

Organic Pest Control

Manage pests without synthetic chemical pesticides

DIFFICULTY Easy-moderate

TYPE Ongoing practice

TIME Varies by method



DIFFICULTY
Easy-moderate



TIME
Varies



COST
Low



BEST SEASON
Growing season



FREQUENCY
As needed,
checked weekly

01 Layered defence, not a single fix

Effective organic pest control usually combines several light-touch approaches — physical barriers, hand-picking, encouraging predators, and targeted organic sprays — rather than relying on one method alone.



ladybird preys on aphids

pest on the plant, beneficial moves in

02 What you'll need

- Netting or row covers for physical exclusion
- A basic organic spray (e.g. soap spray, neem oil) for targeted outbreaks
- A regular inspection habit
- Companion plants that attract beneficial insects

04 Troubleshooting

- **Spray not working** — check it's the right product for the actual pest identified, and that coverage (including leaf undersides) is thorough.
- **Beneficial insects disappearing** — even organic sprays can harm beneficials; use sparingly and as a last resort rather than routinely.
- **Pest returns quickly after treatment** — treat the underlying cause (plant stress, overcrowding) as well as the immediate pest.
- **Can't identify the pest** — take a clear photo and compare against reliable identification resources before treating — treatment differs significantly by pest type.

06 Tips & variations

PAIRS WELL WITH

Beneficial Insects

Companion Planting Principles

COMMON MISTAKES

Reaching for a spray before trying physical or biological methods first

Spraying broadly rather than targeting the specific affected plants

PRO TIP

A strong, healthy, well-fed plant resists pest and disease pressure far better than a stressed one — good soil is itself a form of pest control.

03 Method

1. Inspect plants regularly — early detection makes every other method more effective.
2. Use physical barriers (netting, collars, row covers) to prevent problems before they start.
3. Hand-pick larger pests (caterpillars, beetles) where practical — genuinely effective at a garden scale.
4. Encourage beneficial insects with diverse, flowering companion plants.
5. Use targeted organic sprays only where needed, and only on the affected plants, to minimise harm to beneficials.

05 Timing & maintenance

BEST TIME	Prevention (barriers, healthy soil, diverse planting) works best set up before problems appear; reactive treatment as issues arise.
DURATION	An ongoing, season-long practice rather than a single intervention.
MAINTENANCE	Weekly inspection is the single most valuable habit — most problems are far easier to manage caught early.
SIGNS OF SUCCESS	Pest damage stays at a tolerable, minor level rather than escalating to serious crop loss.