Apartment Pest Control for Tenants

By DoMyOwn staff

As an apartment tenant what can I do to prevent pest infestations?

Sanitation habits play a very important roll in preventing and eliminating pest invaders. Insects and rodents need food, water and shelter to survive and by eliminating as many of these resources as possible you will be able to avoid most infestations. In most cases pest infestations can be spotted very early or prevented all together if sanitation conditions are good.

1. Keep kitchen area as clean as possible.
    - Wash and put away dishes after every use
    - Wipe down counter tops to get rid of any little food crumbs
    - Rinse and dry sinks every night to eliminate a possible water source
    - Empty toaster crumb trays, wipe down appliances
    - Thoroughly sweep the floor to get rid of crumbs
    - Mop at least once a week to get rid of spilled liquids and food particles
    - Either use a trash can with a very tight fitting lid or take out trash every night
2. Get rid of clutter. Unnecessary clutter will provide harborage for pests.

    - Throw away cardboard boxes.
    - Eliminate any unneeded papers, put remaining papers in secure containers.
    - Do not to put anything (blankets, clothes, files…) under your bed or sofa unless it is in a secure (pest resistant) container.
    - Get rid of any unused items. (clothes, linens, food items and papers that are left unchecked for long periods of time may become perfect hiding or breeding places for pests)

3. Check for moisture problems periodically. Almost every pest will need water to sustain itself and all moisture issues should be addressed right away.

    - Fix leaky faucets.
    - Check for “sweating pipes”.
    - Search for and fix any leaking pipes.
    - Check seals around doors and windows for moisture.

What should I do if I already have pests in my apartment?

Getting rid of pests in an apartment can be difficult without the support of management and the tenants in the adjoining units. If management provides pest control they should be notified of any pest control methods or products that you use so that they are not over spraying or over treating your unit. Next, the following steps should be followed:

1. Inspect the entire apartment thoroughly. Look for places where pests can enter the space. Search for gaps, cracks or holes near appliances, in and around cabinets, around utility cables or wires (pipes, plug outlets, TV cable…), around door frames and window frames, and underneath baseboards. Search for pest damage such as gnawed holes in walls or food products, feces or urine.
2. Identify the pest. This step is very important. The treatment for rats is different than for mice and the treatment for roaches is quite different from the treatment for fleas. In most cases you can make a visual identification by either seeing the pest or by finding the feces or damage left behind. If you are unsure what type of pest is causing the problem you should ask for a professional inspection before doing any type of treatment.
3. Seal entry points using **Stuf-Fit Copper mesh**, **Pur Black Foam,** caulk, hardware cloth, or sheet metal.
4. Choose a treatment appropriate for the type of pest that is infesting your apartment. Here is a list of pests that frequently infest apartment buildings. Click on the pest to learn about the treatment process:

- **Roaches**
- **Rats**
- **Mice**
- **Silverfish and Firebrats**
- **Ants**
- **Bedbugs**
- **Spiders**

For general control of insect pests in apartments Do My Own Pest Control recommendsapplying a dust such as Delta dust or Motherearth D dust under the baseboards around the perimeter of each room using ahand duster. This will help prevent pests from coming under the walls from neighboring apartments. We also recommend applying a liquid insecticide such as Talstar or Suspend every 3 months to get rid of any insects that have managed to make their way

indoors and to help prevent any future infestations. Both of these products have a very broad label and will eliminate most insects.

For general rodent control consider placing snap traps or glue boards in problem areas. We do NOT recommend putting rodenticides (mouse or rat poison) indoors as the rodents could die in an inaccessible area and cause a horrible stench and a secondary insect infestation from blow flies, maggots, roaches and carrion beetles.

Related Articles:
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Home Pest Inspection
General Home Pest Control
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