



# Cricket Management

---

There is no single, perfect solution for the management of crickets, but a combination of the following suggestions will help to reduce populations.

*First* determine if there are enough crickets currently present or damage apparent to warrant management; everyone has a different tolerance and only you can determine how many crickets are “too many”. Vacuum up cricket frass (poop), and monitor how rapidly it accumulates in corners and sheltered areas outside. This will allow you to assess the current populations.

1. The single most effective step is to **improve the level of pest proofing in the building**. Information is available at <http://ag.arizona.edu/pubs/insects/az1320.pdf>.

## Cultural strategies:

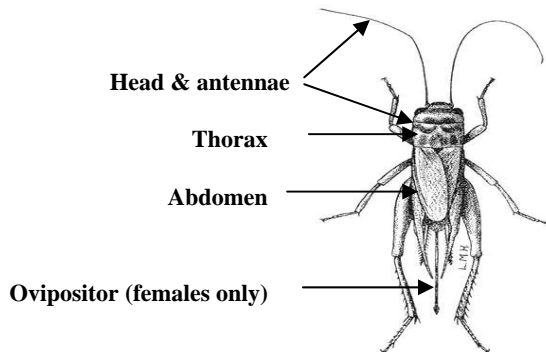
- ♣ Reduce food supply. Keep floors clean – esp. corners, and under shelving! Pick up and seal pet food after dark.
- ♣ Manage outdoor water sources (leaky faucets, moist areas, etc.).
- ♣ Limit the use of night-time lighting, or change bulbs to yellow “bug bulbs” which do not attract bugs.
- ♣ Remove un-kept vegetation and debris from around buildings; it can serve as a hiding place or breeding site.

## Mechanical strategies:

- 🔧 Prevent entry by sealing cracks and openings. Use sealant and weather-stripping to fill all openings, cracks, gaps, and holes in foundation, siding, windows, doors, screens, and other possible entry points. Think like a bug!
- 🔧 Remove crickets from indoors by squashing, vacuuming or using sticky monitoring traps.
- 🔧 Apply diatomaceous earth (DE) or boric acid in cracks and crevices that cannot be filled; this is where crickets hide during the day. DE is an abrasive, fine, white powder which is actually *tiny sharp fossil shells* that will gradually wear through the cricket's outer cuticle, causing it to dehydrate and die. Many products can be used both indoors and outside. Inhalation of DE could lead to respiratory problems; wear a dust mask during application.

## Biological strategies:

Encourage **natural predators** around the school or home (lizards, birds, spiders). Avoiding broad spectrum pesticide applications goes a long way to promote natural predators and a wide diversity of creatures.



## GENERAL HABITS

Crickets are active at night. They enter buildings more often during a wet, warm season and/or when the weather turns cool in the fall. Females have ovipositors, which distinguishes them from males (who only have two short cerci and no ovipositor). Crickets commonly enter buildings through open doors or those that need to be pest-proofed (door sweeps, weather seals, and screens).



### **Indian House Cricket (*Gryllobates supplicans*)**

Tan with darker patterning. Similarities between sexes, with exception of obvious ovipositor on female.

Length:  $\frac{3}{4}$ " long

**HABITS:** Common indoor pest, especially during monsoon seasons. During the daytime, individuals forage for food scraps and crumbs on the ground; frequently seen in kitchen corners and under/behind appliances and shelving. At night, males climb to higher location (shelves, counters) and chirp continuously to attract females. Their presence indicates the need to pest-proof and improve floor sanitation.



### **Field Cricket (*Gryllus* spp.)**

Larger than the Indian house cricket, and often darker in color.

Length: ~1" long

**HABITS:** Prefers to live outdoors; is not a common indoor pest, but an occasional invader. Monsoon seasons may increase indoor sightings temporarily, especially if attracted by outdoor lights. Pest-proof building (especially doors), and use sticky traps to round up occasional invaders.



### **Camel Cricket (*Ceuthophilus* spp.)**

Camel crickets have long antennae and significantly larger hind legs than other crickets. Tan to dark brown in color, wingless, and with a humpedback (giving them their name). These crickets do not chirp.

Length:  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1.5" long

**HABITS:** Nuisance pest. Found outside in caves, wells, hollow trees and stumps, and under rotten logs, damp leaves, stones, boards and bricks. May wander indoors as an accidental invader; in rare cases it will breed in moist dark areas, such as basements. Eliminate above-mentioned breeding and hiding sites around buildings to manage. Reduce moisture in basement areas.