

Killing Aphids Naturally: How To Get Rid Of Aphids Safely

By Jackie Carroll

Yellowing and distorted leaves, stunted growth and an unsightly black sticky substance on the plant may mean that you have aphids. Aphids feed on a wide range of plants, and in severe cases the plant fails to thrive. As they feed, they secrete a sticky substance, called [honeydew](#) ^[1], which quickly becomes infested with [black sooty mold](#) ^[2]. They also spread viruses, many of which are incurable. For this reason, it's important to take steps toward controlling aphids in the garden.

How to Get Rid of Aphids Naturally

Killing aphids naturally is not only better for the environment, it's also more effective. Aphids don't respond well to insecticides, but you can get them under control by taking advantage of their weaknesses and making a few changes in the way you manage your garden.

Aphids have a number of natural enemies, and these insects are much better at controlling aphids than any other method available to gardeners. Pampering and nurturing their natural enemies is an excellent method of organic aphid control. Introduce beneficial bugs, like [lacewings](#) ^[3] and [ladybugs](#) ^[4], to your garden as a natural way to kill aphids. Nearby plantings of [mint](#) ^[5], [fennel](#) ^[6], [dill](#) ^[7], [yarrow](#) ^[8], and [dandelions](#) ^[9] will help attract these insects to your garden.

Pesticides are more likely to kill the predatory insects than the aphids, so the insect population usually increases after spraying. Using natural ways to kill aphids preserves the insects' natural enemies while creating a hostile environment for aphids.

While predatory insects are bent on destroying aphids, ants in the garden are their sworn protectors. Ants feed on the honeydew produced by aphids, so it is in their best interest to defend this precious resource. [Getting rid of the ants](#) ^[10] so that the predatory insects can do their job is an important part of a good aphid control program.

Control ants by trimming the lower parts of the plant so that they don't touch the ground and give ants easy access. Coat the lower part of the stem with a sticky substance to prevent the ants from climbing. You can apply the sticky substance directly to the trunk of thick-barked trees and shrubs. Wrap the stems of other plants in tape and apply the product to the tape rather than the stem. Most of the time, however, the use of an organic aphid control pesticide, such as [neem oil](#) ^[11], will take care of the ants as well.

Organic Aphid Control

Killing aphids naturally is better for your plants, the environment and beneficial bugs in your garden. Here are some natural deterrents for controlling aphids.

Grow young plants under [row covers](#) ^[12]. Remember to remove the covers when the plants begin to flower.

Use aluminum foil or reflective mulch on the ground beneath the plants. While you may not want to do this in your flower garden, reflective mulch in the vegetable garden is a very effective deterrent.

A strong spray of water from a hose will knock many of the aphids off the plant, and they won't be able to return. It also rinses off some of the honeydew. Spray the plant every day until the plant is aphid free.

Grow plants for a homemade aphid control. Plants such as the following are attractive to aphids and good for organic aphid control. Growing these far from other garden plants will lure aphids away and keep the garden aphid-free.

- [Nasturtium](#) ^[13]
- [Aster](#) ^[14]
- [Mum](#) ^[15]
- [Cosmos](#) ^[16]
- [Hollyhock](#) ^[17]
- [Larkspur](#) ^[18]
- [Tuberous begonia](#) ^[19]
- [Verbena](#) ^[20]
- [Dahlia](#) ^[21]
- [Zinnia](#) ^[22]

You can also try planting [garlic](#) ^[23] or [onions](#) ^[24] near infested plants, as the smell drives aphids away.

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[7] dill: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/dill/tips-on-how-to-grow-dill-weed-plants.htm>

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[9] dandelions:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/dandelion/growing-dandelion.htm>

[10] Getting rid of the ants: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/pests/insects/keeping-ants-off-flowers.htm>

[11] neem oil: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/pests/pesticides/neem-oil-uses.htm>

[12] row covers: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/vgen/row-covers-for-garden-plants.htm>

[13] Nasturtium:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/nasturtium/growing->

nasturtiums.htm

[14] Aster: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/asters/growing-asters.htm>

[15] Mum:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/chrysanthemum/growing-chrysanthemum-flowers.htm>

[16] Cosmos:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/cosmos/growing-cosmos.htm>

[17] Hollyhock:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/hollyhock/tips-on-hollyhocks-growing-hollyhocks-successfully.htm>

[18] Larkspur:

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[19] Tuberous begonia:

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[20] Verbena:

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[22] Zinnia:

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[23] garlic: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/garlic/growing-garlic.htm>

[24] onions: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/onion/find-how-to-grow-onions-in-your-garden.htm>

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