Unseen threats lurking: Top tips to keep your home pest- and animal-free.



Sometimes, unwanted guests — both furry and crawly — find their way into our living spaces. To maintain a peaceful and hygienic home environment, implement these effective strategies for animal and pest mitigation.

1. **Secure entrance points.** Perform a comprehensive examination of your home's exterior, focusing on points where utility lines enter. Have a chimney? Ensure each chimney vent has a cap. Use weather-resistant materials to seal any gaps or cracks, ensuring animals and insects can't sneak into your living space. Look at all door and window seals, too.

2. **Practice proper waste management.** An overflowing trash bin can be an open invitation for pests. Dispose of kitchen waste regularly in tightly sealed bins … never take trash bags out and set them on the ground. Keep outdoor trash cans secure with lids to prevent animals from scavenging for leftovers.

3. **Safeguard your pet food.** Stop pests from being drawn to the scent by storing pet food in airtight containers. Don't leave pet food out overnight, as this can attract unwanted critters. Establish a routine of feeding your pets and promptly removing any uneaten food to maintain a pest-free environment.

4. **Maintain a tidy yard.** Cut back overgrown vegetation surrounding your home to eliminate possible hiding spots for pests. Keep your yard clean and free of clutter to decrease the chances of small animals seeking refuge near your living space.

5. **Clean regularly.** Consistent cleaning not only enhances the appearance of your home, but also reduces the likelihood of pests entering it. Focus on spots prone to crumb accumulation, like kitchen

counters and dining areas. Vacuum and mop floors regularly to eliminate any food particles that could attract pests. If you or your family takes food, drinks, or snacks to other areas of the home, don't leave dirty dishes out longer than a couple of hours.

6. **Install sound or light repellants.** Incorporate motion-activated lights around your home's perimeter, especially near entry points, to startle and deter nocturnal pests. A combination of sound and light can be an effective deterrent for unwanted visitors.

7. **Invest in professional pest controls.** If you're dealing with unwanted animals, consider using humane traps to capture and release them away from your home. Consult with local wildlife control professionals, if needed for safe and ethical removal. If a pest problem is out of control or out of your expertise, hire vetted professionals to help with the job.

8. **Store firewood properly.** Store wood away from the house on a raised surface to eliminate potential nesting sites. Elevating and keeping wood piles at a distance diminishes the likelihood of pests discovering suitable nesting spots.

9. **Educate your household.** Share the importance of these mitigation tips with every member of your household. Consistent effort from all household members is vital in keeping animals and pests away.

With these animal and pest mitigation tips, you can ensure your family, friends, and pets are the only guests in your household. For even more protection, talk to a local, independent agent about comprehensive home coverage today.

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