

You can have pests on your indoor plants even if you are taking the best of care for them. How do we control them. There are chemical methods and nonchemical methods to use.

Many insect problems on indoor plants can be managed using nonchemical methods, particularly if the infestation is minor.

#### Washing

- Wipe leaves with a damp paper towel, changing towels often to prevent spread.
- Spray small plants in a sink.
- Spray large plants in a shower.

#### Physically remove pests

- Handpick large pests such as [earwigs](#), caterpillars, [slugs](#) and [millipedes](#).
- Small numbers of scale insects can be removed using a fingernail file or something similar.
- Mealybugs can be removed using tweezers or a cotton swab dipped in alcohol.
- Some pests can be removed using a forceful spray of water.
- Repot with new potting soil to eliminate soil-borne pests. Use clean pots and wash soil off plant roots.

#### Pruning

- Prune if a pest issue is isolated to a few leaves, stems or branches.
- When infestations are more widespread, prune the most severely infested plant parts. This makes it easier to manage pests on the remaining plant.
- In the case of severe infestations and depending on the type of plant, cutting it back may help eliminate pests.
- Watch new growth for signs of infestation.

#### Throw away or compost plant

- Necessary and economical if the plant is heavily infested and badly damaged.
- Avoids exposing other plants to the same pest problem.