How to Get Rid of Ants

Indoor & Outdoor Ant Treatment Guide

By DoMyOwn staff

OVERVIEW

Getting Rid of Ants For Good Requires A Variety of Methods

You Can Learn How To Kill Ants Yourself With These Steps



Ants are one of the most common pests both homeowners and renters encounter, leaving most to wonder how to get rid of ants. These tiny pests can be found both indoors and outside and will survive where they find food and water sources. Ant treatment must include proper sanitation in addition to an actual pesticide treatment using a combination of professional-grade outdoor and indoor ant sprays and ant baits.

There are many different species of ants, including fire ants, sugar ants, and tiny black ants. Not every ant control product is labeled to treat all ant species, so be sure to identify which ants you are trying to treat before you select a product.

The following steps will help you eliminate your ant problem:

Indoor Ant Treatment

- How to Prepare Your Home for Ant Treatment
- How to Use Indoor Ant Baits and Sprays

Outdoor Ant Treatment

- How to Prepare Your Home for Ant Treatment Outdoors
- How to Use Ant Sprays and Baits Outdoors

STEP 1 Indoor Sanitation and Preparation

Get Rid of What Attracts Ants

Sanitation is definitely one of the most important steps to getting rid of ants, and most ant treatment programs will fail if this step is skipped or poorly implemented. You must eliminate what attracts ants, including as many food sources and water sources as possible. Finding and sealing areas that the ants are using to gain entrance into the structure is also important.

1A Eliminate Food Sources for Ants Indoors

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xjc5vDio8s

Getting rid of food sources is one of the most important parts of an Ant control program. Sanitation of your kitchen and other areas of your home requires dedication and hard work, but is necessary for an ant-free living space.

- **Clean Kitchen Appliances.** Ants in your kitchen can live off grease and food spills under and behind your appliances. Clean under and behind the stove, refrigerator, microwave, toaster, dishwasher, and around and underneath the sink.
- **Empty and Clean Cabinets.** Crumbs and food spills from stored food products provide a buffet for ants. Clean to eliminate this food source.
- **Keep Food in Sealed Containers.** Ants are small enough to get into cardboard packaging or loosely closed boxes and bags. Store food in metal, glass, or hard plastic sealable containers.
- **Limit food consumption to one room of the house.** Keeping all food and eating in one area of the home will eliminate crumbs and food spills and it limits your infestation to one area of the house.
- **Clean the kitchen thoroughly each night before bed.** Ants come out to feed at night, so cleaning the kitchen each night will leave nothing for foraging ants to eat. Wipe down kitchen countertops, wash all dishes, clean floors well, and put away all food.
- **Vacuum or sweep all other non-food areas of the home every few days.** Picking up stray crumbs and ant feces, skins, body parts, and egg sacs - which contain pheromones that attract other Ants to the same areas - will help keep your home clean.
- **Empty pet food containers overnight, or cover tightly.**
- **Keep garbage cans clean and covered.**

1B Eliminate Water Sources for Ants Indoors

Ants drink water. While it's difficult to get rid of all water sources, you need to eliminate as many as possible.

- Fix leaky plumbing and sweating pipes.
- Before going to bed, dry all sinks, tubs, and showers completely and plug the drains.
- Place wet dish rags and sponges in an airtight plastic storage bag overnight, place them directly in the washing machine, or hang them outdoors to dry.
- Pet water dishes should be emptied and dried at night and refilled in the morning.
- Empty drip tray from under the refrigerator.

1C Eliminate Harborage and Ant Entry Points



By eliminating potential hiding and nesting spots ants will find your home or structure less attractive. Ant colonies can number

from a couple of hundred to many thousand ants per colony. That means failure to seal entry points can allow new ant colonies or ant subcolonies to re-infest your home.

- Seal cracks and crevices around window frames and door frames, around baseboards and other places where you have noticed ants entering the structure with caulk or another suitable material.
- Seal holes around cables pipes and wires with copper mesh or another suitable material.

STEP 2 Use Indoor Ant Baits and Sprays

Now that you have completed the sanitation and preparation, you can start the process of applying products to eliminate the current ant infestation. We recommend using **three** key products to effectively get rid of ants:

- A non-repellent aerosol ant spray insecticide for use around doors, windows and baseboards.
- Two kinds of ant baits for use in cabinets, on counters, near sinks and other places where sprays would not be appropriate:
  - a protein-based bait, and
  - a carbohydrate-based bait

This combination of products will help get the ant infestation under control much more quickly than using any one product alone. We include these key products in our indoor ant control kit to make product selection easier for you.

Products needed for Step 2



DoMyOwn

Indoor Ant Kit
$61.72
★★★★½ (64)

2A Indoor Ant Baiting

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJ3w34hMhoE

Place bait in areas where ant activity has been noticed. It's important to avoid purposefully putting the bait in the middle of an ant trail or on the ants themselves: this will make the ants avoid the bait and make the baiting ineffective. Instead, put the bait near ant activity or next to ant trails. To help keep ant bait fresh and off of surfaces we recommend placing the bait in the bait plate stations provided in the kit. Some examples of places where the bait can be placed are:

- In kitchen cabinets and on counter tops.
- Behind, next to, and under the stove.
- Near sinks or drains
- Around pipes, cords, and cables that come out of the wall.
- Behind and under bathroom fixtures.
- Around the medicine cabinet and vanity.

You should check the bait placements once a week and replenish as needed until ant activity has stopped.

Products needed for Step 2A



Advion Ant Bait Gel - Single Tube
$14.33
4.5 (715)

2B Spraying for Ants Indoors

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xf9BTRP4Hs0

We recommend using a non-repellent ant spray to supplement baiting. We make this recommendation because there are times that ants may be in a nesting cycle or they may already have a steady, safe food source and they will ignore baits. We put a non-repellent ant spray in our ant kits because the ants will not be able to detect the spray and it is picked up on their bodies and carried back to the nesting areas. Non-repellent ant sprays take several days to start killing but that gives the product time to start spreading throughout the colony, infecting more ants.

Using the included straw applicator, apply the spray directly into cracks and crevices along baseboards, under appliances, around door frames, window frames and in areas where utilities (cables, pipes, wires) enter into the structure and other areas where ants have been entering your structure.

Products needed for Step 2B



PT Phantom II Pressurized Insecticide - 14 oz.
$30.26
4.5 (219)

STEP 3 Outdoor Sanitation and Preparation

How to Get Rid of & Kill Ants Outside

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0dfkMFFJXo

If you find that you have ants crawling around the exterior of your home or structure you should also consider treating outdoors to avoid a new infestation indoors. Just like treating indoors, you must eliminate or change the environment around your home that made the ants find your property attractive to start with.

Sanitation means more than cleaning up food that has been left out or sweeping up certain areas. In terms of ant control, sanitation means changing or removing the things ants need to live. All pests, including ants, need three main things to exist on your property:

1. Food
2. Water or sufficient moisture
3. Shelter

Pests seek these things when looking for a place to live, and by removing or limiting one or more of these aspects, you will help make your property less attractive to pests.

Sanitation:

- To prevent ants from using trees and foliage to reach your home and gain access to it, trim back trees and shrubs so that the branches and foliage do not touch your home. This will also help avoid the need for pesticide applications.
- Eliminate moist, shady areas where ants like to nest by trimming bushes and shrubs up from the ground so you can see beneath them.
- Create a "dry zone" - an area devoid of any landscape material - that ants are likely to avoid by raking mulch, pine straw or other landscape bedding at least 6 inches from the foundation.
- To reduce moisture retention and discourage nest building, turn mulch or other bedding material every couple of weeks.
- Insects and other household pests are known to live in gutters and downspouts, so clean these out frequently.
- Keep your lawn short, mowing as often as necessary.
- To eliminate potential harborages for a wide variety of insects and pests, remove grass clippings, leaf piles, stacked wood, and other lawn debris.
- If fruit trees are on the property, pick fruit from trees when ripe and pick up fallen fruit from the ground.
- Outdoor trash cans and dumpsters provide food and shelter for pests, so store them as far away from structures as possible and check for tight fitting lids.
- Wash out trash cans and dumpsters with an ammonia solution when needed.

Products needed for Step 3



Terra Verde Hedge Shear (23")
$34.13

STEP 4 Outdoor Ant Baiting and Spraying

Having some ants in your yard or near your home is normal and is actually needed to keep other pest populations under control. When the ants become so numerous that they start to move indoors you will usually need to kill them outdoors around the perimeter of the structure. By using a mixture of ant baits and non repellent ant spray you can eliminate the ant colonies near the structure. We have put together an Outdoor Ant Kit to help make selecting the right products for your needs easy for you.

Products needed for Step 4





Outdoor Ant Kit
$103.32
★★★★☆ (8)

4A Spraying For Ants Outside

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CjN_EG7uFs

There are many concentrated insecticides on the market that are labeled for killing ants. We strongly recommend you use a non-repellent spray such as Advion WDG. You can also use Termidor SC, but it's not as great of a value. Most ant sprays will only kill the ants that actually crawl over the treated surfaces. Since only about 20% of an ant colony is likely to venture out to forage for food these sprays will not adequately control the colony. The other downside of using other ant sprays is that ants are sensitive to most insecticides and will try to avoid the treated area, further lessening the effectiveness of the spray. Non-repellent products are undetectable by ants and other insects so they readily cross over treated surfaces. When the ants contact the surface the product sticks to their bodies, causing them to carry it back to the colony. Once the infected ants are back at the colony, they spread the product around through social interaction with the other ants, eventually leading to colony elimination.

You will need a hand pump sprayer or a backpack sprayer to apply a non-repellent spray. Mix the labeled amount of product with water. Most homes will need 1-2 gallons of finished solution to complete a perimeter application. You will need to apply the insecticide up the foundation and out onto the ground to build a barrier. You can also apply the solution around window frames, door frames, places where cables, pipes and wires enter the structure, and any other place where you have noticed ants crawling or trailing on the building. You cannot spray many insecticides out in the yard as a broadcast spray, and most products require that applications are limited to once every 6 months. Always read the label to confirm these sorts of instructions before applying.

To apply Advion WDG, mix 1-2 packets of the pre-measured water dispersible granules with each gallon of water. Apply around the perimeter of the building, up and out along the foundation in a band not exceeding 10 feet total.

You should note that Advion WDG and other non-repellent insecticides are formulated to have a slow kill time to allow the ants to spread the product around the colony, and it can take several weeks to see the full results.

Products needed for Step 4A



Termidor SC Termiticide/Insecticide
$79.98
★★★★★ (1704)

4B Outdoor Ant

Baiting

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZWyMYuNhNk

Using an ant bait outdoors will allow you to exterminate ants that are farther away from your structure. We recommend you **use both a liquid ant bait and a granular ant bait**because ants can be picky and will sometimes only accept the liquid bait or sometimes only accept the granule bait, depending on what nutritional needs they are trying to meet. You can use both bait formulations in each station at one time. You should place the stations near areas where you are seeing high levels of ant activity. Check the stations once a week and replenish the bait as needed until the ant population has been eliminated.

Products needed for Step 4B



Maxforce Complete Granular Bait
$24.57
★★★★½ (214)

Ant Treatment Infographic
(Click to View Full Graphic)

