



Integrated Pest Management For Classrooms

GOT PESTS? TELL THE FACILITIES TEAM!

The sooner you let the facilities team know about pest problems or sanitation issues in your classroom, the easier it is to correct them.

Why Are There Pests in My Classroom?

Pests have the same needs that all living things require to thrive - food, water, and shelter. Below are the most common pests that we find in classrooms, their common routes of entry, and the conditions that benefit them the most.

How Can IPM Help Prevent Pests?

By using the simple Integrated Pest Management (or IPM for short) methods below you can prevent pest infestations in your classroom. Education is the first step for prevention, so please join the team and learn how you can help.



- 1** **FRUIT FLIES** feed on yeasts present on ripe fruits and vegetables, food scraps, and sugary liquids. The bottoms of wastebaskets, forgotten food containers, or food scraps left in desk wastebaskets over the weekend can all be sources of fruit flies.

Solution: Don't leave fruit or vegetables out overnight and be sure to throw food away in bins outside of your classroom.
- 2** **FUNGUS GNATS** may buzz around your face while you're trying to teach. If you notice them, look for the usual culprit—over watered plants or potted plants with broken down, soggy soil.

Solution: Don't overwater potted plants and/or repot the plants in new soil every one to two years.
- 3** **PANTRY PESTS** include beetles and moths that lay eggs in nuts, cereal, crackers, and even chocolate. They can show up when students leave uneaten snacks in their desks or cubbies for months, or from food you leave in the drawers of your desk.

Solution: Keep snacks and other food in rigid, sealed containers, not in plastic bags.

- 4** **ANTS** often come indoors to find food during summer and fall when they no longer find food outside. Rain or irrigation will sometimes drive ants indoors to escape flooded conditions.

Solution: Clean up food spills and wipe down desks and counters by the end of each day. If you see an ant trail wipe it up with a soapy water solution.
- 5** **COCKROACHES** thrive in cluttered conditions that provide food and water, preferring to live in cardboard. They can get into buildings by slipping under doorways, on personal belongings from home or from food deliveries to the classroom.

Solution: Reduce clutter such as stacked paper and cardboard boxes, report plumbing leaks to facilities, and clean food-soiled surfaces by the end of each day.
- 6** **RATS & MICE** squeeze under doors or through holes around utility penetrations. They nest in clutter and will chew or gnaw almost anything, including paper, fabric, and plastic. They will also eat the food of classroom pets.

Solution: Reduce clutter in work areas and store items up off the floor in cabinets, on racks, or in bins. Store food for classroom pets in rigid containers with tight fitting lids and do not leave food bowls out overnight.
- 7** **SPIDERS** are beneficial predators of mosquitoes, gnats, and house flies. Most are harmless. Black widow spiders rarely live inside buildings, and brown recluse spiders do not live in California.

Solution: Practice good housekeeping habits to limit food sources and harborage for spiders.