

Further Advice

If you wish, you may get a private pest control company to help you.

The following companies are based locally and will charge for their services:

Rentokil:

0800 218 2210 (Residential)

0800 917 1989 (Commercial)

WIES (Western Isles Environmental Services)

07831 295 158

Hebridean Pest Control

07508 454 043

E-mail: info@hebrideanpestcontrol.co.uk

Pestrid

01851 643456 or 07825 542 892

Stornoway Grounds Maintenance

0800 182 2733

Colin Newton, Uist Pest Control

07824 905 709

Alternatively, if you wish to tackle the problem yourself you can buy suitable pesticides specially designed for bedbugs from DIY stores, Garden Centres and Supermarkets.

Please read and follow instructions carefully to ensure safe and effective use and never use them directly on clothes, bedlinen or your mattress



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Pest Control

Advice and Guidance on Bedbugs



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

What are bedbugs?

They are small, blood sucking insects that are attracted by body heat and carbon dioxide. They usually feed at night and are commonly found around beds, hence the name.

Adult bedbugs are visible to the naked eye. They are oval-shaped, flat and up to 5mm long. Their colour can vary between dark yellow, red or brown.

Their eggs are white specks which stick to surfaces and are very difficult to spot. They hatch after about 10 days to form tiny straw-coloured insects which take about six to eight weeks to grow into adults.

As they grow, they shed their skin, which leaves mottled brown shells. Adults can survive for up to a year without feeding.

Because their bodies are flat, bedbugs can squeeze into the smallest crevice or crack, such as a mattress seam or the joints of a bed frame. This can make them very difficult to spot.

They tend to prefer fabric or wood over plastic and metal, and often hide near to where you sleep. However they are also often found in other furniture, along carpet edges and even behind mirrors or inside smoke alarms — almost anywhere in a bedroom where they won't be disturbed.

Evidence of bedbugs

Evidence of bedbug activity includes:

- Unexplained skin rash or itchy bumps
- Live or dead bedbugs, mottled shells they have shed, and hatched or unhatched eggs
- Blood spotting — most frequently seen on bed linen, but also along mattress seams and others places bedbugs can hide
- Sickly sweet coriander/almond-like smell in rooms with large infestations

How are they spread?

Once introduced into your home, bedbugs can spread easily from room to room. They don't jump or fly, but can crawl quickly.

Bedbugs can soon spread within a building by getting through holes in walls or pipes.

The bugs can also be transported in luggage, clothing, furniture and bedding from one building to the next.

They're not attracted to dirt, so a bedbug infestation isn't a sign of an unclean home. Bedbugs may be found in all types of housing, but are more common in short-term accommodation such as hotels or hostels.

Tips to avoid an infestation

- Inspect your mattress regularly for common signs
- Avoid buying second-hand mattresses
- Be wary of old beds you might be using in rented accommodation
- Keep your bedroom tidy and remove clutter

Treatment options

Some things you can do include:

- Wash infested clothes and bedlinen at 60°C, or put them in a dryer on a hot setting for 30 minutes to kill the bugs
- Dismantle your bed and furniture, and closely inspect every seam, crevice and joint using a bright torch
- Use the hose on your vacuum to suck up any bugs you can see. Dispose of the contents of the vacuum cleaner in a sealed bag
- Throw away your mattress if it is heavily infested

Note that insecticide sprays may become less effective as the bugs build resistance to them.

Treating the bites

If you develop very itchy bumps, visit your GP or local pharmacist for treatment advice.

More information on insect bites in general is available at www.nhs24.com

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