

Keep German Cockroaches Out

A Cockroach Prevention Checklist for Businesses

Check your facility with this list weekly in food areas and monthly everywhere else.



German cockroaches are the most common cockroach found in restaurants, kitchens, and other commercial buildings. Unlike many pests, they rarely walk in from outdoors. They hitchhike in on boxes, deliveries, used equipment, and personal belongings, then settle into warm, tight cracks near food and water. They reproduce quickly, spread bacteria, can trigger allergies and asthma, and a single sighting during a health inspection can be costly. Use this checklist to stop them at the door and give them nowhere to settle.

1. Deliveries & Incoming Goods

- ☐ **Inspect every delivery.** Check boxes, cases, and crates for live roaches, droppings, and egg cases before bringing them in.
- ☐ **Unpack in one area.** Receive and unpack deliveries in a designated spot, not directly in the kitchen or storage room.
- ☐ **Get rid of cardboard.** Move products into clean storage and break down and remove cardboard right away. Roaches hide in corrugated layers.
- ☐ **Inspect used equipment.** Examine secondhand appliances, furniture, and electronics carefully before they enter the building.
- ☐ **Watch personal items.** Discourage storing bags, lunch boxes, and backpacks in kitchen or food storage areas.

2. Seal Hiding Places

- ☐ **Caulk cracks and crevices.** Seal gaps around sinks, counters, backsplashes, baseboards, and cabinet edges.
- ☐ **Seal utility openings.** Close gaps where pipes, conduit, and wires pass through walls, floors, and under sinks.
- ☐ **Repair walls and floors.** Fix loose tile, damaged grout, peeling wall coverings, and holes in drywall.
- ☐ **Check equipment hiding spots.** Roaches hide in motor housings, hinges, door gaskets, and control panels on warm equipment.
- ☐ **Replace worn gaskets.** Repair torn cooler and freezer door gaskets, where roaches like to hide.
- ☐ **Reduce clutter.** Remove unused equipment, stored decorations, and stacked papers that create hiding spots.

3. Take Away Water

- ☐ **Fix leaks.** Repair dripping faucets, leaking pipes, and ice machine or dish machine lines right away.
- ☐ **Dry sinks at night.** Wipe down sinks and counters and do not leave standing water overnight.
- ☐ **Manage condensation.** Insulate sweating pipes and check refrigeration and HVAC condensate lines.
- ☐ **Keep mop areas dry.** Empty mop buckets, hang mops to dry, and keep the mop sink area clean.
- ☐ **Clean floor drains.** Scrub drains and covers regularly to remove buildup and standing water.

4. Kitchen & Equipment Cleaning

- ☐ **Pull out equipment.** Move cooking equipment, shelving, and coolers on a schedule to clean behind and underneath.
- ☐ **Degrease.** Remove grease from hoods, fryers, grills, walls, and the cooking line. Grease is a food source.
- ☐ **Clean the small spaces.** Clean inside drawers, cabinets, and under prep tables and storage racks.
- ☐ **Store food sealed.** Keep dry goods in sealed, hard-sided containers and off the floor on clean shelving.
- ☐ **Clean dining and break areas nightly.** Wipe tables and booths, sweep under seating, and do not leave food or dishes out overnight.
- ☐ **Clean beverage stations.** Clean soda fountains, coffee stations, and drip trays, where sugary spills build up.

5. Trash & Recycling

- ☐ **Use lined, lidded bins.** Keep lids closed and empty indoor trash at the end of every shift or day.
- ☐ **Wash the cans.** Clean trash cans and recycling bins regularly to remove residue.
- ☐ **Rinse recyclables.** Rinse bottles, cans, and food containers before storing them.
- ☐ **Keep dumpster areas clean.** Keep lids closed and clean up spills around dumpsters and grease bins.

6. Watch for Warning Signs

- ☐ **Know what to look for.** German cockroaches are about 1/2 inch long, light brown, with two dark stripes just behind the head.
- ☐ **Droppings.** Small, dark specks like ground pepper in drawers, on shelves, and along cabinet hinges.
- ☐ **Egg cases.** Light brown, purse-shaped capsules about 1/4 inch long. Each one can hold 30 to 40 eggs.
- ☐ **Shed skins and odor.** Shed skins in cracks, and a musty, oily smell in heavier infestations.
- ☐ **Daytime sightings.** Roaches hide during the day. Seeing one in daylight usually means a larger population is present.

7. Make It a Routine

- ☐ **Assign responsibility.** Name one person to complete this checklist and report problems.
- ☐ **Train your staff.** Make sure employees know the warning signs and report every sighting with the date and location.
- ☐ **Skip store-bought sprays and foggers.** They often scatter roaches deeper into walls and can keep professional baits from working.
- ☐ **Use professional monitoring with U.S. Pest.** Monitoring traps, targeted baits, and regular service by a licensed professional catch problems early.
- ☐ **Keep records.** Log inspections, sightings, cleaning, and service visits. Many health and food safety audits ask for them.
- ☐ **Act quickly.** German cockroaches multiply fast. Call a professional at the first sign of activity.

Spotted a cockroach? Don't wait.

A professional inspection can find hiding places and activity you may miss.

Call 615-590-1260 | U.S. Pest Protection Inc.