

# Controlling Thrips – How To Get Rid Of Thrips

By Kathleen Mierzejewski

Thysanoptera, or thrips, are little slender insects that have fringed wings and feed on other insects by puncturing them and sucking out their insides. However, some of them also feed inside the buds and leaves of a plant. This causes distorted parts to the plant or black specks, which is actually the feces from the thrips. Stippled leaves or blossoms that die before opening are also a sign that you may have thrips.

## Not All Thrips on Flowers Are Bad

If you are wondering how to kill thrips, insecticides work. The problem with killing them is that you will accidentally kill things that are beneficial to your plants. This includes some species of thrips. Therefore, you want to form a plan of thrip control because controlling thrips is much better for your plants than getting rid of thrips altogether.

There are other pests that can cause damage similar to that of thrips. This might be [mites](#) <sup>[1]</sup> or [lace bugs](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. Make sure that pest thrips are the thrips you have before you take any action to start thrip control so you know what you are doing will kill the actual problem. [Some thrips are beneficial](#) <sup>[3]</sup> because they kill other pests to your plants, so you want some thrips on flowers. However, the bad ones need to be controlled and there are some specific ways to go about controlling thrips.

## How to Kill Thrips

When you are performing thrip control, realize that controlling thrips is not always the easiest thing to do. You could use pesticides, but you don't want to rid the plant of the beneficial thrips. You should use control strategies that include the least toxic insecticides along with making sure you use good cultural practices, such as providing consistent watering and cleaning up dead or diseased plant material.

When controlling thrips, you can prune and get rid of any injured areas on the plant. Regular pruning helps get rid of thrips. Thrips on flowers can be eliminated as soon as

you see signs of damage by using a mild insecticide like [insecticidal soap](#) <sup>[4]</sup> or [neem oil](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, or by pruning the flowers. You never want to shear your plants because the new growth caused by shearing will attract even more thrips than you had before shearing the plant.

So remember, controlling thrips is better than thinking about getting rid of thrips because when you get rid of thrips, you are will also be eliminating beneficial bugs to your plants as well. You do not want to do that. Protect the [beneficial bugs](#) <sup>[6]</sup>, and make sure you take care of eliminating thrips that are not beneficial by taking appropriate and safe measures.

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[2] lace bugs: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/pests/insects/what-are-lace-bugs.htm>

[3] Some thrips are beneficial: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/beneficial/natural-predator-for-thrips.htm>

[4] insecticidal soap: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/plant-problems/pests/pesticides/homemade-soap-spray.htm>

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