



GARDEN *pests* IN PERTH

How to Control Ants

There are many different species of ant that can become a pest around the home and in the garden. They can set up extensive nests which undermine paving, eat fruit and damage plants. Their trails are often visible on pathways and they can quickly invade the house. There are several steps which can be taken to keep problem ant populations under control.

- Ants are attracted by sweet and protein-based foods. Remove any possible food sources including crumbs and keep barbecues clean.
- Ants are attracted to honeydew secreted by other insects such as aphids, thrips and mites. If there are ants crawling up plants, attracted by the honeydew, you need to control the other insect and eliminate that food source to eliminate the ants.
- Ants go looking for water sources. Repair leaking taps, remove water in dishes and saucers, and dry up any pools of water sitting in the garden.
- Ants are sensitive to smells. Use dishes of strongly scented substances such as peppermint, eucalyptus, or tea tree oils, spray surfaces with a vinegar solution, or place small bowls of cinnamon, black pepper or garlic near ant infested areas.
- Eliminate the problem at its source. Follow the ant trail and locate the nest. Dig a small hole in the centre of the nest and pour in boiling water. Repeat until ants stop coming to the surface. Work with gloves, long sleeves and protective clothing to avoid ant bites.
- Make an ant trap using a mixture of 1 teaspoon of peanut paste or sugar to two teaspoons of Borax. Put the mixture inside a lidded container and punch several small holes in the top. Place this trap near a visible ant trail. The ants will be lured into the trap but won't be able to escape. They should disappear in 2 – 3 days.
- Commercial products for the control of ants are available. [David Grays Ant Dust](#) comes in a convenient squeeze application pack. It contains Permethrin in powder form which can be blown or swept into cracks and crevices.
- [Pyrethrum Long Life](#) is a natural long-lasting spray for the control of insects, including ants, on plants, vegetables and fruit trees. It contains natural stabilised Pyrethrum derived from Chrysanthemum flowers. The ready to use spray remains active for up to 20 days in outdoor applications and up to 40 days indoors.

This is intended as general information only. Please ask one of our horticulturists for specific advice for your situation.