



Alternatives to Pesticides

What are the alternatives?

Prior to the 1940s, synthetic pesticides did not exist. Instead, people created healthy and safe landscapes using cultural, biological, or mechanical methods. Many of these time-tested methods still work. Try them for yourself.

Cultural

- Use gardening techniques that encourage vigorous plant growth and discourage pests.
- Choose pest-resistant garden plants that provide habitat for wildlife. [Find local sources here](#)
- Plant a variety of species.
- Rotate crops regularly.
- Try companion-planting. It's a natural pest deterrent. For example, marigolds keep away many insects.
- Manage soil fertility, watering, and drainage to provide optimal growing conditions. Healthy plants are naturally more resistant to pests.

Biological Control

Welcome insects that eat or parasitize pests.

- Many insects are predatory and parasitic.
- Ladybugs control aphids.
 - Use nematodes to control unwanted pests.
 - For help, contact your local plant nursery

Attract helpful birds and bats

- Plant native flora. Native pest controllers love it.
- Install [bird nesting boxes and bat houses \[PDF - 2.3 MB\]](#)

Mechanical Control

Reduce pest habitat in your yard.

- Slugs, snails, and other pests like to hide.
- Get rid of debris, pots and boards and other objects.

Create barriers to stop slugs and snails.

- Crush eggshells and oyster shells.
- Use other prickly material.

Get physical.

- Hand crush insects on plants.

- Forcefully spray insects with water.

Reduce weed growth.

- Mulch between plants.
- Spreading cardboard or layers of newspaper between garden rows.
- Use cloth crop covers. Floating row covers keep pests away but allow light and moisture in.
- Hand-pull weeds. Do it before they go to seed for best results.
- Pour boiling water on the cut stalks of large, persistent weeds like thistles.

Prevent mildew on sensitive plants.

- Don't water your garden with an overhead sprinkler in the evening.

Natural Pest Control Products

Try using a commercially available insecticidal soap.

- Spray onto plants to safely control harmful bugs when required.

Natural homemade fungicides controls many problems.

- Black spot on roses.
- Blight on tomatoes.
- Mildew and rusts on other plants.

Fungicide Recipes

Baking Soda Option

- Combine 1 tablespoon each of baking soda and horticultural oil.
- Dilute in 4 litres of water.
- Spray on leaves.

Milk Option for Mildew

- Mix a 50/50 solution of milk and water.
- Thoroughly spray plants at first sign of mildew.
- Repeat every 3 to 4 days.
- You can also use this weekly as a preventative measure.

Contact Us

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