

# Organic Pest Control

Manage pests without synthetic chemical pesticides

**DIFFICULTY** Easy-moderate  
**TYPE** Ongoing practice  
**TIME** Varies by method



**DIFFICULTY**  
Easy-moderate



**TIME**  
Varies



**COST**  
Low



**BEST SEASON**  
Growing season



**FREQUENCY**  
As needed,  
checked weekly

## 01 Layered defence, not a single fix

Effective organic pest control usually combines several light-touch approaches — physical barriers, hand-picking, encouraging predators, and targeted organic sprays — rather than relying on one method alone.



ladybird preys on aphids

pest on the plant, beneficial moves in

## 02 What you'll need

- Netting or row covers for physical exclusion
- A basic organic spray (e.g. soap spray, neem oil) for targeted outbreaks
- A regular inspection habit
- Companion plants that attract beneficial insects

## 03 Method

1. Inspect plants regularly — early detection makes every other method more effective.
2. Use physical barriers (netting, collars, row covers) to prevent problems before they start.
3. Hand-pick larger pests (caterpillars, beetles) where practical — effective at a garden scale.
4. Encourage beneficial insects with diverse, flowering companion plants.
5. Use targeted organic sprays only where needed, and only on the affected plants, to minimise harm to beneficials.

## 04 Troubleshooting

- **Spray not working** — check it's the right product for the actual pest identified, and that coverage (including leaf undersides) is thorough.
- **Beneficial insects disappearing** — even organic sprays can harm beneficials; use sparingly and as a last resort rather than routinely.
- **Pest returns quickly after treatment** — treat the underlying cause (plant stress, overcrowding) as well as the immediate pest.
- **Can't identify the pest** — take a clear photo and compare against reliable identification resources before treating — treatment differs significantly by pest type.

## 05 Timing & maintenance

|                  |                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BEST TIME        | Prevention (barriers, healthy soil, diverse planting) works best set up before problems appear; reactive treatment as issues arise. |
| DURATION         | An ongoing, season-long practice rather than a single intervention.                                                                 |
| MAINTENANCE      | Weekly inspection is the single most valuable habit — most problems are far easier to manage caught early.                          |
| SIGNS OF SUCCESS | Pest damage stays at a tolerable, minor level rather than escalating to serious crop loss.                                          |

## 06 Tips & variations

### PAIRS WELL WITH

[Beneficial Insects](#)

[Companion Planting Principles](#)

### COMMON MISTAKES

Reaching for a spray before trying physical or biological methods first

Spraying broadly rather than targeting the specific affected plants

### PRO TIP

A strong, healthy, well-fed plant resists pest and disease pressure far better than a stressed one — good soil is itself a form of pest control.