



Home Termite Control

Handouts

Presented By: Brad Anderson

Table of Contents

How to distinguish ants and termites.....	3
Life Cycle of Termites.....	3
Termite Prevention: How to Control Termites at Home	4
Termite Treatment: A Guideline to Basic Types of Termite Treatments.....	6
Termites FAQs: Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions about Termites.....	8
Prevention and eradication of other home pests.....	10



How to distinguish ants and termites

People often confuse ants and termites. Both insects live in social colonies, and may take up residence in or near your home. Knowing how to identify ants and termites will help you decide when to call the exterminator. While they appear similar at first, a closer look reveals some distinct differences.

Differences between Ants and Termites Ants have elbowed antennae and obvious "waist" between the thorax and abdomen. Termites fore and hind wings are of the same size, where as ants fore wing is larger than its hind wing. Ants are generally darker than termites.

Life Cycle of Termites

Notorious for their destructive abilities, **termites have quite a fascinating life cycle** that integrates the caste system. And just like most common insects, they undergo metamorphosis stages—from egg, nymph, and adult.

First off, the **termite life cycle** starts during a mating flight, wherein winged reproductives or alates leave their original colony to procreate and establish a new colony. These flights happen during warm weather, usually in spring and autumn. Once an ideal nesting site is found, the mating pair (the new king and queen) land and shed their wings, hollow out a small mating chamber, and the queen starts to lay eggs.

These **termite eggs** then hatch into larvae and moult (shed exoskeletons) to assume the role of any of the three castes—workers, soldiers, and reproductives. Depending on which caste a **termite belongs**, it starts to develop physical features that come handy in accomplishing its caste's responsibilities. A nymph is a **young termite** that is moulting several times to become a reproductive. Development into adulthood usually takes several months, and is dependent on food, temperature and the size of the colony. To keep the colony's correct **balance of termites performing every duty**, the queen and or king termite produces hormones or pheromones that prevent the workers from becoming queens.

Also, since a **termite colony's** needs are constantly changing, a **termite's role** may as well change over time. If that's the case, a termite nymph may be developed into whichever form is required at the time. However, the king and queen termites remain to be the focal point of the termite life cycle, as they are exclusively in-charge of reproduction. The queen particularly, can produce around 10-20 eggs during the early phases of a colony, and increases to more than 1000 eggs daily after many years. In some mature colonies the queen can lay up to 30,000 eggs pr day.



Termite Prevention: How to Control Termites at Home

Termites have been around the earth for at least 250-million years. No matter how irritating these insects are, they actually play a significant part in decomposition process by breaking down dead wood in the jungle, which then speeds up the conversion of nutrients into the earth. Nevertheless, when they threaten our homes, it's not difficult to disregard their role in the environment.

So, you may be asking, "How to control termites at home?" Well, the best way to control termites is to keep them from showing up in and around your property. To avoid any impending termite problems, read on below some useful tips for termite prevention.

Moisture – Termites are crazy about moisture. So to control termites, it's crucial to remove damp areas in and around your house. The drier your exterior is, the less likely termites to come and pay your house a visit.

Avoid water leakage and any other instances where water can accumulate, which consequently promote termite growth. As such, immediately fix leaky faucets, plumbing or air conditioners to ensure the ground around your home stays dry.

Regularly clean gutters, downspouts, and splash blocks to avoid rainwater build-up. If you don't have splash blocks, consider using them to help keep water away from the foundation.

Water far from your house, and adjust sprinklers to prevent them from showering directly onto wood walls and siding.

Wood – Deprive termites of their favourite food—wood. Store away all wooden products that you don't need; any spare wood left lying around attracts termites.

Never stack or store firewood, timber, newspapers, cardboards, and any other cellulose materials near the foundation or crawl spaces—and away from the house.

Wood Contact – Remember that termites burrow through the soil to reach your home. That’s why as much as possible, wooden parts of your house must not touch the soil. They should ideally be at least six inches above the ground.

Get rid of dead trees, stumps, roots, scrap lumber, fallen branches, and other wood chippings/debris from your yard.

Use termite-resistant wood in areas where wood must come in contact with the ground, and be sure to pre-treat the wood when renovating or constructing a new house.

Wood Mulch – Wood mulch is a protective covering that is laid over the soil surrounding plants to enrich the soil, while also retaining its moisture and preventing erosion. But it can also attract termites, especially when damp. Avoid placing wood mulch beside or near the foundation of your house, wood frames of doors and windows. As an alternative, you may also want to use pea gravel or crushed stone, which are less attractive to termites and other bugs.

Vegetation – Trees, shrubs, and any flora type should never come in contact with your home. Trim bushes, shrubs, and vines away from the foundation to help prevent termite growth.

Cracks – Regularly check your home for cracks or holes in the slab and foundation, as these may already be signs of termite invasion. Make sure to repair/seal/fill them up as soon as possible.

Termite Inspection – As a preventative measure and to ensure that termites don’t come anywhere near your property, it’s best to perform a regular termite inspection done by a professional termite company.



Termite Treatment: A Guideline to Basic Types of Termite Treatments



Termites can undoubtedly cause significant amount of damage to homes and offices. And while termites mostly devour on wood structures and products, they also have a penchant for trees, paper, and anything that has cellulose. By employing termite treatment solutions, property owners can further avoid destruction of their precious belongings.

Now, the question is that what are the types of termite treatments, and what is the best termite treatment? To eradicate subterranean termites, you can:

1) Bait

2) Dust

3) Apply a chemical treatment.

Baiting chemicals contain a small amount of slow acting poison killing termites over time. Highly social creatures, the infected termites feed other they transfer poison in the process. The colony, including the queen, soon succumbs. The downside is that this technique requires termites to eat the

bait. If they don't the colony will continue to grow. It also only tackles one colony at a time. Sometimes termites, including *Schedorhinotermes* spp, may have multiple nests.

Effective baiting takes three to four months depending on the size of the colony and time of year. During this time the colony continues to eat your home. Termite Baiting is ideal when you only have a minimum number of termites to deal with and you can't find the nest.

Dusting, another technique, usually works faster than baiting. It takes on average three to six weeks to start being effective depending on the size of the colony and the time of the year. It involves introducing fine poisonous dust to termites. Termites will then infect the rest of the colony by rubbing their body against each other and grooming themselves and other termites. Like baiting, dusting is a delayed acting poison. There are two disadvantages

- 1) You may need to infect as many termites as 10 percent of the entire colony to secure the eradication of the colony.
- 2) If a new colony attacks your home again you need to dust them as well.

Termite chemical techniques,

Such as Termidor and Alteriset, are applied as subfloor or perimeter barriers. They can also be applied directly into termite workings. These chemicals are so called non-repellent termiticides where termites would get infected without being aware of it. They will then infect the rest of the colony by grooming themselves and other termites.

Choosing the right termite treatment method is a case to case basis and depends on many factors. That's why property owners should not expect for one termite treatment type that is all effective. all methods of termite infestation elimination are effective as long as instructions are properly followed.



Termites FAQs: Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions about Termites

1. **What are termites?**

Termites are vital for the environment; they recycle dead timber back into the nature. They live for wood as their source of food; thus, these insects destroy wood in the process. Their existence dates back since the dinosaur era. And while termites are ecologically important, experts estimate they cause around \$5 billion of property damage annually.

2. **How can I differentiate termites from ants?**

Termites and ants look quite similar from a far. But there are a few things to look for to distinguish them. Most termites are usually pale, almost white in color. Ants can be red, black or brown. Termites' wings easily break off after leaving the colony. Termites have straight antennae, while ants have bent antennae. Termites have broad midsections, while ants have narrow ones.

3. **What are signs of termite infestation?**

Depending on your geographical location, termite swarms are often more evident during hot and humid summer. Some signs of termite infestation include soft wood in the household, mud tunnels in the interior or exterior of your home (usually near the foundation), and swelling or darkening of wood structures. These occurrences are a give-away sign that termites can already be everywhere!

4. **Are termites seasonal or do I need to look out all throughout the year?**

Termites are active all year round and they do not sleep! They normally swarm to start a new colony around summer time; however, that rule is not carved in stone. As long as they have what they want most—warmth, moisture, and food—the colony will continue to proliferate.

5. **How can I prevent termites?**

There are numerous methods to prevent or reduce termite infestation, such as chemical and physical barrier, moisture control and anti-harboring measures for new buildings. For older homes or existing structures, it is a must to contact a termite specialist so they can provide you solutions for your specific needs.

6. **How often should I get termite inspection from a professional?**

Regular inspections by qualified termite inspectors help avoid nasty surprises of finding termites and damages. CSIRO recommends termite inspections to be carried out every 6- 12 months. However, in some areas where there are a few favorable conditions for termite infestations, quarterly inspections may be necessary.

7. **What if my neighbors have termites, does it indicate that I have them, too?**

If your next door neighbor's home is infested with termites, it doesn't necessarily mean that you have them as well. Nevertheless, it signifies that your house, including the entire neighborhood is at a high risk of a termite infestation. Termites can travel up to 50 meters in

search of a food source. Inspections can be done for a reasonable cost, so it is a good idea to have your home inspected regularly.

8. **What do I do if I have termites in my house?**

DO NOT DISTURB OR KILL THEM YOURSELF. We need them alive in order to identify and eradicate them. Although termites can severely damage your property, they work at a slow pace. So do not panic; your house will not fall into pieces overnight. However, it's best to act fast to prevent any further damage. Contact a licensed termite control company as soon as possible to have your house inspected and provide proper termite treatments.

9. **What is the most efficient method of termite control?**

There is no one product or technique that suits every kind of termite problem. The most effective type of termite treatment depends on many factors such as the location of the nest if found, the species of termite, and the location and construction of the property. An experienced termite specialist can evaluate each infestation separately and propose a thorough action plan that will successfully control the termite colony.

10. **Can I treat my house for termites using DIY (do-it-yourself) methods?**

Unless you have the right qualifications, properly treating your home could be very complicated and you may end up spending thousands of dollars on timber repairs on top of extermination fee. Moreover, the termiticides are not available to homeowners as they can be hazardous to apply by an untrained person. Hence, unless you are knowledgeable and have the proper equipment, it is best and more economical to let a termite professional treat your house or building.

Prevention and eradication of other home pests

Huntsman spider, Sydney Funnel web spider, White tale spider, tick, Coptotermes termite

