

# Cockroaches



In Britain, only two species of cockroach are generally found – the German cockroach and the Oriental cockroach.

The German cockroach prefers warm, moist environments, particularly heating systems in large buildings, bakeries and so on. German cockroaches can swim and can easily climb smooth surfaces. The insect is often difficult to get rid of as it hides in places that are hard to reach.

The German cockroach is 12 to 15 millimetres long, mid-brown, with a yellow/brown thorax that has two dark brown stripes, and long antennae. It can fly but does not do so often. The wings are full length in the male but two-thirds length in the female.

The female cockroach produces an egg case which can contain 30 to 40 eggs. The eggs develop for two to four weeks, depending on the temperature, and hatch as nymphs, which are pure white at first but then quickly turn brown. These nymphs shed their skin a number of times, growing larger each time, and the adult cockroach emerges three to six months later.

Adult cockroaches are not active during the day but they look for food and water at night.

Cockroaches feed on any form of organic material, including human waste.



***German cockroach***  
(not actual size)



***Oriental cockroach***  
(not actual size)

As they need water, during the day they normally hide in the area around taps, sinks, drains and other water sources.

The Oriental cockroach is also very common in Britain, mainly in heated buildings. It is often associated with hospitals, hotels, restaurants, prisons and blocks of flats. It is sometimes found outdoors around dustbins and rubbish tips.

The Oriental cockroach is 17 to 30 millimetres long, dark brown to black, very shiny, and with a flattened body and a long flexible antennae. They cannot fly or climb smooth surfaces, but they can move very quickly.

The female Oriental cockroach can lay up to five dark-brown egg cases, each containing up to 18 eggs.

These eggs take several weeks to develop and hatch as nymphs. The nymphs go through up to 10 stages before becoming adults.

Adult Oriental cockroaches normally hide by day and look for food at night. They feed on any organic matter, including human waste, soap, candles, paper and so on.

**Both species of cockroach can carry and spread diseases. If you discover a cockroach, you should take action as soon as possible**

**Pest control officers will carry out treatment to control cockroaches. There is a charge for this service**

## Treatment

Treatment consists of using gel which kills the adult. Cockroaches are cannibals, so they eat the poisoned dead bodies and are poisoned themselves.

For treatment to be successful, areas such as the kitchen must be spotlessly clean so that there is nothing for cockroaches to eat other than dead bodies.

Cockroaches' favourite hiding place is behind fridges, as they like the heat from the motor. So, it is important to move the fridge and freezer and clean behind them, before the treatment.

## Fees and charges

We have negotiated treatment at a reduced charge for residents who pay Council Tax to Rochford District Council. For a full list of our fees and charges please visit our Pest Control page on our website at [www.rochford.gov.uk/pestcontrol](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/pestcontrol) or phone our customer services team on 01702 318111.

The reduced rate is not available for treatment if any part of the property is used for business purposes (this may include areas such as corridors and hallways shared by more than one household).

You may be able to get help with the cost of treatment if you are receiving certain state benefits. Please phone us on 01702 318111 to see if you qualify.

### Rochford District Council

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Email: [customerservices@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@rochford.gov.uk)

Website: [www.rochford.gov.uk/pestcontrol](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/pestcontrol)

If you would like this information in large print, Braille or another language phone us on  
**01702 318111**