

HOW TO AVOID PICKING UP



THE DREADED BED BUG

TRAVEL GUIDE



TERMITE & PEST SERVICES

Wherever there are people, bed bugs are sure to follow. They are parasites and we are their hosts, providing them with their needed blood meals. It is only natural that bed bugs congregate wherever people do – airports and other mass transportation, shopping malls, movie theaters, and of course, the top bed bug transfer location, motels and hotels.

The cautious traveler assumes that bed bugs may be patiently waiting for them at the hotel or winter rental they booked. But that doesn't mean you should become house-bound. By taking precautions, you can avoid picking up bed bugs while traveling or heading south for the winter.



GET TO KNOW YOUR ENEMY

The first step in avoiding bed bugs is to know thy enemy.

BED BUGS

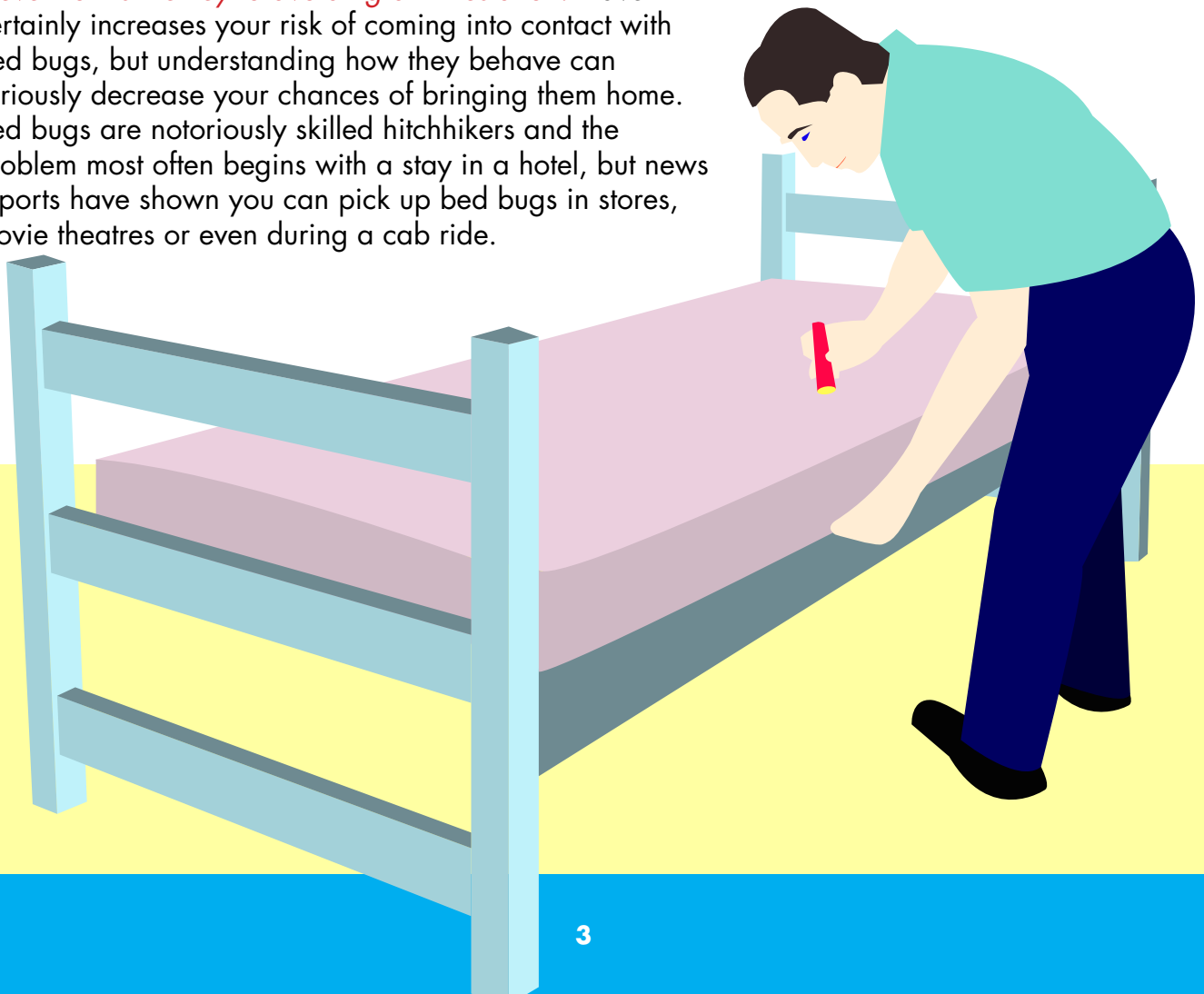
- small wingless insects red to dark brown in color
- can't fly; they can only crawl
- have a small, flat body with an oval shape
- adults grow to about ¼ inch in length
- are nocturnal
- feed on warm-blooded animals, preferably humans, feed most often while they sleep



BED BUGS RANK HIGH ON THE GROSS OUT METER

- Bed bugs can ingest seven times their own weight in blood and draw blood for about five minutes before retreating to digest.
- Bed bug bites are painless and can go undetected unless the host has a reaction, which often results in itchy welts found on the body.
- Bed bugs, their eggs and nymphs (newborns) are all visible to the naked eye but are masters of stealth due to their small size and nocturnal habits. During the day, bed bugs find the smallest of nooks and crannies to hide in and because of their size and shape can fit into the smallest of cracks.
- Bed bug hatchlings are so small they can pass through a stitch-hole in a mattress. They can live for many months without a blood meal, making them even more difficult to control.

Prevention is the key to avoiding an infestation. Travel certainly increases your risk of coming into contact with bed bugs, but understanding how they behave can seriously decrease your chances of bringing them home. Bed bugs are notoriously skilled hitchhikers and the problem most often begins with a stay in a hotel, but news reports have shown you can pick up bed bugs in stores, movie theatres or even during a cab ride.



Tips to keep in mind when traveling to avoid the problem:

1. Do a careful inspection of any hotel room you stay in. Consider bringing along a small flashlight to help you inspect. We recommend doing the inspection before you even bring your belongings into the room.

- Start your inspection with the bed.
- Lift the sheets, mattress pad or lining and examine the mattress for blood stains or small, speckled spots that often resembles sprinkled pepper.
- Look along the seams of the mattress for bed bugs and bug casings.
- Examine the headboard and look along any cracks or crevices for evidence of bugs.

If you discover evidence of bed bugs the room is likely well infested. Report your findings to the front desk and change rooms immediately, ensuring that your new room is not immediately next to the infested room.

2. If you do not uncover any bed bugs during your room inspection move in your belongings.

- Avoid drawers for your clothing and personal items.
- Use the closet to hang clothes where necessary.
- Keep your suitcase off of the bed and any soft furnishings including upholstered sofas and chairs, as cracks and hidden areas are common hiding grounds for bed bugs.
- Avoid the luggage rack since so many travelers before you placed their belongings on it and it has a greater chance of being exposed to bed bugs.
- Place your belongings on hard surfaces like a desk or dresser or even in the bathtub or bathroom.





3. When arriving at your destination take a few steps to reduce the chance of an infestation.

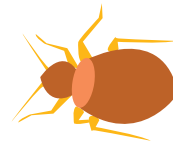
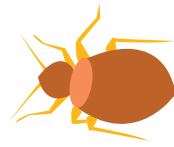
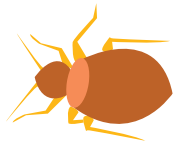
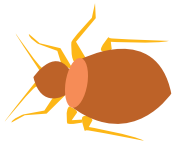
- Immediately wash and dry all of your clothing on the highest setting the fabric can stand. Bed bugs, nymphs and eggs will die from the extreme temperatures.
- Consider vacuuming your suitcase, both inside and out. Never come home and put your suitcase on your bed and never unpack your belongings and store your suitcase underneath the bed.
- Store your suitcase in the garage or attic, someplace where a hitchhiking bed bug will not easily travel to find a blood meal from yourself or a pet.

BE AWARE AFTER RETURNING HOME

Call a pest management professional immediately should you experience any of the following:

- Small blood smears often described as looking like someone sprinkled pepper on your sheets or pajamas.
- Unexplained bites or itchy welts found around the body, note that some individuals may not react to bed bug bites so it is possible for two people to live in the same house, both be bitten, but only one show signs of a reaction. Bed bug bites often appear as small, red marks that burn or itch and are often grouped together typically on the arms, legs and other body parts.
- Fecal stains, cast skins or crushed bugs found in the seams of the mattress or anywhere in the linens, mattress or box springs. You will often see molt bed bug skins, their white sticky eggs, or empty eggshells.

HOW TO AVOID PICKING UP THE DREADED BED BUG WHILE TRAVELING



Putting these useful tips to avoiding bed bugs into practice will certainly lower your risk of becoming a bed bugs next blood meal. Enjoy your winter travel, be mindful of your belongings while away from home and take precautions upon returning.

Remember to call a professional should you experience any signs of bed bug activity. With bed bugs a small infestation can quickly turn into a large one. Bed bugs can lay one to five eggs a day and more 500 in a lifetime.



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For more information on

BED BUGS

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