

CONTROLLING YELLOWJACKETS AROUND YOUR HOME

YELLOWJACKET CONTROL IS EASY AS 1-2-3!

1. Keep them out

- Seal foundations, walls, roofs, and eaves
- Install fine mesh insect screens over attic and crawlspace vents
- Keep garbage cans clean and tightly covered

2. Trap them

- Set traps a few hours before you bring food outdoors, but away from picnic areas
- If a trap isn't working, move it to a new location
- Change the bait seasonally:
 - Protein in spring/summer
 - Sugar in late summer/fall

3. Start in spring

- Place traps in early spring to capture queens and reduce nests around your home throughout the summer

Wasps (even yellowjackets) are beneficial in the garden, pollinating flowers and eating other insects, including caterpillars and flies. But yellowjackets can be annoying and intimidating pests at picnics and around the barbecue, especially in late summer.

Before you take steps to get rid of yellowjackets, be sure you are correctly identifying the pest. Less aggressive flying insects, such as paper wasps, mud daubers, and honeybees, are often mistaken for yellowjackets.



Yellowjacket



Paper wasp



Yellowjacket nest



Paper wasp nest

QUICK TIP

Yellowjackets don't usually sting—unless their nest is disturbed by a direct blow or the yellowjackets inside detect vibrations. Mowing the lawn near an underground nest, construction work near a nest in a wall void, or even walking near a nest can provoke an attack by one or more yellowjackets. This is especially true if the nest has been disturbed before.

YELLOWJACKET OR PAPER WASP?

Most often, paper wasps are mistaken for yellowjackets. Yellowjackets are shorter and rounder than paper wasps. A paper wasp's body is longer and thinner, with long, dangling legs. Yellowjacket nests are round and are enclosed in a papery shell with a small entrance hole at the bottom. They build their nests in abandoned rodent burrows and other holes in the ground, in attics, in wall voids, and in shrubs and trees. Sometimes they hang their nests from eaves. Paper wasp nests usually hang from eaves or porch ceilings and look like tiny umbrellas filled with six-sided cells.

TRAPPING YELLOWJACKETS

Trapping can help control yellowjackets. You can find both disposable and reusable traps in home and garden centers.

- **Follow label directions** for setting traps, disposing of trapped yellowjackets, and cleaning reusable traps.
- **A few hours before you bring food outdoors, set traps around the edge of your yard.** Make sure traps are well away from picnic areas, to lure yellowjackets away from people and food.
- **If a trap is not attracting yellowjackets, move it.** If you see yellowjackets but none of the traps is attracting them, try changing the bait.
 - **In the spring and early summer, yellowjackets are looking for protein.** Use strong-smelling baits such as tuna-flavored cat food.
 - **In late summer and fall, yellowjackets need sugar and act more aggressively.** Use grenadine, or the sweet-smelling bait that comes with the traps.
- **Putting out traps in early spring may capture queens and reduce the number of nests in the area.**
- **For ground-nesting yellowjackets, call your county vector control for assistance.**



Use insect sprays as a last resort, and opt for a spray made with natural plant oils such as RESCUE W.H.Y. Spray or Zevo.

YELLOWJACKETS IN THE HOME

The first step to avoid yellowjackets is to keep them from building a nest in your house.



- **Seal holes and cracks in foundations, walls, roofs, and eaves.**
- **Cover attic and crawl space vents with fine mesh insect screen.**
- **Clean recyclables before throwing them in the bin and keep garbage cans clean and tightly covered.** Yellowjackets scavenge for meat and sweet foods and drinks in outdoor garbage and recycling bins.

If you often find yellowjackets in your home, you may have a nest inside your walls. Contact a pest control company that specializes in less-toxic pest control methods. Unless you have a large nest in your home, the pest control professional shouldn't need to use poison bait.

AVOIDING YELLOWJACKET STINGS

Swatting at yellowjackets may make them more likely to attack.

When a yellowjacket comes near:

- **Move slowly and try to stay calm.**
- **You can slowly brush a yellowjacket off with a piece of paper or some other object.**
- **Do not squash a yellowjacket.** When crushed, many kinds of yellowjackets give off a chemical that can cause other nearby yellowjackets to attack.
- **Wear shoes and a thick, long-sleeved shirt and pants when mowing grass** if you think there might be underground nests nearby.



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Our Water Our World (OWOW) is an award-winning partnership between municipal agencies and garden centers and hardware stores that sell pest control products. Initiated in 1998, the program focuses on less-toxic, eco-friendly products and techniques as many common pesticides are harmful to sensitive species and ecosystems when they reach California surface waters.

Our Water Our World fact sheets and store displays educate residents about less-toxic pest management. Look for the **Eco-friendly** tag next to less-toxic products in participating stores and nurseries.



Our Water Our World is a program of the California Stormwater Quality Association® (CASQA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that advances sustainable stormwater management protective of California water resources. CASQA is the registered service mark of the California Stormwater Quality Association®.

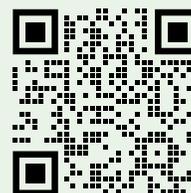
Pest control strategies and methods described in this publication are consistent with integrated pest management (IPM) concepts, and are based on scientific studies and tests in actual home and garden settings. Use suggested products according to label directions and dispose of unwanted or leftover pesticides at a household hazardous waste collection facility or event. For more information on pesticide disposal, visit www.earth911.com.

For more information, contact:

www.ourwaterourworld.org

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