



PEST CONTROL

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Bed Bugs

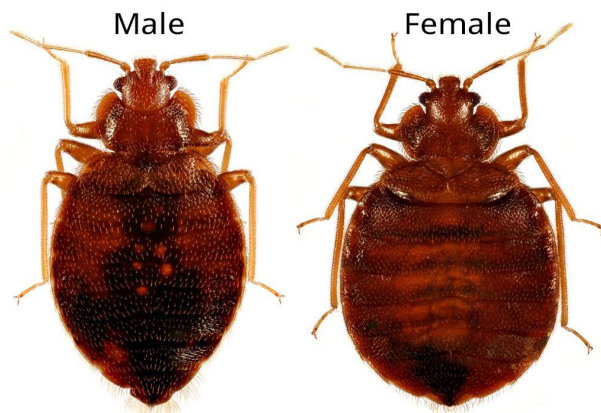


The size of an adult bedbug compared with a US penny

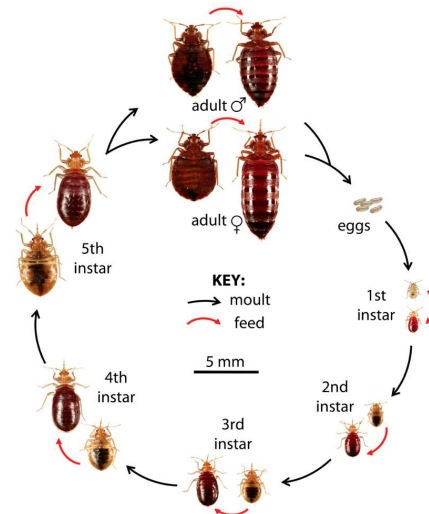
Bed bugs are nocturnal parasitic insects that feed on blood, thus attracting them to humans. Bed bugs bite and cause rashes. They like to hide in warm spaces, including the cracks and crevices of mattresses, furniture, and bedding.

It is important to identify what bed bugs look like before treatment begins. The good thing is that bed bugs are visible to the human eye.

Bed bugs are tiny and vary in size based on their stage in the life cycle. Immature, or nymph, bed bugs range from 2-5 millimeters in length while fully grown adult bed bugs are a quarter of an inch long or larger, generally the size of an apple seed.



Adult bed bugs have a flat, oval-shaped body, six legs each, two antennae, and do not have wings.



Eggs hatch in nymphs which go through 5 instars until molting into their adult stage

Nymph (immature) bed bugs are translucent in color. After feeding, a nymph will have a bright red translucent abdomen that will fade to brown and eventually black as it digests its meal. As nymphs mature into adults, they molt and become a darker brown. Adult bed bugs are a rusty red/brown color.



[How do people get Bed Bugs in the first place?](#)

To some it seems like they just magically appear, and people are often left scratching their heads (and other areas...), confused and frustrated that they've wound up with a bed full of bugs. However, it is no mystery how bed bugs are spread from place to place; humans have helped spread bed bug infestations for hundreds of years.

[How Bed Bugs Spread](#)

The incorrect assumption is that dirty locations attract bed bugs and house bed bug populations. Although most dirty locations do attract a host of nasty insects that spread germs and contaminate areas, bed bugs are pleased with clean or dirty.

Bed bugs are able to spread via human travel and movement. The unique flattened and small round shaped of the bed bug allows them to hide just about anywhere they can squeeze.

They hitch rides onto the fabrics of furniture, mattresses, luggage, clothing, etc., where they ride until they find a suitable host area, like your bedroom. This is where bed bugs can establish populations, which they can accomplish fairly quickly.

[Where You Can Get Bed Bugs](#)

Bed bugs are most often found in homes, apartment buildings, college dormitories, and hotels, which are all places with consistent hosts at rest for bed bugs to feed. But bed bugs have also been found in day-cares, movie theaters, and even city buses; and automobiles. These places generally don't have large established populations, but bed bugs can be picked up and transferred from people resting in these areas and/or their belongings. Since people are constantly rotating in these spaces, bed bugs can be deposited and picked up on clothing, bags, and purses and taken home.

Bed bugs hiding in furniture, mattresses, and other items you might bring into your home is another common way of picking up these little hitchhikers. Since bed bugs are hitchhikers, they travel commonly by luggage. Hotels and motels, no matter how clean or shining the reputation, can be susceptible to bed bug infestations. This is one of the most common ways people get bed bugs, when the bed bugs hitch a ride back to the traveler's home.



Steps to Prevent Getting Bed Bugs

Never bring in upholstered furniture, bed frames, mattresses, or box springs found on the street into your home.

Check all borrowed, rented, or second-hand furniture for bed bugs before you bring them into your home. Check all cracks and crevices, even in wooden furniture.

The best way to prevent the spreading of bed bugs when traveling is to check the rooms before you stay in hotels. The nicest and cleanest hotels can be infested. Don't place luggage on the ground, and inspect mattress, box spring, headboard, etc., for bedbugs before spending a night in your room.

If you suspect you've been around bed bugs, inspect your clothing and any items you had with you before entering your home. If bedbugs are found, launder items immediately or place in plastic bags until further treatment can be carried out.

Even if you don't have bedbugs, seal cracks and crevices in your bedroom with caulk. Door and window frames, baseboards, floorboards, etc., should all be sealed to eliminate bed bug hiding spots. You can even seal cracks and crevices in bedroom furniture. Consider using a bed bug mattress cover, a box spring encasement, and even bed bug pillow covers to prevent bed bugs from taking residence in these items.

To do your part in preventing the spread of bed bugs, if you have to throw away any infested items, make sure to cover them in plastic if possible. Always place signs on the items stating that the items are infested in bed bugs. Never donate infested items.



This photo shows some of the favorite Bed Bug hiding places

