



Getting Rid of Ants

By DoMyOwn staff

Identify the Ant Species

It is helpful before beginning any ant management program to identify the invading species. DoMyOwnPestControl.com has several ant biology pages you may reference to help you do this. Typically you will need only a magnifying glass and a single ant specimen to compare with an online description or photo. If you are unable to identify the species or do not feel comfortable doing so, the following guidelines for general ant control will yield successful results in most cases. However, there are some cases where very specific control measures should be taken, for example, spraying liquid insecticides will only worsen rather than help a Pharaoh ant infestation.

The following steps may help control the following ant species inside and outside the home: Crazy, White-Footed, Acrobat, Ghost, Little Black, Odorous, Pavement, and Thief Ants.

Step 1) Find the Entry Point or Colony

When you first notice invading ants, they may form an obvious trail which you can easily follow to find exactly where the ants are entering. If the ant trail and entry point is NOT obvious, try the following **Honey & Peanut Butter Bait Method**:

- 1) Place a large dab of honey and a dab of peanut butter side by side on a flat note card or piece of tin foil.
- 2) Place the card or foil in a corner on the floor close to where you notice the greatest ant activity.
- 3) If the activity is in several places, put out more than 1 card.

Within about two hours, the ants will locate the food source, and form a steady trail of workers to and from the colony to the food source. You should then be able to follow the trail visually to the point where the ants are entering. This may be a crack in a baseboard, a doorframe, or window sill. Ideally, you will be able to follow the trail all the way to the ant colony.

Step 2) Treat the Nest or Colony

There are several ways to treat an ant colony, depending on its location. If you were unable to locate the colony, skip to step 3.

- **Nests in Structural Voids** should be treated with [Delta Dust Insecticide](#). If the existing point of entry is not large enough to inject the dust, a hole may be drilled and later repaired. Apply Delta Dust in a thin layer (generally 2 to 3 puffs) using a [Hand Duster](#).
- **Nests in Wood** such as structural timbers, fence posts, tree holes, stumps, or logs, should be treated the same as those in structural voids, using [Delta Dust Insecticide](#) and a [Hand Duster](#). Holes may be drilled for easier access.
- **Nests in Soil** (includes ant colonies located in lawns, flower beds, or underneath stones and rocks)- Drench mound with a water-based liquid insecticide such as [Cynoff WP](#), [Suspend SC](#), or [Talstar One](#). You will also need a [Chapin SureSpray 1 Gal Sprayer](#) for mixing and application. Usually only a few ounces is needed, but follow the product label.
- **Nests in Landscape Mulch** may be treated with a liquid insecticide such as [Cynoff WP](#), [Suspend SC](#), or [Talstar One](#). You will also need a [Chapin SureSpray 1 Gal Sprayer](#) for mixing and application. Since mulch is thick and difficult to penetrate, first rake back the mulch to expose the ant colony before treating.
- **Nests in Slab Foundations** are typically difficult to access, and baits would be the ideal treatment (see step 4). If baiting is unsuccessful, a number of holes may be drilled in the foundation through which a termiticide labeled for application under slab foundations can be used. [Termidor SC](#) is an excellent option for such cases.
- **Nests in Stack of Lumber, Bricks, or Other Material** can be treated by unstacking the materials in order to expose the colonies, then drenching the mound(s) with a liquid insecticide such as [Cynoff WP](#), [Suspend SC](#), or [Talstar One](#). You will need a [Chapin SureSpray 1 Gal Sprayer](#) for mixing and application.

Step 3) Treat the Outside Perimeter

Treating the outside perimeter of your home with a liquid residual insecticide creates in effect a protective barrier that ants and

other pests are unable to cross without picking up the toxin. Small insects like ants will die immediately upon making contact with the barrier, while some larger insects like cockroaches may struggle for a few minutes or hours before dying.

You can treat the perimeter of your home with the same chemical used to treat the ant colony itself. We recommend [Cynoff WP](#), [Suspend SC](#), or [Talstar One](#). You will also need a [Chapin SureSpray 1 Gal Sprayer](#) for mixing and easy application. For perimeter application rates and mixing instructions, be sure to read the product label thoroughly. Most liquid residuals remain effective for 8 to 12 weeks.

Step 4) Baiting

While locating and treating the ant colony is ideal, it is often not realistic to expect that homeowners have the time or patience to try to follow ants to the nest. Fortunately, you can almost never go wrong with baiting inside while spraying the outside perimeter. It may take 3 to 5 days to see results with baiting, but it is almost always more effective than spraying indoors because the ants have time to take the bait back to their nests, which will eventually lead to colony elimination.

Additional Methods for Getting Rid of Ants (and preventing them in the first place!)

After you have applied the appropriate pesticide chemicals, these additional non chemical methods will help you to maintain control and prevent future ant infestations:

- Practice good sanitation.
- Limit food preparation and consumption to one or two areas of the home that are cleaned daily. Ants will be less likely to invade if food sources (like crumbs and spills) are not available.
- Eliminate gaps and cracks in the foundation, baseboards, window frames, and door frames with caulk or other appropriate material to eliminate ant entryways.
- Materials such as stacked or piled lumber, stones, bricks, leaf litter, heavy mulch, and other debris that serve as potential ant harborages should be removed as far from the structure as possible.
- Trim the branches of trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that may serve as ant highways so they do not touch the structure.
- Repair leaky pipes and faucets.

Products:

All [Ant Control](#) products

[Ant Baits](#)

[Ant Kits](#)