

Prevent Caterpillars In The Garden

By Kathleen Mierzejewski

After you plant your vegetable garden, you wait to see all your hard work come into play. The fruitfulness of the garden is definitely a reflection on the gardener. Therefore, you might be wondering, “How do I keep caterpillars out of my garden?” There are several ways to prevent caterpillars.

Thinking About How to Get Rid of Caterpillars

Caterpillars are the larvae of moths and butterflies. There are several different kinds of caterpillars and just as many different ways to prevent caterpillars. We can touch on some of them here, but not all!

If you want to stop caterpillars, you should know what kind of caterpillars you are dealing with. There is no sense thinking about how to get rid of caterpillars before you know what you are dealing with.

If you are trying to stop caterpillars that are pale green with stripes running down the back, you are trying to stop [cabbage loopers](#) ^[1]. These are the larvae of brown and green moths that have silver spots on their wings. They really like to eat [collard greens](#) ^[2], [kale](#) ^[3] and [lettuce](#) ^[4] leaves.

If you are trying to prevent caterpillars throughout August and September, you are probably looking at [corn earworms](#) ^[5]. These pests also like to eat [beans](#) ^[6], [lettuce leaves](#) ^[7] and [tomatoes](#) ^[8].

If you are looking at your freshly planted garden and notice that your new shoots are chewed off at the base, you are probably looking for a caterpillar remedy for [cutworms](#) ^[9]. These guys chew off the new seedlings at the base.

Killing Caterpillars

When you are planning on killing caterpillars and you want to keep your garden as organic as possible, you should find a way to stop caterpillars that stays within that

realm. For instance, you could take cardboard and place it around the base of all your plants. This takes time, and no one really knows how it works to prevent caterpillars, but it does work.

The timing with which you plant your garden helps to prevent caterpillars. A healthy garden grows quickly and strongly. If you plant your garden early and make sure your garden is fertilized and well taken care of, you will find that you have beaten the caterpillars to the punch.

Some people spend time picking the caterpillars out of their garden, but this is somewhat inefficient because you could pick 20 caterpillars out of your lettuce one day and the next go out there and find 20 more. If all else fails, you could use [*Bacillus thuringiensis*](#) ^[10], which is a naturally occurring soil bacteria that you can put in your garden. This is non-toxic to humans and animals, but the caterpillars will either stay away or die.

So, how do you keep caterpillars out of your garden? You can try one of these remedies or several others out there. However, you just might have to share a leaf or two!

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URLs in this post:

[1] cabbage loopers:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/cabbage/cabbage-looper-control.htm>

[2] collard greens:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/greens/growing-collard-greens.htm>

[3] kale: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/kale/growing-kale.htm>

[4] lettuce: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/lettuce/growing-lettuce.htm>

[5] corn earworms: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/pests/insects/corn-earworm-control.htm>

[6] beans:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/beans/information-on-common-bean-problems-tips-on-growing-beans.htm>

[7] lettuce leaves:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/lettuce/harvesting-leaf-lettuce.htm>

[8] tomatoes:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/tomato/tomato-hornworms-control.htm>

[9] cutworms: **<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/pests/insects/get-rid-cutworms.htm>**

[10] Bacillus thuringiensis: **<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/pests/pesticides/using-bacillus-thuringiensis.htm>**

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