

Tick Identification Guide

Learn What Ticks Look Like

By DoMyOwn staff



Ticks are small insects that feed on the blood of humans and animals. There are hundreds of species of ticks in the world; several species found in the United States are vectors for disease to people and pets.

Ticks can often be confused with other small pests like fleas, especially baby ticks. Use this guide to learn what different types of ticks look like and common traits among the many species of ticks.

If you do have ticks, continue to read our guide on [how to get rid of ticks](#), [how to find ticks in your home or yard](#) and [how to stop ticks from entering your home](#).

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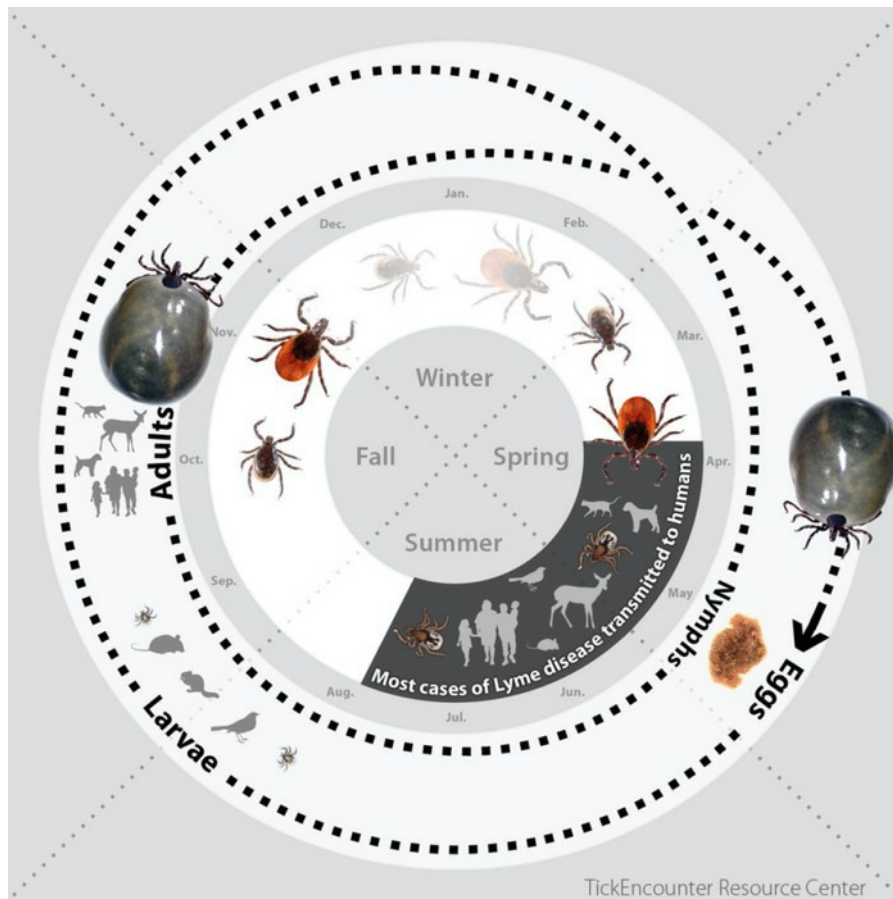


Indoor Flea and Tick Kit

\$69.00

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SIZE



There are 4 life stages of a tick: egg, larva, nymph, and adult.

- Tick larvae are less than 1 millimeter long (the size of a poppy seed).
- Tick nymphs are 1-2 millimeters long, about the size of a pinhead.
- Adult ticks can range from about 2 - 6 millimeters long when unfed and can grow up to 10 millimeters long after feeding.
- Adult male ticks are often smaller than adult females.

SHAPE



Ticks have a flattened oval or tear dropped shaped body before feeding and a plump, rounded body after feeding.

Immature ticks in the larvae stage have 6 legs. After feeding and maturing, they grow two additional legs for 8 legs total.

Ticks do not have wings or antennae.

COLOR



There are many tick types throughout the United States. They range in color and marking depending on their species. See the chart above for examples of tick coloring.

Some common types of ticks include:

- **American Dog Ticks:** Reddish-brown bodies with grayish-white or silvery markings on their backs
- **Brown Dog Ticks:** Uniform reddish-brown to dark brown coloring with little to no noticeable markings
- **Lone Star Ticks:** Reddish-brown bodies; adult females have distinct single white or pale spot in the center of the back
- **Gulf Coast Ticks:** Brown to reddish-brown bodies with ornate silvery-white markings on the back, more noticeable on adults
- **Rocky Mountain Wood Ticks:** Brown bodies with grayish-white or cream-colored markings on the back; similar in appearance to American Dog Ticks
- **Blacklegged Ticks (Deer Ticks):** Dark reddish-orange to brown bodies with very dark, almost black legs; adult females have reddish body and dark shield near the head
- **Western Blacklegged Ticks:** Reddish-brown bodies with black legs; females typically have dark shield near the head and reddish-orange abdomen

RANGE

Ticks can be found throughout the United States. While not every species of tick is in every state, there is at least one species of tick in each state.

Have you found a tick? Learn how to inspect for more with our [guide to finding ticks in your home or yard](#) and how to treat your home and yard for ticks with our [how to get rid of ticks guide](#).