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Household Pests

Cooperative Extension Service
South Dakota State University

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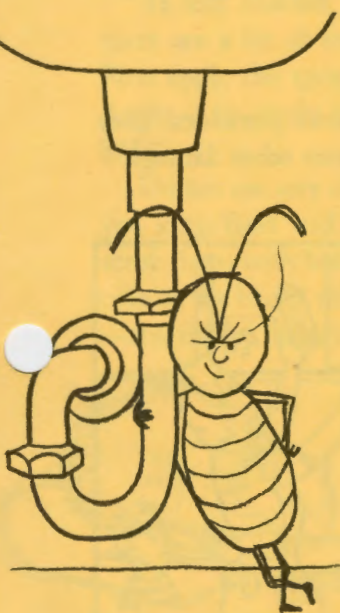
Household Pests

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Cooperative Extension Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
South Dakota State University, Brookings

YOU WILL NEED:

Hot water
A cloth or a sponge
Soap or detergent
Pesticides
Spray gun
Mouse Traps



Nobody likes to have flies, cockroaches, mosquitoes, ants, rats, mice, bedbugs, and other pests around the house.

Pests carry disease germs and make people sick. They get into food and spoil it. They get into closets and ruin clothes.

These pests live and breed in places that are dark, dirty, and damp. They like places where garbage trash, and filth pile up. You can help get rid of insects and other pests by keeping the house and its surroundings clean and dry, and by using pesticides.

How to Keep Out Household Pests.

Pests are harder to get rid of once they get into the house. There are ways to help keep them out in the first place.

Keep the whole house *very* clean. Pests need food and places to hide. They like to hide in dirty places, so don't leave dirt or spoiled food around the house.

Scrub all parts of the house often with soap or detergent and water. Use hot water when you can. Dip a cloth or a sponge into the hot suds. Use it to wash:

- around water pipes, sinks, and toilets.
- behind kitchen drawers and washtubs.
- shelves—especially in the kitchen and bathroom.
- storage places—especially those not opened often.
- around baseboards and window frames.
- cracks and openings—in cupboards, walls, and floors.



Get rid of garbage, bits of food, scraps of cloth, and other wastes that pests like to eat or use for nesting material.

Major portion of the material in this publication was adapted from a similar publication, "How to Deal with Household Pests," by the Cleanliness Bureau, 485 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022.

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Keep food in covered containers. Wash these containers often with hot soap or detergent suds—both inside and outside.

Don't leave greasy dishes or pans around. They will attract pests. Wash these utensils soon after use.

When you go to the store, make sure the boxes and bags of dry food are sealed and are not broken. Don't bring insects into the house in shopping bags and boxes used to carry groceries and other supplies from the store.



Air bedding and mattresses in the sun often. Insects hide in dirty beds and bedding. Wash blankets, quilts, and sheets often. When possible, hang them in the sun to dry.



Tack down pieces of wood or tin to close up places where pests can enter.

Use plaster, cement, or sealant to seal openings and cracks around sinks, toilet bowls, water pipes, radiator pipes—and to fill in cracks around baseboards and between floor boards.

See that windows and doors fit tightly, and try to get screens to keep out flying insects.

How to Choose and Use Pesticides.

If pests *do* get in, go after them right away. The longer you wait, the more there will be.

You will need some special chemicals which are made to kill insects and pests. These are called "pesticides." You can buy them in drug stores, hardware stores, and grocery stores.

There are different kinds of products for different kinds of insects, and for rats and mice. Some are sprays for the air. Some are sprays for flat surfaces. Other kinds are liquids, creams, pastes, dusts, powders, and poisoned baits.

When you buy a pesticide, make sure that you get just the right kind for your special problem. **FIND OUT BY READING THE LABELS ON THE PACKAGES.** Or ask the clerk to help you.

Safety Rules.

Be careful how you use and store pesticides. They can poison people and pets or cause other damage.



Keep these chemicals in a secure place — away from children and pets. Do not keep them near food, under the sink, or in the medicine chest. Certain products have to be kept away from heat; the label will tell you this.

Don't get pesticide on food, dishes, or cooking equipment.

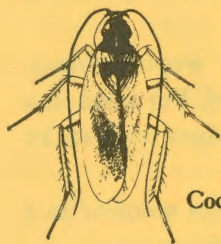
Keep birds, fish, animals, and children out of the room when you use an insecticide.

Wash your face and hands with soap and water after using any pesticide. If it spills on your clothes, remove those clothes and wash them as soon as possible.

Read the label to learn how to use each product. Read the label again every time you use it.

How to Destroy Some Common Household Pests.

Start by using hot water and soap or detergent to scrub the places where you are going to put pesticide. Then follow these general directions:



Cockroach

Cockroaches like to hide during the day in warm, moist, dark, dirty places. At night, they come out to get food.

To kill roaches, use a surface spray or dust. If there are a lot of roaches, use both spray *and* dust. First apply the spray. After it dries, apply the dust. Apply it in cracks and openings where the roaches hide.

Do not use any chemical inside of drawers where you keep food and dishes. Empty the drawers and scrub them with hot sudsy water. Then use the pesticide on the backs, sides, and bottoms of these drawers—also on the insides of cabinets.



Mice and rats like food, garbage, and a warm place to live. To keep them out, make sure that spaces around doors and windows are no bigger than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch. Close up or seal off all other openings.

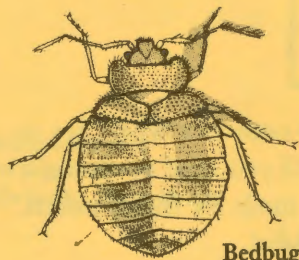
One way to get rid of just a few mice and rats is to starve them out. Do not leave food in open places or even in open cardboard boxes. Get rid of garbage and trash right away.

Another way to destroy just a few mice or rats is by catching them in snap traps. The best bait is peanut butter smeared over the trigger. Other good baits are cake, bacon, cheese, and chocolate candy or gumdrops.

If the problem is serious, poisoned bait is recommended as the best way to kill rats. This is dangerous. It can also poison people and pets. So always be very

sure to follow the directions. Keep children away from poison bait—and keep it away from food and dishes.

If mice and rats are a problem in the whole neighborhood, ask the landlord and the neighbors to help get rid of these dangerous pests. Also ask the health department for help.



Bedbug

Bedbugs are hard to find because they hide to avoid the light. They come out at night to bite people and feed on the blood. They also stain mattresses and bedclothes.

If there are signs of bedbugs, air and brush bedding *every day*—out in the sunlight, if possible.

Another way to destroy bedbugs is to pour boiling water over the bed slats and cracks. First put a big pan under the bed to catch the dripping water.

The best way to kill bedbugs is with a special spray. Use enough of it to wet the bed frames—also the baseboards and cracks in walls and between floor boards. Spray mattresses all over, but do not soak them.

If you still find bedbugs after a few weeks, use the spray treatment a second time—and a third time, if necessary.



House Fly

House flies live any place where they find good food, decaying food, or garbage and manure.

See that garbage cans have tight covers and keep them clean. Do not let garbage pile up in the house or outdoors. Get rid of it at least once a week; more often is better. If there is no garbage collector, try to either bury it outdoors or burn it in some safe place.



If you see just a few flies once in a while, try to kill them with a fly swatter. If you need to control a lot of flies, use a spray that is made for flying insects. Follow the directions on the label.



Mosquito

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in water or in damp places, so don't keep open bowls or cans of water around the house. Water in vases and in saucers under potted plants should be changed every day to destroy mosquito eggs.

Mend any holes in window and door screens or mosquito netting.

Use a pesticide spray to kill mosquitoes in the house.



Clothes Moth

Clothes moths like to feed on woolens and this leaves holes. Moths cause more trouble by laying their eggs in seams, pockets, and folds of clothes, blankets, and other things made from wool.

One good way to get rid of moths and their eggs is to hang woolen articles out in the sunshine. Then brush them on both sides. Be sure to brush out the pockets, seams, and folds.

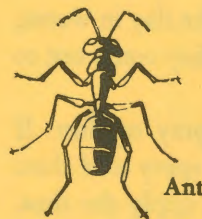
A second way to get rid of moths and moth eggs is to wash woolens if they are washable. Otherwise, have them dry cleaned. When woolen things are

clean, treat them with a pesticide before you store them away.

To protect woolens from more moths, hang them on a clothesline and spray them with moth-proofer until the cloth is just damp. Do not let it get really wet.

When you want to store away woolen things, make sure they are clean and sprayed. Put them in a clean cardboard box and seal the edges with sticky tape.

Keep the boxes or bundles of clean woolens in a cool place until you are ready to use them again.



Ant

Ants crawl over food and spoil it, so keep food in tightly covered containers.

Find out where the ants are coming from by following their line of march from the food to their nest. When you find the nest, treat it with liquid pesticide. If the nest is outdoors, destroy it by pouring on boiling water or ashes.

To keep ants from coming into the house, use a pesticide spray on the outside walls, from the ground up to the windows. Also spray any cracks and openings in the house, and indoor surfaces where you see the ants crawling.



In the kitchen, it is best to put the pesticide on with a small paintbrush so it will go just where you want it to be. **Never use pesticide where it can get into food or on dishes.**

If the trouble is really bad, set the legs of tables and food storage cabinets in containers of water. Then pour a little oil over the water to trap the ants.



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