



How to Get Rid of Weevils (Flour Bugs)

User
Reviewed

Have you found creepy crawlies in your pantry? Don't wait; they lay *many* eggs! Here is how to remove weevils and keep them away.

Steps

- 1 Freeze the flour.** As soon as you bring flour home, seal it inside a freezer bag and put it in the freezer for 96 hours (four days).^[1] Remove and store as usual. The freezing process will kill off any eggs and weevils already present in the flour.
- 2 Place a dried bay leaf in each container or bag of stored flour.** This will discourage weevil infestation.^[2]
- 3 Keep flour in canister type containers with lids.**^[3] Storing flour in a container with a lid can prevent spread of weevil infestations through the pantry.
- 4 Use flour regularly.** Leaving flour in the pantry too long will encourage pest infestation. The faster it is used, the fresher it is, and the fewer the chances for infestation.
 - Purchase only the amounts of flour that you'll use within a month or two. Any more than this and you risk weevil infestation.
 - Rotate older products to the front and newer ones to the back so that you're always using up older products first.
- 5 If you discover an infestation, stay calm.** You won't get much done if you're shrieking and acting all grossed out. The bugs will not bite, sting, or harm you.
- 6 Remove all food from the cabinet or pantry.** Throw away all food that is or might be contaminated. In addition to flour, be sure to check your sugar, grains, dried beans and legumes, and breakfast cereals for signs of weevils.
- 7 Clean shelves and containers thoroughly after an infestation.**
 - Remove shelf paper (if necessary).
 - Wipe all areas clean with soapy water. Get into all corners and crevices.
 - Rinse with water. Bleach, if preferred.
 - Wipe the area with eucalyptus oil or ti-tree oil to discourage weevils from resurfacing.
- 8 Once the shelves have dried, reline them with shelf paper.**
- 9 Put all the food back.** To deter future infestation, place a few bay leaves in both the cabinet and the canisters.

Community Q&A

Why do weevils come from?



Weevils typically hatch out of eggs that already have been laid in the foods you buy, such as rice or flour.

M Mourlam

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 1

Helpful 9

I sealed the crevices with sealer. I checked this morning and found a few, but not a lot. So what can I do next?

M Mourlam

Clean the area as instructed above until you do not see them anymore. You can also try 'pantry pest' traps that use a food-based goo to trap the weevils.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 7 Helpful 26

I had an item filled with wheat that I stored in my closet, it got weevils and although I have removed it I still find them. How can I get them out of my closet, what pesticide would work?

wikiHow Contributor

Clean out the whole area and throw away any other food that is open and attracting the weevils. Wash down the cupboard sides, base and ceiling areas with a strong cleaner or disinfectant wash. You could even make a light mixture of Dawn and Clorox. Then get some eucalyptus oil and mix a little with warm water and wipe down all areas again. Reline areas if desired or just leave bare. Regular cleaning of cupboards and freezing all grain products will help too.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 16 Helpful 42

If I am using a food saver, how long will the flour last?

wikiHow Contributor

A food saver will only prevent insects from entering the flour. It will not deter any insects that might already be in the flour. Unfortunately, there are eggs in most grain items, so the food saver will not help with them--you freeze the flour first for 96 hours and then package it with the food saver.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 17 Helpful 41

How do I get rid of weevils that are already in the food?

wikiHow Contributor

Just put your flour through a sifter--the weevils are too big to go through the holes. Then freeze as outlined above to destroy any eggs and place a bay leaf in the container of the newly sifted flour. Don't be concerned that these have contaminated your flour and that the flour must be discarded. There is already a certain amount of eggs when the flour is new and most all grain items will contain a minute amount of infestation--and still meet FDA standards. Our pioneer ancestors dealt with this all the time--they just accepted some addition protein.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 20 Helpful 46

What do the tiny black bugs look like?

Rosy hary

Their bodies are shaped like a cockroach, but they are similar in size to a small ant.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 3 Helpful 12

I saw live weevils in the bottom of my grocery bag. I checked all the boxed and bagged items as I unloaded, and put everything into the freezer. Will this kill the live bugs I may have missed?

M Mourlam

Freezing everything should kill the bugs. Make sure to clean everything thoroughly after taking it out of the freezer, to get rid of the bugs that died.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 4 Helpful 14

Do weevils hatch into flying insects like small moths or is this likely to be something else?

wikiHow Contributor

Yes, some kinds of weevils are flying insects. No, they don't look like moths. They're actually a type of beetle. You're more likely dealing with pantry moths, which are a similar nuisance to weevils. When you see one, make sure to find and kill as many as you can; they are very hard to get rid of once they multiply.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 9 Helpful 24

I don't have any food at all, but I still have weevils. What do I do?

M Mourlam

Weevils can still be seen for a time after ridding the area of anything contaminated. Continue to clean the area once in a while until the infestation is gone.

Flag as duplicate

Not Helpful 5 Helpful 9

Tips

- Do not throw contaminated food away in a kitchen. Throw it outside, or else your problem may come back.
- Return flour when weevils appear in it only a few weeks after purchase; this means it was milled at least half a year ago and is old stock.
- Pyrethrin can be sprayed on the shelves, but all food and containers must be removed first. Be sure to follow the waiting period specified on the pyrethrin product label before returning food to the treated shelves.
- Use a flour sifter to remove the obvious weevils.
- It is possible to eat flour that has obvious weevils in it; it's simply "insect protein." You've already eaten non-obvious weevils without knowing it, as they're present in most flour in the form of eggs and exoskeletons.^[4] Doing so grosses out a

lot of people, though, including vegetarians! It won't harm you; it just depends on how frugal, iron-stomached, or desperate you're feeling!

- Don't microwave the flour; weevils survive and simply run everywhere. If you want to use heat, use the oven. Place the flour in the oven at 130°F/54.4°C for half an hour^[5], or 120°F / 48.8°C for one hour.^[6]

Warnings

- If you vacuum the shelves, empty the bag outside and get rid of the contents immediately.
- Remove old contact paper and replace it with a new one. Otherwise, weevils might hide under it.

Things You'll Need

- Storage containers
- Plastic freezer bags
- Bay leaves

Sources and Citations

1. Phillip Glogoza, Bugs in Your Cupboards, <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/home/e300w.htm>
2. Hanna McAbbot, *Kitchen Hints & Tips*, p.70, (1990), ISBN 1-86282-066-X
3. Phillip Glogoza, Bugs in Your Cupboards, <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/home/e300w.htm>

[Show more... \(3\)](#)

Made Recently

Did you try these steps?
Upload a picture for other readers to see.