



How to Get Rid of Bugs on Indoor Plants

There is a wide range of plants that can thrive in an indoor environment and grow successfully in a pot or container. Indoor plants bring along many benefits, including improving air quality, reducing stress, and improving overall environmental wellness. However, indoor plants can attract and retain bugs. Luckily, there are many ways to address and eliminate this problem.

The Basic Needs of Indoor Plants

There are seven basic needs for indoor plants to thrive:

1. The right amount of water
2. Temperatures of 60 degrees and up
3. Consistent light
4. Potting soil with nutrients
5. The right size pots
6. Fertilizer
7. Pest management

Health Benefits of Indoor Plants

Indoor plants bring a variety of health benefits to their environment, such as:

- **Improved Air Quality** – Indoor plants replace carbon dioxide with fresh oxygen that has reduced amounts of air pollution like mold and mildew.
- **Stress Reduction** – Caring for indoor plants can reduce the stress of those doing the caring. Interacting with indoor plants creates a meaningful connection that is good for overall mental health.
- **Improved Sense of Well-Being** – Indoor plants can help improve focus and reduce anxious or depressive feelings.

Seven Most Common Indoor Plant Bugs

Indoor plants are at risk of attracting and housing unwanted pests. The seven most common bugs found on indoor plants include:

- Aphids
- Scale
- Thrips
- Mealybugs
- Spider mites
- Fungus gnats
- Whiteflies

Why Do Indoor Plants Have Bugs?

Indoor plants are the perfect place for bugs because there are no natural predators present. In addition, inside conditions often have high humidity and low air circulation, creating a warm, enticing place where bugs want to live and reproduce. Fortunately, there are ways to eliminate pests from indoor plants, and ways to prevent infestations from happening in the first place.

Your first line of defense is to determine exactly what type of pest your plant has. We can help you with this through a sample of the pest. This is best done by bringing in the specimen – on an affected leaf or stem – in a sealed plastic baggie.

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There are different remedies for getting rid of bugs depending on the type of pest or plant:

- **Bugs on Indoor Plant Leaves** – To get rid of bugs that are feeding on indoor plant leaves, first isolate the plant and clean the surrounding area. Then, wash the plant leaves and clean the pot. Use a cotton swab that has been soaked in rubbing alcohol to kill the remaining bugs. Lastly, utilize an insecticide to keep the bugs from returning.
- **Flying Bugs** – To get rid of flying bugs, use sticky stakes or sticky traps to capture and kill the flying bugs. To eliminate eggs, follow the same steps to get rid of bugs on indoor plant leaves.
- **Bugs in Soil** – To get rid of bugs living and breeding in the soil of an indoor plant, first remove the top layer of soil in the pot and throw it out. Replace the missing soil with fresh soil and drench the soil with a mix of 10 drops of liquid dish soap in a quart of water.

How to Prevent Bugs on Indoor Plants

Preventing bugs from invading indoor plants is easier and more effective than trying to get rid of them once they're infested. Here are six ways to prevent bugs from attacking indoor plants:

1. **Don't Overwater** – Soil that is damp and soggy is perfect for breeding bugs. Soil should be dry on top before watering again to maintain a healthy balance of moisture.
2. **Keep an Eye Out for Bugs** – Regularly look for signs of bugs so they can be addressed quickly, reducing the extent of the infestation.
3. **Ensure Good Air Flow** – Proper air circulation gets rid of stale air that can attract bugs.
4. **Only Use Clean Pots** – Always wash pots before using them and never put plants in a dirty pot that could already be infested with bugs.
5. **Clean Up Leaves** – Leaves that have fallen off a plant and are laying on top of the soil are an ideal spot for bugs to live and breed.
6. **Keep Plants Healthy** – A healthy plant is much less likely to be attacked and infested with unwanted bugs.

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