

If you decide to use a professional pest control company, ask questions about what they will do. If they use pesticides, ask to see their Michigan pesticide applicator's license and write down the license number. Find out what they recommend to protect children, pets, and family members.

How can I keep cockroaches out?

Even if a building has many cockroaches, you CAN help keep cockroaches out of your living area by doing the following:

Clean and repair areas where you find cockroaches. Caulk cracks along floors, add screens to floor drains, and paint cracks in cabinets to seal them. Pay special attention to areas where dust and food fall, and vacuum and wash these areas thoroughly.

Dry up wet areas and repair leaky faucets or drains that create moist spots. Remove pet water dishes at night.

Keep all food in containers with tight lids. Keep tables, counters, sinks, and floors clean and dry.

Remove clutter to make cleaning easier and to get rid of hiding places for cockroaches.

Make cleaning and repairs a group effort. In apartments or group housing, ask your neighbors to do what you are doing to their living areas to help keep cockroaches out.

Remember

If you try these things and still have a problem, get help or more advice from professional pest control companies or resource agencies.

Cockroach baits, sprays, liquids and powders, and other pesticides are poisons. Keep kids and pets away from pesticides. Store pesticides in locked cabinets or out of reach, and store them away from food.

Call the **Poison Control Center** at 1-800-222-1222. Keep this number with your emergency phone numbers.



Poison Control

If someone is poisoned by pesticides, don't delay!

**Michigan Department of
Agriculture and
Rural Development
Pesticide & Plant Pest
Management Division**

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**Michigan Department of
Agriculture
and
Rural Development**

**Questions and Answers
about**

COCKROACHES



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What do cockroaches look like?

Look for six legs and two long antennae; some have wings; they are reddish-brown, grey-tan, dark brown or black. Cockroaches are about 1/2 inch to 1 1/2 inches long.



American Cockroach
(*Periplaneta Americana*)

There are many kinds of cockroaches. The American, Oriental, brown-banded, and German cockroaches are most common in Michigan. Cockroaches are sometimes called other names like water bugs or palmetto bugs.

You may also find cockroach eggs. Eggs are contained in oval "casings," about 1/4 to 1/3 of an inch long. They are light to dark brown or black, but may look dusty. Cockroaches carry egg casings attached to their bodies, or drop them in out of the way places.



Brown-banded Cockroaches,
Various Stages and Ages
(*Supella longipalpa*)

Where do they live?

All cockroaches like warmth and moisture. They like tight places where their bodies touch the top and bottom; places like very small cracks between walls and floors, or in cabinets. You can also find them in wet wood piles, under porches, behind counters, stoves or refrigerators, in floor drains, under bathroom or kitchen sinks, in furnace rooms, behind air vents, etc. They eat many things - food crumbs, glues, paints, garbage, soiled laundry, or soap, etc.

Different kinds of cockroaches prefer different places. American and Oriental cockroaches like warm, damp spots like basements or furnace rooms. Brown-banded cockroaches may be found anywhere, even in drawers. German cockroaches are usually found in areas with food, warmth, and moisture such as kitchens and baths.

Cockroaches move around at night; if you see roaches during the day then it's likely there are several of them in the area.

Are cockroaches harmful?

Cockroaches aren't pleasant to have around, but they won't bite or sting you. Cockroaches crawl through waste and garbage, so they may pick up and spread bacteria and diseases.

Some adults and children are allergic to cockroaches, and there can be bad odors in areas with a lot of cockroaches. If you or your child have asthma, exposure to cockroaches may cause asthma attacks.

How can I get rid of cockroaches?

Some control methods take time to work. If you have a lot of cockroaches, it may take a few weeks, a month, or longer to get rid of them.

Remember that just killing cockroaches won't keep them from coming back. You need to find ways to keep them out.

Control Methods

Traps

Cockroach traps are used primarily for monitoring purposes. If you find large numbers of cockroaches in your trap, they are probably living or feeding nearby. If you have a lot of cockroaches, using traps alone probably won't get rid of them.

Traps usually have a bait to attract the cockroaches. Sometimes bait is a poison, so keep traps away from children and pets. Some traps work better for certain kinds of cockroaches; try a different trap if yours isn't working.

Put traps in the paths cockroaches use - along the edges of walls or in cabinets. You may need several (about two or three every 100 square feet.)

If you have only a few cockroaches, you could use a heavy duty vacuum to sweep them up. They should suffocate in the dust of the bag. Throw out the bag to make sure they don't escape.

Pesticides

If you use pesticides to kill cockroaches, use the least toxic available. These pesticides will be labeled with the word "Caution."

Pesticides are poisons, so follow label directions and use them carefully. Don't use pesticides around food or on food preparation surfaces. Keep children and pets away from areas where pesticides have been applied, as the label requires.



German Cockroach
(*Blattella germanica*)

Never use a pesticide that doesn't have a label attached to the container, and make sure the pesticide is labeled for indoor use.

Beware of "miracle products" that promise to control cockroaches instantly and forever. These products may be illegal, and could be harmful to you or your family if used in or around your home.

The following pesticides will kill cockroaches and pose less risk to people and pets when used properly:

Boric acid is a powder used in cracks. Cockroaches will either walk through it, attaching it to their body, or eventually eat it. A light dusting is all you need. Buy a product with a nozzle so you can squirt it into a crack.

Baits are used to attract and poison cockroaches when they eat them. They can be purchased in pet-proof and childproof containers. You may need to set out several containers.

You could also hire a professional pest control company to help you.



Oriental Cockroach
(*Blatta orientalis*)