

Insects: Help! Small, brown ants are invading my home!

How do I get rid of them?

Ants are often driven indoors by rainy weather but once it dries out more, they will likely migrate back outside to their normal homes in the ground.

Using sprays that kill the ants on contact may be effective initially, but normally the ants you see comprise 10% or less of the entire colony, so spraying isn't the most effective way of controlling their numbers.

We've had good luck with the Borax-based ant baits (one brand is Terro). They take from a few days to a couple of weeks to work, but generally do kill off the entire colony. Unfortunately, some types of ants (such as carpenter ants) won't eat the baits and so bait traps are ineffective for those types. There are different types of ant baits, as some are better for ants that prefer greasy baits rather than the sweet-type Borax baits.

If you've tried a number of baits already and they've been ineffective, then for us to make any further recommendations, we would have to identify more specifically which type of ant you're dealing with. For that, we'd need to see some photos or have you bring a specimen by one of our offices (listed on our website homepage, www.metromastergardeners.org). Good photos of ants are tough to get without a microscope camera, so bringing in specimens is the most effective way of helping us get a positive identification so we can then make our best recommendation of how to get rid of these ants.

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