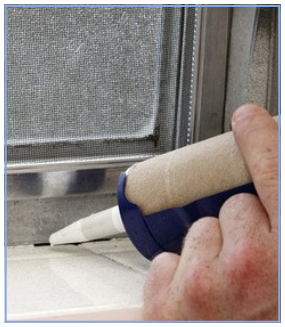
ARGENTINE ANTS

Ants are usually beneficial, hunting other pests, but can become a pest themselves when they invade your home

Although other ants may be a nuisance, Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*) are the ants most likely found in homes in Santa Clara County. They are small (1/10 inch long), brown, and difficult to control. They can squeeze through cracks 1 mm wide. They do not sting but may bite and their invasions can be disruptive and annoying.

Control and Prevention

- Vacuum ants from their trails
- Spray trails and ants with soapy water or window cleaner and wipe them away.
- Cover food left out overnight and close kitchen trash containers
- Wash dishes
- Remove opened or damaged cans or other food products in cupboards
- Use caulk or plaster to seal off cracks around door frames, window frames, openings for pipes under sinks, and other cracks and crevices
- Follow trails of ants to where they enter the house openings



Caulk around window sills and other entry points

Insecticides

Insecticides only work to keep ants from entering the home or if you can find the nest. Application of insecticide in the home for Argentine ants is not helpful.

Look for insecticides registered for ant control that include ingredients like allethrin, permethrin, or resmethrins.

- If nest is located, apply directly to nest
- Apply around the foundation of your house and 2 feet up the wall to create a barrier
- Apply to pillars, pipes, porches, and vegetation

Proper and thorough application will show results in a few days to a few weeks depending on the product

Read all safety information on pesticide labels and follow instructions.

Baits

Baits can be used if a nest is not found. Ant baits work by allowing the ants to carry poison back to the nest.

- Place baits inside house by ant trails or entryways or where they look for food
- Bait stations can be used to keep children or pets from coming in contact with insecticides
- Baits need to be checked and replenished regularly in order to be effective

Baits will take a week or longer to completely destroy the colony if the bait supply is constant.

Ants entering bait station

Santa Clara County
Vector Control District

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(408) 918-4770 www.sccvector.org

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