
How to Inspect for Bed Bugs

According to pest management professionals (PMP), the number of bed bug-related service calls has increased to more than 400% in the past five years. Bed bug infestations are occurring in hotels, apartments, nursing homes, upscale commercial office buildings, school classrooms, dormitories, and the list goes on. The basic bed bug damage claim encompasses property damage as well as pain and suffering (physical and emotional). In addition, most property owners are concerned about the potential negative impact to their reputation. After all, who would want to rent a room or reside in an apartment/nursing home after hearing it had a bed bug infestation?

Tools and Equipment

Bed bugs are small, and identifying their presence requires some basic tools and equipment. Recommended equipment includes: a magnifying glass, a flashlight, and plastic zippered bags for collecting specimens; a probe, such as a credit card cut into a long triangle for checking narrow spaces; compressed air for flushing bed bugs from cracks and crevices; a screwdriver to remove light switch cover plates; alcohol, glass-cleaner, or baby wipes to confirm that stains are bed bug droppings.

The inspection process should be thorough and, initially, focused on the bedroom. The intent is to look for signs of bed bugs, check for their hiding places, and ultimately confirm the presence of the insect. This checklist is designed to be used as a tool for bed bug inspection.

Next Steps

The solution to a bed bug problem requires a series of steps that begins with confirming the presence of the insect. If the presence or evidence of bed bugs is found, contact a PMP to do a thorough survey. Several cycles of inspection, cleaning, and treatment may be required before bed bugs are eliminated.

	Yes	No	N/A
Identification			
Is there evidence of bugs or brown spots (dried blood) around the seams and tufts of a mattress?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are bed bugs or brown staining visible between the folds of draperies or curtains?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there signs of infestation underneath chairs, couches, beds, and dustcovers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the bed frame checked thoroughly, even in the cracks and screw housings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do gaps behind baseboards, pictures, window and door casings, wallpaper, and other 'shelters' harbor bed bugs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do nightstands, dressers, etc. show evidence of bed bugs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do doors and window casings show evidence of bed bug infestation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the area behind the electrical switch plate been checked for infestation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were telephones, radios, clocks, and similar places checked for the presence of bed bugs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	N/A
Recordkeeping			
Have there been complaints about bed bug bites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If so, were the complaints documented, including the investigation activities taken by management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were inspections completed in adjacent units, including the unit above and below the unit where the complaint about bed bugs was received?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are treatment records kept, including dates and locations of various housekeeping and pest control activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are records of actions taken to resolve the problem maintained and inclusive of findings after treatments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>