

## **STOPPING ANT ACTIVITY IN YOUR HOME**

### **Using Ant Bait and/or Diatomaceous Earth**

#### **Ant Bait**

##### **1. First, understand the ant colony and its queen.**

To solve an ant problem, you need to first eliminate the ones you don't see to get rid of the ones you do see. It sounds strange, but it's true. This is because the queen -- the one who lays all the eggs -- never leaves her nest. She just stays there, being fed by the workers (the ones you see) and continuing to reproduce more ants. So you can spray and spray the ants you see, and she'll just keep making more to take their place.

##### **2. Watch the trailing ants.**

So, although it may sound silly, the first step in controlling ants is simply [watching the ones that enter your home](#) to see where they are coming from and going to. An ant will seek food, but once it finds food, the ant will return to its nest with the crumb, leaving a scent trail behind it. By doing so, the ant leaves a trail for its fellow worker ants to help in gathering the food.

##### **3. Don't spray the ants!**

As discussed in #1, the ants that you see are worker ants. Their job is to find food and take it back to feed the queen and her young, who are being groomed as the next generation of worker ants. Because of this, these worker ants are your ticket into the colony. If you spray and kill these ants, the colony will simply send out more workers, and you'll never reach the queen. So what do you do? See #4:

##### **4. Set out ant bait.**

Instead of eliminating the worker ants, use them! Following all label directions, place [ant bait stations](#) along the trail you identified (in #2). The workers will find the bait, carry it back to the nest, and feed the queen, eventually killing her and eliminating future populations.

##### **5. Hold off on cleaning.**

Although you will need to eliminate other food sources, you don't want to mop away the ant's odor trail yet. The trail will now lead the workers to your bait instead.

##### **6. Be patient.**

The ants will carry the insecticide bait back to the nest, but it can take several days to eliminate the colony, or even a few weeks if the colony is very large or it has several queens. [\(Some ant species do.\)](#) You may even need to replace the bait station if they empty the food or liquid bait.

##### **7. Know when to spray.**

If the trailing ants have led you to an outdoor, below-ground nest -- now can be the time to spray. Drenching the nest with an approved insecticide spray (following all label directions) can be effective.

##### **8. Keep it clean.**

Sanitation is critical for the prevention and control of any pest. Like all living creatures, ants need water, food, and shelter for survival. Ants will leave the shelter of their colony to seek food and water. Don't make it easy for them! Keep foods sealed, floors swept, and all surfaces cleaned.

##### **9. Keep ants out.**

Ants are tiny creatures and can enter homes and buildings through minute cracks and crevices. To minimize this, seal around windows and doors, and all cable, pipe, and wire entry points.

## Diatomaceous Earth

### What is Diatomaceous Earth?

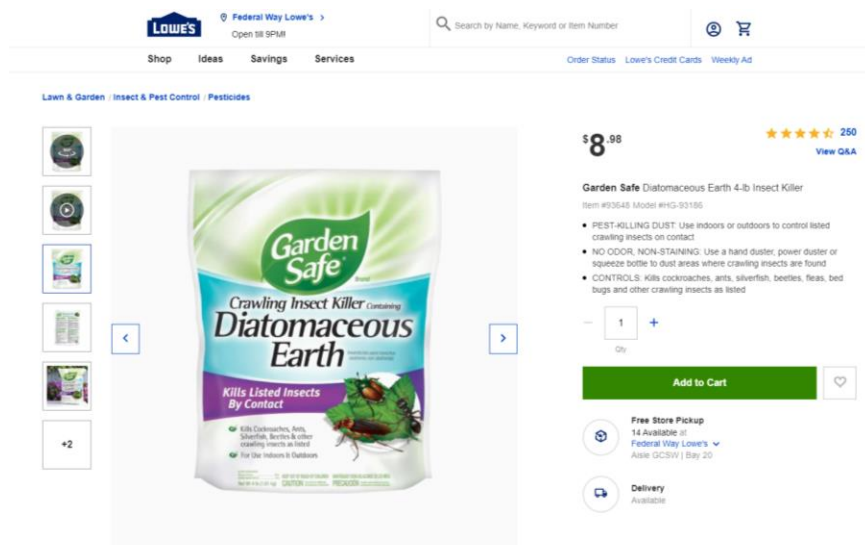
Diatomaceous earth is a non-toxic natural substance. It's made from crushed fossilized (or skeletal) remains of billions of microscopic algae-like organisms, called diatoms. Diatomaceous earth is deadly to any insect, yet completely harmless to animals.

### Why Does It Work?

The reason why DE is recommended for killing bugs is pretty simple. The dust is scratchy, so when critters with exoskeletons (hard shells on the outside) are exposed to diatomaceous earth, it cuts through that protective layer and the bugs eventually dehydrate and die.

### How Do I Use It?

- Start by identifying areas where you have seen ant trails or groups of ants. Follow the ants and try to figure out where they may have entered your home.
- Apply a thin line of diatomaceous earth along the ant trails. If you have found a large group of ants, you can spread the powder directly over them and create a perimeter around them.
- Also spread the DE (make a thin trail line, using an applicator bottle, old ketchup bottle, etc) along baseboards, floors, window sills, and in cracks where you have seen the ants. In hard to reach areas, you can use a duster to get it in the right place.
- Wait 24-48 hours. Watch the areas you have treated to see if the ants have created an alternate route and if follow-up treatment is needed.
- If the ants have gone, clean up the diatomaceous earth and carefully wash the floor and other areas where the ants have been. This gets rid of the pheromones that will attract more ants.
- On the outside of your home, sprinkle a light application of diatomaceous earth around the foundation of the home, going out at least 6-12 inches. Create this perimeter all along the outside of your house, paying special attention to known entry points. Reapply when needed if the DE is washed away by sprinklers, rain, etc.



The screenshot shows a product page on the Lowe's website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Lowe's logo, a search bar, and links for Shop, Ideas, Savings, and Services. Below the navigation bar, the product is displayed in a large image. To the right of the product image, the price is listed as \$8.98, and there is a star rating of 4.5 out of 5 stars based on 260 reviews. The product name is "Garden Safe Diatomaceous Earth 4-lb Insect Killer". Below the product name, there are several bullet points describing the product's features and usage instructions. At the bottom of the product page, there is an "Add to Cart" button and a "Free Store Pickup" option.

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**\$8.98** ★★★★★ 260 [View GSA](#)

**Garden Safe Diatomaceous Earth 4-lb Insect Killer**  
Item #93648 Model #HG-93196

- PEST-KILLING DUST: Use indoors or outdoors to control listed crawling insects on contact
- NO ODOR, NON-STAINING: Use a hand duster, power duster or squeeze bottle to dust areas where crawling insects are found
- CONTROLS: Kills cockroaches, ants, silverfish, beetles, fleas, bed bugs and other crawling insects as listed

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