to dry, then cover shelves with clean paper to prevent insecticide from contacting food packages.
Fabric Pests	Carpet beetles are 1/8", solid black or with yellow and white scales. Clothes moths are 1/4" tan or golden moths. They are not attracted to lights.	Wash or dry clean woolens before storing. Vacuum under and behind furniture, so lint and hair do not accumulate. Keep drawers and closets clean.	Commercial aerosol sprays are available. Cedar chips may help when the wood is fresh, but it loses its repellency as it ages and dries. Mothballs can be used in closed containers with stored woolens. Store where people won't breathe the vapors. Keep mothballs out of children's reach. They can be fatal if swallowed. Infants exposed to blankets containing mothball vapors have died.

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