



How to Keep Animals Out of Your Vegetable Garden

Three Methods: [Blocking Access to Your Garden](#) [Deterring Animals from Your Garden](#) [Dealing with Common Garden Pests](#)

Planting and growing a vegetable garden can be a rewarding and tasty hobby. However, many wild animals will be just as eager to enjoy your hard work as you are. Keeping animals out of your garden can be a serious challenge, as they can be very persistent. However, there are many methods that you can use to deter animals from entering your garden, saving your vegetables for you to enjoy.

Method
1

Blocking Access to Your Garden

1 Add a fence around your plants. A good way to keep animals out of your vegetable garden is to build a fence. You can choose from a variety of fence types to place around your garden, acting as a wall between animals and your vegetables. Fences can work great, but they may be expensive and require some effort to install. Keep some of these basic facts about garden fences in mind when considering one for your garden:^{[1][2][3]}

- Many fences will require you to install fence posts before wrapping the fence itself around them.
- Most fences are built to surround an entire garden.
- The exact material and style of your fence is up to you. You could use wood, metal or plastics such as polypropylene to create your fence.
- Some fences are electric and will shock any intruding animal that touches it.
- It can be a good idea to bury about 1' of your fence underground to block burrowing animals.

2 Build raised beds in your garden. Planting your garden in raised beds can be a great way to keep out weeds, make tending to the garden a bit easier and keep out some common garden pests. Most raised garden designs are simple to follow and build, allowing you to create a pest resistant home for your plants.^{[4][5]}

- Most raised beds can be made out of wooden planks, stones, bricks or concrete blocks.
- Building a raised bed that is at least 2' off the ground will keep most rabbits out.
- Adding a bottom layer of mesh fencing to your raised bed will keep burrowing animals out.
- You can still add fences and covers to a raised bed for extra protection.

3 Create covers for your plants. If you are concerned about specific plants in your garden, you can try adding small fences or covers over them. These covers will help keep most invading garden pests away from your plant. You can create your own plant covers or buy plant covers at most home and garden shops.^{[6][7]}

- Adding a simple chicken wire fence around a plant can be enough to keep most pests away.
- You can buy garden fabric to cover your plants and protect them from being eaten.
- Young plants can be covered in deer or bird netting.

Method
2

Deterring Animals from Your Garden

1 Apply sprays around your garden. Most animals that are sneaking into your garden are doing so because they can smell the vegetables and are attracted by the free meal. Scents can also be used to keep animals out, sending a message that your garden is either not a safe place to eat or by making it smell unappealing. Take a look at the two main types of scent deterrents to help you pick one for your garden:^{[8][9][10]}

- You can buy animal repellents that smell like the urine of a predator. These repellents will make your garden seem dangerous to animals. You'll likely need to know which type of animal is invading your garden before buying a predator scent that scares that specific animal.
- You might try using spicy or unappealing sprays around your garden. These sprays can make animals

uncomfortable or make your garden taste and smell bad enough that they will look for food elsewhere.

- Animal repelling sprays can be bought at most home or garden stores.
- You can try looking up homemade animal repellent recipes and make your own.
- Many sprays will need to be applied often, as rain or moisture will wash them away.

2 Include plants that animals find repulsive in your garden. If you know the type of animal that is regularly invading your garden, you can try growing some plants that they would find repulsive. Adding plants that common garden pests dislike can help keep them out and protect your vegetables. Take a look at some of the following plants that are thought to keep away garden pests:^{[11][12]}

- Azalea, boxwood, lamb's ear, peony and marigolds are all unappealing to rabbits.
- Bleeding hearts, daffodils, hyssop, and mullein are plants that can repel deer.
- You can try mixing some of these plants in with your garden to make the whole thing look unappealing.
- Planting these barrier plants along the parameter of your garden can help repel pests.

3 Scare away unwanted animals. Even though your garden is a peaceful place, the animals that are sneaking in will still be on the look out for threats. Because of this, you can add devices to your garden that are designed to startle and scare off whatever animal might be nibbling your vegetables. Take a look at some of these ideas to give you an idea of how you can make your garden a scary place to unwanted animals:^{[13][14]}

- Modern scarecrows come equipped with motion sensors and will spray water at any invading wildlife.
- Having an outdoor dog can help keep many animals out of your garden.
- Some repellents make use of shiny or reflective material to frighten off birds.
- You can buy electronic repellents that sound an alarm or play a frightening sound when they detect motion.

4 Let your cat help keep small animals away. Cats are naturally inclined to hunt and can do a great job of keeping small animals out of your garden. Besides actually hunting the animals that make it into your garden, your cat's scent and presence may scare off future pests. So if you have an outdoor cat, consider introducing them to your garden to help cut down on the amount animals snack on your vegetables.^[15]

- Make sure your cat has all of its vaccines as many wild animals can carry diseases.
- Always monitor your cat to make sure they are in good health and are capable of safely going outdoors.

5 Include sacrificial plants near your garden. It might seem counterintuitive, but adding plants near your garden that animals love can be a good way to keep them out of your actual garden. Once you know which animals are causing you trouble, you can try planting their favorite foods away from your garden, keeping them out and sparing your vegetables.

- Make sure any attractive plants are placed away from your garden.
- Making an animal's favorite foods easy to get to will prevent them from trying to gain access to your garden.
- Try planting some extra vegetables in an area that is easy for pests to get at, keeping them away from the ones you plan on eating.

6 Use landscaping to make animals feel unwelcome. Certain environments and landscapes will make animals feel more or less comfortable. Depending on how you've landscaped your garden or yard, you may actually be making animals feel right at home. Rearranging your landscaping can be a simple way to help make animals uncomfortable and keep them out of your garden. Try keeping some of these tips in mind when landscaping your garden to help scare off would be invaders: ^{[16][17]}

- Avoid having lots of weeds or heavy plant cover, as most animals enjoy feeling hidden in the foliage.
- Get rid of woodpiles that may be near the garden.
- Cut down or move bushes or shrubs that surround the garden.

Method
3**Dealing with Common Garden Pests**

1 Figure out which animals are causing trouble. Before you can successfully deter the animals that are bothering your garden, you'll need to know which type of animals you are working with. Knowing more about the type of animal will help you form a strategy that is unique to that animal's nature. The more directed your methods are to an animal's likes and dislikes, the safer your garden is likely to be. Take a look at some of the common garden invaders to get an idea of which animals you might be dealing with:^[18]

- Rabbits
- Chipmunks
- Mice
- Moles
- Raccoons
- Rats
- Skunks
- Deer
- Birds

2 Make rabbits feel unwelcome in your garden. Rabbits will love to find a way into your garden and will eat nearly anything you have planted there. Because rabbits can be such a pest, you'll want to have your garden set up in a way that keeps them out and makes your garden seem unappealing. Keep some of these tips in mind to stop rabbits from eating your garden:^{[19][20][21][22]}

- Garden fences should be at least 3' tall.
- Burying a fence 1' underground can help prevent rabbits from burrowing under.
- Raised beds can make it difficult for rabbits to enter your garden.
- Try adding barrier plants like azalea or boxwood to repel rabbits.
- Clean up piles of brush, logs or rocks to remove a rabbit's favorite hiding places.
- Ask your local authorities about trapping regulations if your rabbit problem persists.

3 Cut deer off from your garden. Deer are a common garden pest and can cause big problems for your garden. To keep deer away from your garden, you'll want to make it an uncomfortable place for them. Try using some of these methods to help keep deer out of your garden and protect your plants:^[23]

- A deer fence will need to be around 8' tall.
- Deer won't leap over a fence if they don't see a safe space to land. Try adding another, inner fence or fence posts to prevent them from leaping into your garden.
- Spraying predator urine around your garden's parameter can scare deer away.
- Scaring deer away with motion triggered devices is a good option.
- Dogs that allowed to roam outdoors can keep deer from your garden.
- Rosemary, garlic and oregano can make good barrier plants.

4 Keep birds away from your garden. Birds can be an annoying pest in your garden and are prone to nibbling on your choicest fruits and vegetables. You can keep birds out of your garden by using several methods including:^[24]

- You can hang shiny balloons on posts around your garden, preferably vinyl balls with menacing faces.
- You can try building a barrier out of chicken wire around your plants.
- Casting a net over your garden is a sure-fire way to keep birds out. You may create a framework out of bamboo poles, fence posts or tall stakes. Then, drape the netting over the framework so it reaches the ground and anchor the net using bent wire so it cannot get blown over by the wind.
- You can also try putting fishing line or black thread throughout your garden, as birds do not like wires and may stay away.
- Try a high-tech option by using a computer system in the shape of an owl that makes a screeching owl noise, which will frighten away the birds.

Community Q&A

Is it safe to use moth balls strawberries to keep rabbits and chipmunk out?

wikiHow Contributor

No. Try using chicken wire instead. String it tightly around metal garden stakes, and bury the base 3 to 4 inches into the ground. It should discourage burrowing from rabbits and other small mammals/rodents.

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How can I prevent birds from eating my fruit and vegetables?

wikiHow Contributor

Put some protective bird netting over your fruit and vegetables. You can buy it from a home improvement store. You can also try other bird deterring methods, such as using a spray or getting a cat or dog. Even if the cat or dog does not hunt the birds, its presence should be enough to frighten them.

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What if I don't have any wood?

wikiHow Contributor

What materials do you have available? You may be able to fashion an obstruction out of another material.

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How do I get rid of rats that eat the bait from traps without springing the trap?

wikiHow Contributor

Make tasty salads into a "ball" and suspend them with string over the area that trips the trap. That way they have to struggle with the bait a bit and that trips the trap.

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What can I do to keep Squirrels out of my flower pots?

wikiHow Contributor

If you have potted plants as part of your garden, make sure they are kept within the main garden fence. You can also buy covers for individual plants to help keep squirrels or other pests from eating your vegetables.

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How do we keep birds out of the garden

wikiHow Contributor

Birds can be kept out of a garden by adding things that they find scary. Some bird deterrents will be made from shiny or reflective material that scares birds away. Other deterrents will emit a sound that frightens birds off. If you can't seem to scare the birds away, you may consider covering your plants in bird netting.

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How can I keep squirrels and raccoons out of the garden?

wikiHow Contributor

Squirrels can be kept away with spray based repellents or fences that cover a plant completely. Raccoons won't be stopped by most repellents or standard fences. However, electric fences will likely deter raccoons.

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Chipmunks are destroying my garden. What should I do?

wikiHow Contributor

Chipmunks are difficult to keep out of the garden with fences. Foul smelling repellents are usually the best choice when keeping chipmunks away.

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Sources and Citations

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2. <http://www.planetnatural.com/pest-problem-solver/lawn-pests/animal-control/>
3. <https://bonnieplants.com/library/keeping-deer-out-of-the-garden/>

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