

# Cockroaches

## The Cockroach Problem

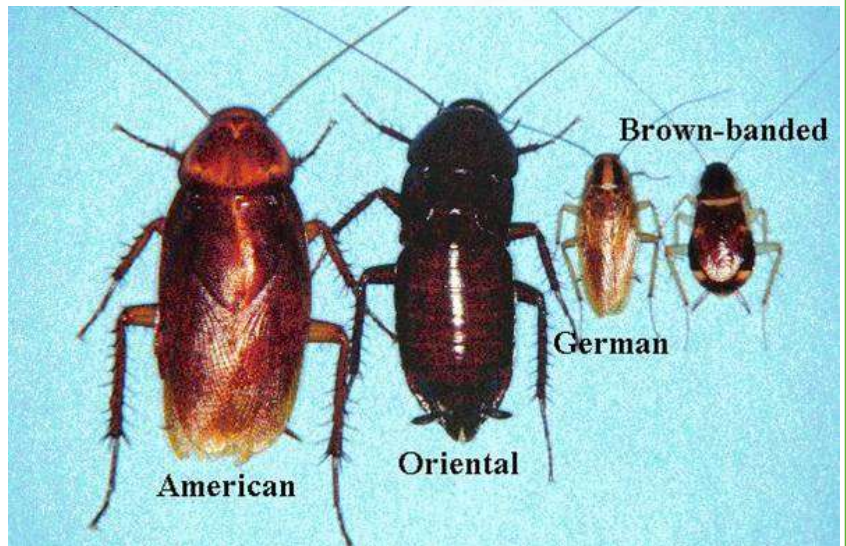
Cockroaches (Blattoidae) are insects typically about ½ inch long with an average life span of 100 days but can live much longer if conditions are right. Cockroaches are nocturnal but can be seen during the day if disturbed. They are commonly found in kitchen and bathroom areas due to moisture requirements. They are scavengers that will eat almost anything. Adult females carry egg capsules with 30-50 eggs and produce new capsules every two weeks. Cockroaches are hemimetabolous insects and have a life cycle that involves the following stages: Egg, Nymph, and Adult. Even though cockroaches are known to carry disease, bacteria, and parasitic worms, they have not been associated with disease outbreaks in the U.S.



## Prevention

Monitoring and sanitation are the most important steps in preventing cockroaches.

- Regular inspections and monitoring (sticky) traps can be used to determine if you have cockroaches. Place traps under sinks, against walls, in dark corners, and in cabinets.
- Look for droppings.
- Clean up spilled foods, especially in hard to reach places. Also, be sure to clean any splattered grease (a favorite food for cockroaches) on walls, appliances, and floors.
- Store opened food in sealed plastic containers.
- Disposing of trash regularly will help to prevent food sources and shelter for cockroaches.
- Remove boxes or equipment from storage areas to minimize shelter.
- Seal any entry points into the building and any entry points where cockroaches could nest.
- Waste pipe P-traps need to be filled with water; empty P-traps allow cockroaches to enter dwellings from the sewer.



## Chemical Control

As a last resort, you can use chemical control to help eliminate cockroaches.

- Baits may be used where monitoring traps indicated a high number of cockroaches.
- Continue monitoring to see progress.
- Food service establishments may only use approved insecticides and must be applied according to the label instructions
- For severe infestations contact a professional pest control service.

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## Where to Look

Monitor your kitchen or home in places that resemble the cockroach's ancestral home, or **ecological equivalents**. Look for areas in your home that mimic jungles, swamps, food sources, and shelter. You can monitor by looking for feces or placing traps.

Rat



Mouse



Cockroach



### Warm = Jungle

- Water heaters
- Steam tables
- Dish machines
- Appliances that give off heat

### Wet = Swamp

- Dish machines
- Leaky plumbing
- Standing water
- Drains
- Bathrooms



### Dining Area = Food Source

- Drains beneath dish machines
- Uncovered food
- Crumbs
- Grease
- Cardboard
- Toothpaste



### Tight Places = Shelter/Escape

- Storage areas
- Cardboard boxes
- Pallets
- Inside appliance
- Beneath trash cans
- Cracks/holes in walls



For more information, visit <http://www.tchd.org/387/Animals-Bugs-Pests> or if you have any questions, please call your local Tri-County Health Department office.