

# How to Get Rid of Scale Insects

By DoMyOwn staff

## OVERVIEW

### Getting Rid of Scale Insects on Your Plants



Scale insects can be unsightly and disruptive pests in both residential and agricultural settings. Their general hardiness and small size can mean that they can be tough to spot and eliminate. On this page our experts have shared some ways to eliminate scale insects on your property, plus ideas for the best product to use for each.

#### METHOD **1** Encourage Natural Predators

Provide shelter and fuel for natural predators of scale insects and nature may resolve the infestation on its own. Larger insects such as lady beetles, soldier beetles, and certain varieties of small wasps can eliminate scale with ease. Lady beetles and some other scale-eating insects are available for live purchase. Introducing [beneficial insects](#) to your residential or garden area could be a safe and nature-friendly way to eliminate a scale pest infestation.

#### METHOD **2** Treat with Horticultural Oil

##### Video Instructions



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cghH1IDIU0Q>

Products like horticultural oil sprays can help eliminate scale insects by smothering them. This requires complete coverage of the host plant to be fully effective. You may need to use multiple applications to rid your plant of every stage of scale pest present. You will mix a small quantity of horticultural oil with water in most cases.

Always read the label of the product to confirm that it is safe to use on the host plant you're treating, as some plants are more sensitive to these oils than others. You should also consider the temperature when applying horticultural oils to stop pests. These products are recommended for plants growing in temperatures under 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and out of full sunlight. High temperatures and harsh sunlight can react with horticultural oils to cause plant injury. Applying these products in the

morning or evening also helps to avoid harming local beneficial insects, which will be less active during those times.

Neem oil is a similar type of product that offers additional benefits including hormonal control of some insects. Consult the product label or ask our experts if you have questions about which is best for your plants.

### Products needed for Method 2

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**Monterey Horticultural Oil**

- Quart

\$31.50

★★★★★ (1)

### METHOD **3** Apply an Insecticide Systemic Root Drench

#### Video Instructions



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liNykEnhuxg>

If you've identified the type of scale insect that is attacking one or several plants on your property, [applying a systemic insecticide drench](#) with a product using acephate, [imidacloprid](#) or dinotefuran will get the best results. To learn more about how to apply insecticides as a systemic root drench, view the video here and give our experts a call if you have any further questions.

#### PRO TIP

For heavy scale infestations, try applying a foliar spray application (oil or otherwise) for quicker pest reduction in addition to a systemic drench application for ongoing prevention--the systemic application will take longer to show results, but will pay off in lasting effects.

### Products needed for Method 3

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**Safari 20SG Systemic Insecticide with**

**Dinotefuran**

\$140.96

★★★★☆ (27)

### METHOD **4** Physical Removal with Alcohol



You can remove existing scale with a sponge or cotton soaked with rubbing alcohol. Contact with the alcohol will kill scale insects that are present on the plant surface at the time, and they can be easily wiped off by hand. Repeat treatments will probably be needed to fully eliminate the scale pests that have made a home on your plant, however. Consider separating any infested plants by moving them outdoors or into a garage if these places have a suitable climate for the plants to survive.

**METHOD** **5** **Prune Infested Branches**

Prune infested stems or branches if the scale presence isn't too widespread. You should take care to dispose of any clippings immediately, keeping them away from healthy plants, and never using them for compost.

**Products needed for Method 5**



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**Terra Verde Hedge  
Shear (23")**  
**\$33.58**

**If you have questions about any of these methods or need help deciding on the best way to get rid of scale insects around your home, give us a call at 866-581-7378 for expert answers.**