

Fruit Flies and Fungus Gnats: Get Rid of Them

Do tiny flies in your home drive you crazy? Ever notice that fruit flies seem to come home from the grocery store with you, especially when you buy bananas? Apparently, they love bananas and other ripening fruit. What about fungus gnats? If you have houseplants, you have probably seen these tiny pests. These tips will help you get rid of both of them and learn the difference between them if you care to.

Fruit Flies or Fungus Gnats?

Fruit flies are different than fungus gnats. If you care to differentiate, read this article from [Get Busy Gardening](#). I just assume the tiny flies in my kitchen are fruit flies and the ones around my house plants are fungus gnats. I've never taken the time to look that closely or distinguish between the two.

Separate and Wash Your Bananas

As soon as you bring them home, separate your bananas so they are no longer in a bunch, and wash them in soapy water. Yes, I said wash them! This will remove the eggs of fruit flies from the bananas. I have never thought to wash my bananas, even [during the pandemic](#), when everyone was washing everything that came into their home. Apparently, fruit flies like to shelter in the crevices between bananas that are attached to each other in a bunch, so separating them is crucial too.

Who knew?

Vinegar Down Your Drain

Another trick is to pour vinegar down your drain to get rid of both fruit flies and fungus gnats. Fruit flies not only like banana stalks but also the wet, sticky environment in our kitchen drains. So do fungus gnats, AKA drain gnats or drain flies. Rotting fruit in our garbage cans and compost buckets also attracts fruit flies, so spraying those containers with vinegar helps too.

Other Tips to Reduce Fruit Flies

Changing garbage and compost bags often helps keep fruit fly infestations down too. Another tip is to keep your fruit in the fridge instead of on the counter, although I've never put bananas in the fridge. Some people use liquid traps made with apple cider vinegar or wine and dish soap to attract and kill the fruit flies respectively.

Hydrogen Peroxide and Sticky Traps for Fungus Gnats

As I do [love my houseplants](#) but hate fungus gnats, I have a procedure I am diligent about. Especially as these little buggers can be a quickly escalating issue when purchasing or inheriting new plants:

- Shake the plant well outside before bringing it into the house
- some people cover new plants with a plastic bag and leave them in their garage for a few days to isolate any fungus gnats before bringing them into their homes. I've never tried this.
- wipe the leaves of new plants with hydrogen peroxide when they arrive in your home and at least once a month afterward.

- use sticky traps to catch adult fungus gnats
- shake plant pots once in a while, spraying any adults or babies that you disturb
- spray the wet soil in each pot with hydrogen peroxide each time you water your plants
- Microwave or bake new bags of potting soil. This kills any fungus gnat adults or eggs that might be unwanted guests within the bags, Let the soil cool of course before using it.
- let the top of the soil in your pots dry out between watering. Some plants tolerate drier soil than others, but most hate overwatering, in fact, the quickest way to [kill your houseplants](#) is to overwater them.



sticky traps

Conclusion

Well, whether or not you care which tiny insect is flying around your home, you are now equipped to battle them and win. If they are in your kitchen and you have no houseplants, they are probably fruit flies. If zipping around your houseplants in other areas of your home, they are most likely fungus gnats.

Bottom Line: Fruit flies don't like wet soil and fungus gnats

don't like rotting fruit. Also: Don't use vinegar on your houseplants.