

Spiders

Spiders are mostly beneficial because they feed on pest insects. However, many people think that all spiders are dangerous and aggressive. In Washington, there are no indigenous spiders on the CDC list of poisonous spiders. Spiders seen out in the open during the day are unlikely to bite people. Focus pest management efforts on removing webs and hiding places. Pesticides alone will not resolve spider issues.

What to know about spider bites

- The jaws of most spiders are too small to bite humans.
- Adult female black widows are the main spiders capable of causing injury in individuals, but are not indigenous to Pacific Northwest, although a few might be found traveling from the eastern side of the state from the high desert area.
- Anyone bitten by a spider should remain calm and carry the offending spider with them to visit their physician.
- The brown recluse spider does not live in Washington. Only one has been found in the state in the last 15 years.
- Some other spiders bite when trapped in clothing or bedding, but the effect is usually no more severe than itching or the reaction to a bee sting.

To prevent spiders from entering your building, take these steps:

- Seal building foundation cracks and other access holes.
- Inspect window and door screens for good seals to keep out spiders and the insects they prey on.
- Keep areas around home foundations free of clutter.

Manage spiders using these tips:

- Indoors, regular sanitation provides adequate spider control.
- Vacuum up the spider and its web.
- Alternatively, squash spiders or capture them in a jar and release them outside.
- Prevent clutter buildup that can provide spider hiding places both indoors and out.
- Remove spider webs and egg sacks from the exterior of the house with a broom or high pressure hose.

Spiders and biological control

When removing spiders, don't overlook the fact that spiders eat a large number and variety of nuisance and pest insects. Spiders also have natural enemies — wasps, other spiders, birds, reptiles, and others — that sometimes keep them from becoming too numerous.



Minimize the use of pesticides that pollute our waterways. Use non-chemical alternatives or less toxic pesticide products whenever possible.

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