



## Keeping Pests Away How to Manage Pests in the Yard and Garden

Weeds and bugs can be a problem in your yard and garden. All pests need water, shelter, and food to live. Yards and gardens provide many, if not all, of these things. The best way to manage pest problems is to prevent them from happening.

It is important to find the best and least toxic way to remove the pests. By using fewer pesticides, you increase the safety of people and the environment and preserve the natural enemies of the pest.

While it may seem easier to use a pesticide to treat your entire yard or garden to remove one pest, pesticides kill more than the pest you are targeting. They will also kill the “good bugs” that help to maintain a healthy balance in your yard and garden.

### What Kind of Pest is It?

There are six steps to help you better understand the pest and how to deal with it:

1. What is it?\*
2. Where does the pest live, breed, and what does it eat?
3. How many pests are there?
4. How many pests are too many?
5. What is the best way to get rid of the pest?
6. How did ways to remove the pest work?



\* Contact your county extension agent, found in the blue pages of the phonebook, or use <http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/casdept/IPM/pdf/commoninsects.pdf>.



## Caring for Your Yard

It's possible to have a nice yard without using large amounts of pesticides. Residential property owners use more pesticides, on a pound per acre basis, than farmers do. Here are some tips to manage pests in your yard:

- Grow pest resistant plants, shrubs, and trees.
- Avoid hurting tree trunks with mowers and weed whackers.
- Put mulch at tree bases.
- Keep an adequately fertilized lawn.
- Hand dig and spot treat weeds.
- Only use pesticides like insecticidal soaps and *Bacillus thuringiensis*/"Bt."
- Pay attention to organic matter, watering, and other conditions for healthy plants.
- Do not grow the same types of plants (e.g. tomatoes, peppers, eggplant) in the same place each year.
- Grow composite flowers for the good insects to land and feed on (such as Queen Anne's lace, daisies, fennel, dill). Limit pesticide use to attract these insects.
- Do not mow the grass to less than 3 inches.



*List modified from the New York State Community IPM Program.*

## Gardening with Good Bugs

Some bugs are good. Gardeners, especially, know how helpful the right kinds of bugs can be. Good bugs can be placed in your garden to eat the bad bugs. Here are some helpful gardening tips:

- Place plants that attract good bugs in your garden.
- Buy beneficial bugs from internet companies, garden or seed catalogs, and some garden centers. Release these bugs into your garden in small groups in targeted areas of your garden.
- Buy plants that can easily grow in your region and soil-type.
- Create a "bug tub" for your garden. This is a large tub that contains live plants that attract the good bugs. Make sure to keep your "bug tub" well watered and fertilized. For more information on creating a "bug tub" go to this Web site:

<http://franklin.extension.psu.edu/Horticulture/Articles/benefinal.htm>

