

HOW TO (ACTUALLY) GET RID OF FRUIT FLIES



Fruit flies are [the worst](#). One day, you have a perfectly lovely banana sitting on your counter, and the next, you're hosting a bed and breakfast for a colony of vermin, and they are overstaying their welcome.

Fruit flies can pop up at any time of year, but they are especially common in the summer months when there are generally more fruits and vegetables ripening. They lay eggs on rotting or fermenting food, which hatch into hundreds of larvae. Then those larvae lay eggs, and then those larvae lay eggs, and before you know it you have to move and surrender your home over to the flies.

Luckily, before you give up your keys, there are a few things you can do to get rid of the little suckers. If you follow these steps, you'll significantly reduce the numbers of these little tyrants and take back your kitchen.

Prevention

It's much easier to stop the fruit flies from settling down in your space if your kitchen is clean and tidy. Start by cleaning up any areas where food might collect and break down. That means keeping your garbage outside or in a container with a well-fitting lid. Throw your food scraps in a compost bag and keep that in the freezer, rather than letting it sit out at room temperature. Flush out the drains of your sink in case old food has collected there.

If you normally keep fruits and veggies on the counter, try moving them to cooler spots or covering them, especially fruits with a high sugar content that ripen quickly. Try keeping your bananas and tomatoes in a cool drawer or under a dome. Yes, tomato drawers are a thing.



Photo by Catherine Powell/Shutterstock

How to Trap Fruit Flies

If fruit flies do make your kitchen their hangout spot, there are ways to trap them. They like fermented fruit, so mix a bit of dish soap with old beer, wine or apple cider vinegar. Pour water into the mixture until it bubbles, and leave the glass or bowl on the counter where you spot the flies. They'll come to the glass because of the fruit sugar, but get trapped in the soap bubbles. You can also fit plastic wrap over the top of a beer bottle or glass of vinegar, and poke a few holes in it. Fruit flies can get in, but they can't fly out.

If you're looking for a solution with alcohol, there are commercial traps available, or you can make your own spray by mixing isopropyl alcohol and water. That should kill the flies on contact.

If All Else Fails...

Wait them out. Fruit flies only live for about two weeks, and when temperatures get cooler, they don't survive long. You can have the sweet satisfaction of watching them drop off as summer turns to fall. Sip your pumpkin spice latte and grin, knowing you've outlasted the beasts for another season. Who's in charge now, fly?

The gross reality is that fruit flies are mostly just annoying, but they do pose slight health risks. They can transport bacteria or germs as they land on food and surfaces in your home, which can

occasionally lead to health issues. If you clean up an area with a lot of flies, you should wash your hands well afterwards, and wash any fruits and vegetables that are still on your counters before eating them.