

**Do NOT throw away your bed—even if you find bed bugs on it!**

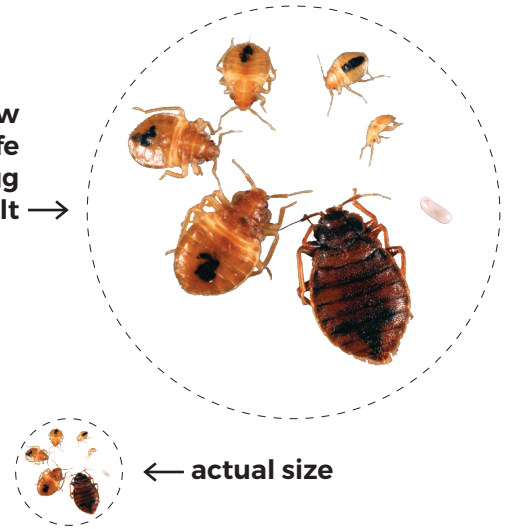
# BED BUGS

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What does a bed bug look like?

Adult bed bugs are about the size of an apple seed. If they haven't fed recently, they are long and brown with a flat, oval-shaped body. If they have fed recently, they are longer and more balloon-like with a reddish-brown body. Bed bug eggs are the size of a pin-head and pearl-white in color. The images to the right show the life stages of a bed bug from egg to adult—both magnified and actual size.

magnified view  
showing the life  
stages from egg  
to adult →



### How will I know if there are bed bugs in my home?

Bed bugs are active only at night. During the day, they hide in cracks and crevices in walls, floors, beds, and furniture.

**Bites on the skin are a poor indicator of bed bugs.** More accurate physical signs include:

- Reddish stains on bed sheets or mattresses
- Dark spots about the size of a pin point that may bleed on fabric like a marker would
- Eggs and eggshells
- Live bed bugs

Since bed bugs are difficult to identify, it is best to consult a trained professional. You can also mail found insects to the address below for free identification.

Pennsylvania Integrated Pest Management Program  
Penn State Center  
675 Sansom Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

### How do I prevent bed bug infestations in my home?

Bed bugs cannot fly, so they infest homes by being transported in clothing, backpacks, suitcases, mattresses, or other furniture. They can also walk in from adjacent apartments or rooms through cracks or conduits for electrical wiring or plumbing.

You can protect your home from bed bugs in the following ways:

- Inspect secondhand furniture for signs of bed bugs before bringing them home.

- Protect mattresses (and box springs, if you have them) with high quality bed bug proof protectors. You can find them at stores that supply bedding like Walmart and Target, or online at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).
- Reduce clutter in your home to reduce hiding places for bed bugs.
- Vacuum frequently (with a vacuum that has a HEPA filter), and immediately dispose of the bag or canister contents.
- Be careful when using shared laundry facilities. Remove items from the dryer directly into a bag, and fold them at home.
- If you live in a multi-family building, try to isolate your unit by installing door sweeps, and by sealing cracks and crevices along shared walls, floors, and ceilings with a silicone sealant.

## What do I do if I find bed bugs in my bed?

**Do NOT throw away your bed—even if you find bed bugs on it!**

**It is important to remember that you do not need to throw away your bed—even if you find bed bugs on it.** You can continue to safely use your bed while your home has bed bugs and after you've gotten rid of them.

- Cover your mattresses (and box springs, if you have them) with high quality bed bug proof protectors, and never remove them. Bed bugs will be contained in the protectors and die. You can find protectors at stores that supply bedding like Walmart and Target, or online at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).
- Wash and dry all bedding on high heat.
- Take apart and clean bed frames thoroughly with hot, soapy water.
- Make your bed an island by moving it at least 6 inches away from the wall and removing everything under it. Place bed bug interceptors under each bed leg and tuck in all bedding, so it doesn't touch the floor. You can find interceptors at stores with pest management supplies like Walmart or Target, or online at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).
- Inspect other furniture and items around the bed, like bedside tables, lamps, pictures on the wall, clock radios, etc.
- Consult a pest management professional, and come up with a strategy to treat and eliminate the bed bugs in your home. There are many treatments that you can purchase and use on your own, but these are often unsafe and ineffective. For example, you should never use bed bug foggers or bombs.

*This information is from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Integrated Pest Management Program at Penn State. For additional details, please visit [www.epa.gov/bedbugs](http://www.epa.gov/bedbugs) and [www.extension.psu.edu/ipm](http://www.extension.psu.edu/ipm).*

One House at a Time (OHAAT) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its current focus is a program called Beds for Kids, which helps children and youth get the sleep they need to thrive.



**BEDS FOR KIDS**

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