

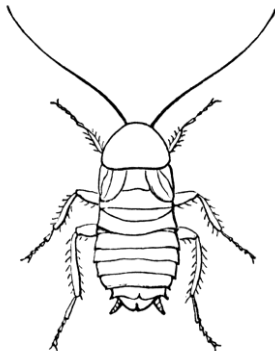


## Cockroaches

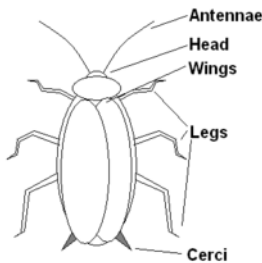
Seven species of cockroach occur in California, but only three of these show up regularly in complaints to our office. These are the German cockroach, the Oriental cockroach, and the Turkestan cockroach. Of these three the German cockroach is the worst for indoor infestations. German cockroaches multiply rapidly and are hard to eliminate and control. Oriental and Turkestan cockroaches occur more regularly outside the home and usually show up inside only incidentally.

### How to Recognize a Cockroach

Adult cockroaches have wings that cover their bodies, but young cockroaches have short wings that let the abdominal segments show.



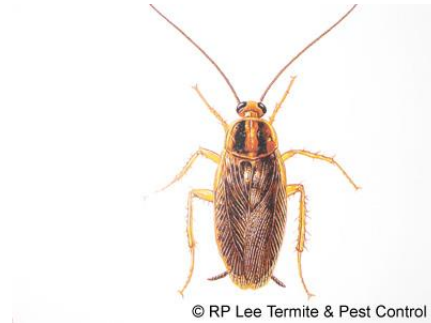
Young cockroach



Adult cockroach

In both cases there are two peg-like structures (cerci) at the end of the abdomen. These are very sensitive to air movements and help the cockroach to escape from predators.

### German Cockroach



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The German cockroach is smaller (1/2 inch) than the Oriental and Turkestan cockroaches. They have dark brown bands on the area behind their heads.

### Oriental Cockroach



The Oriental cockroach grows up to an inch long, and is dark brown to almost black. They are also known as waterbugs. Oriental cockroaches do not fly.



### **Turkestan Cockroach**



The Turkestan cockroach is fairly new to California, but seems to be spreading actively. It is similar to the American cockroach, but smaller. It is about 1 inch in length, while the American cockroach can grow up to 2 inches long. Adult male Turkestan cockroaches can fly. Turkestan cockroaches are light brown in color and prefer moist locations like water meter boxes, sewer lines and compost piles.

### **Cockroach Control**

Elimination of food, water and hiding places is an essential component of cockroach control. Spraying alone will not control an infestation. Proper sanitation helps to remove even the small crumbs that cockroaches can live on. Food can be stored in insect-proof containers. Leaking plumbing and condensation provide water for cockroaches. Hiding places are provided by trash, newspaper, piles of paper bags or boxes. Even if all such clutter is removed, cockroaches can still hide in cracks and crevices, especially cracks between baseboards and floors.

Sealing cracks and conduits, and weather stripping doors and windows helps to block

access from outside. Insecticide powder formulations containing boric acid can be applied around baseboards and areas that can't be sealed. As long as it remains dry, boric acid clings to the cockroaches that ingest it and are poisoned.

Chemical control alone will not eliminate a serious infestation. It must be combined with sanitation and exclusion methods. Oriental cockroaches seldom cause major indoor infestations, but usually blunder inside from irrigated areas. Turkestan cockroaches are increasing in population and are displacing Oriental cockroaches. They also may occur incidentally indoors or they may create more of a problem. The German cockroach is responsible for the worst indoor infestations and will require chemical control. German cockroaches can spread disease and cause asthma in children and allergic people. For large or complex cockroach infestations it is best to consult a licensed professional pest control business. They are found in the yellow pages under pest control.

Chemical control options include dusts with boric acid or insecticide ingredients; baits, either in bait stations or in gel form which can be injected into cracks and crevices; and sprays and aerosols (foggers or bug bombs). Baits provide good long term control. Baits combined with dusts applied to cracks and other hiding places can be very effective. Insecticide sprays provide quick knock-down but little long term control. Aerosols are very ineffective, as cockroaches will flee into deeper recesses and wait them out. When using any

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*"What's Bugging You?"*



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Loren Gehrung, Ag. Biologist III  
pesticide product ALWAYS READ AND  
FOLLOW THE LABEL.

For in-depth information on cockroach  
control see:  
[http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNO  
TES/pn7467.html](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNO<br/>TES/pn7467.html)