

Getting rid of bed bugs from your home can be a challenging task. Following these steps will help you get rid of bedbugs and assist a professional pest control company when their services are required.

Find Out Where Bed Bugs Are Hiding in Your Home

- Use a bright flashlight to look for bed bugs or their dark droppings in bedroom furniture. Use a hot hair dryer and an old business card or playing card to force them out of hiding spaces and cracks. Places to look for bedbugs include:
 - Behind your headboard.
 - In the seams and tufts of your mattress.
 - Inside your box spring. Remove the dust cover on the bottom of the box spring so you can check inside.
 - Along bedroom baseboard cracks.
 - In and around bedside tables (night stands).
 - In cracks and corners of dresser drawers and other furniture.
 - Other bedroom items, including window and door casings, pictures, moldings, nearby furniture, loose wallpaper, cracks in plaster, and clutter.
- Place glue boards, double sided tape or bed bug interceptors under your bed legs to monitor and catch the bed bugs.

Clean Areas Where Bed Bugs Are Likely to Hide

- Clean bedding, linens, curtains, rugs, carpets and clothes.
 - To kill bed bugs and bed bug eggs, put clean items in dryer on hottest setting for 20 minutes. Wash dirty items in hot water and dry them on the hottest dryer setting. Keep drying the items in the dryer for at least 20 minutes after the items are dry.
 - Wool items, plush toys, shoes and many other items that cannot be washed can be placed dry into a hot dryer on the hottest setting for 30 minutes to get rid of bed bugs.
 - Put cleaned items in new plastic bags until the bed bugs have been eliminated.
- Scrub mattress seams with a stiff brush to dislodge bed bugs and their eggs.
- Vacuum mattresses, bed frames, furniture, floors and carpets. Pay special attention to cracks, open spaces and anywhere you found bed bugs during your inspection.
- If your box spring, couch or upholstered chair has a dust cover attached on the underside, remove it and vacuum inside the space.
- Immediately after vacuuming, put the vacuum cleaner bag in a sealed plastic bag. Dispose of the bag in an outdoor garbage container.

Reduce Clutter

- Be careful not to spread the bed bugs. Don't move items from the infested areas to non-infested areas of your home.
- Throw away excess magazines, newspapers, all cardboard boxes and trash. Put items directly into plastic garbage bags and dispose of them in an outdoor garbage container.
- Keep clothing off of the floor.

Make Your Home Unfriendly to Bed Bugs

- Cover both your mattress and your box spring in a zippered mattress encasement that is labelled “allergen rated”, “for dust mites” or “for bed bugs”. Keep the encasement on the mattress and on the box spring for at least a year.
- Make your bed an island. Move your bed 6 inches (15 cm) away from the wall. Be sure no blankets or bedding touches the floor. Place bed bug interceptors or glue pads under each leg of your bed.
- Seal cracks in walls that allow bed bugs to travel between apartments. Seal baseboards, wall switch and plug covers, and where pipes enter your apartment.
- Apply weather-strip to the door into your apartment.

Careful Use of Pesticides

Be careful about using pesticides yourself. Pesticides can be harmful to people and to pets. If you choose to use a pesticide, follow these precautions:

- If you live in rental housing, contact your landlord and request pest control treatment for bed bugs. Treatment should be done at least two times, 10-14 days apart, to effectively remove bed bugs.
- Only use pesticides clearly labelled for bed bugs. Never use a cockroach spray, ant spray or any pesticide that does not have bed bugs listed on the label.
- Follow label instructions exactly.
- NEVER spray pesticides on a mattress or sofa, or in areas where children or pets are present.
- Do not use an “insecticide bomb” or “fogger” in your home. These products can spread harmful chemicals throughout your home and are not likely to be effective against bed bugs.
- Consider hiring a professional pest control company. Chemical pesticides can be an effective tool that works well with the other steps recommended, but are best left to the professionals. The company should describe the treatment and tell you how to prepare your home for treatment. Treatment should be done at least two times, 10-14 days apart, to effectively remove bed bugs.

How Can I Keep Bed Bugs Out of My Home?

- Never bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs or upholstered furniture into your home.
- Carefully inspect used furniture for bed bugs before bringing it into your home.
- Wash clothing and inspect luggage immediately after returning from a trip.

