



J&J's Pest Control - Commercial & Domestic Services

<http://www.jjsspestcontrol.com>

Ph (02) 9740 5557 | Mobile: **0411 211 843** | Fax **02 9740 5004** | ABN: 79 096 870 030

PEST INFORMATION ABOUT ANTS

The life cycle of an ant

Ants have a holometabolous (complete metamorphosis) life cycle. After hatching from an egg, ants begin life as larvae. The differentiation of the female castes (into queen and worker sub-castes) is largely determined by environmental factors such as:

- the amount and quality of food
- temperature
- hormones produced by workers and the queen
- males usually develop from unfertilised eggs.

Ants belong to the family Formicidae, which forms part of the order Hymenoptera. This order of insects also includes bees and wasps.

Ants are ubiquitous. In fact around 15 000 species and subspecies of ants have been described world wide, with just over 1 300 known from Australia so far. Most Australians are familiar with ants be they:

- bulldog or bull ants (*Myrmecia* sp.)
- jack-jumper or jumper ants (*Myrmecia pilosula* species group)
- green-headed or metallic pony ants (*Rhytidoponera metallica*)
- meat ants (*Iridomyrmex* sp.)
- sugar ants (*Camponotus* sp.)
- green tree ants (*Oecophylla smaragdina*).



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Are they pests?

Some ants, such as bulldog or bullants, are troublesome because they give painful stings, while the venom of jack-jumper or jumper ants can cause severe allergic reactions. Unlike bees that can only sting once, ants can sting multiple times.

Others, such as meat ants and green tree ants, don't sting but bite and then spray formic acid into the wound.

Some ants are nuisance pests when they make mounds, disturb paving or invade buildings.

Some introduced species are both nuisance and environmental pests, including:

- Argentine ant (*Linepithema humile*)
- red imported fire ant (*Solenopsis invicta*)
- crazy ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*)
- electric ant (*Wasmannia auropunctatata*)
- big headed ant or coastal brown ant (*Pheidole megacephala*).

PEST CONTROL METHODS FOR ANTS

1 - Put a food source by the door or window in order to get the ants to leave things like cabinets and counters. Put out some food on say a plate in those places where they are and then physically relocate them into the garbage or recycle. If they prefer it, the scouts will direct the rest there.

2 - Organize the trash. You should use something like meat in the food garbage, and maybe not so well washed ice cream containers or soda bottles in the recycle, one or the other or both. Make sure the ants can get under the door or window, from and to the outside.

3 - Place the commercial service waste containers next the door or window outside if possible. After the whole or most of the gang is foraging the garbage and not the rest of the kitchen, move the garbage and or recycle outside next to the commercial service containers.



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4 - Leave a space under the lid of the waste container so the ants can get in. They usually move into there at this point, once they realize it is a paradise of unwanted food scraps. Then you can again have your small garbage and recycle containers back in the kitchen ant free. If the waste collection service containers cannot be used near the kitchen or place where the ants have congregated, you could use something of your own creation.

5 - Removing the commercial containers to the street for pickup will deprive the the ants of their food source for a couple of days. This may not generally interrupt the system.

Ring J&J's Pest Control Services on (02) 9740 5557 or 0411 211 843: successful pest control of ants depends on many variables learnt from technical training and practical experience in a wide variety of situations.

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