

# Maggots and flies



## Description

- Maggots are the larvae stage of the common housefly.
- Flies all follow a complete metamorphosis with distinct egg, larval (maggots), pupal and adult stages.
- The whole of this process can take up to ten days in warm weather and up to a month in cold weather.

## Lifestyle

- The adult fly mates, and then lays its eggs in a substance that will provide sufficient food for the immature stage, a pale, legless maggot.
- The breeding site is nearly always moist (damp soil, rotting vegetation and meat or animal faeces) and surrounds the soft-bodied maggots.
- When maggots are fully grown, they stop feeding and usually wander from the breeding site in search of a place to pupate.
- After pupation they emerge as a fly.
- Flies are attracted to food and other rubbish, they lay their eggs on the rubbish and these then hatch into maggots. The maggots then form pupae and eventually hatch into flies.

## Significance

- Because animal excrement and domestic waste is an ideal breeding ground for flies, it means that they can spread disease.
- Their body can pick up disease from food waste and excrement and carry this to food or surfaces that they subsequently land on.
- Diseases can also be carried in a fly's stomach, which can also be transferred onto food from their saliva and faeces.

Maggots only exist if flies have been allowed to have access to your rubbish. So if flies land on your rubbish they may lay eggs and these will hatch into maggots. If flies do not come into contact with your rubbish, then you will not get maggots.

## How to avoid maggots and flies in your residual bin

Following these simple guidelines should prevent you from getting maggots

- If possible keep your bin in a shaded place in your garden and out of the full sun.
- Always make sure that your wheeled bin lid is closed properly. Remember if it is open just a few millimetres a fly can enter.
- Clear plates away immediately after a meal, do not leave plates on the side in the kitchen containing leftover food.
- Always wrap and double wrap food waste in newspaper before placing in your kitchen bin.
- Ensure that your kitchen bin has a tight fitting lid and that it is always closed when not in use.
- Use a dustbin/wheelie bin liner, and ensure that after you have deposited waste in it, the top is folded or tied in order to stop flies getting in.
- Dispose of solid waste from disposable nappies down the toilet and then fasten the nappy tightly on itself, and double bag, before placing in the bin. The use of 'real nappies' is much more eco-friendly and cheaper in the long run than using disposables, and will reduce the amount of waste in your residual bin.
- Avoid leaving cat/dog food uncovered all day. Remove it as soon as possible.

- Do not leave excess waste around the wheeled bin, dispose of it as soon as possible at the Civic Amenity Site at Charlton Lane Shepperton.

## **Control**

If maggots do get into your wheeled bin, most of them will go when your bin is emptied. However, the following tips may be useful to you:

- Maggots and fly eggs can be killed with boiling water.
- Clean/wash your bin out once it has been emptied. If you do not want to do this yourself you can get in touch with professional bin cleaners.
- Try using a cleaning product with a fragrance, as this will help to deter the flies from entering and laying eggs in the bin.

If you find that your bin is starting to smell, the following tips may be of use to you:

- If possible place your bin in a shaded area in the garden.
- Ensure that your bin lid is kept closed
- Clean your bin regularly after it has been emptied.
- The use of detergents and cleaning products with a fragrance will help to keep the flies away.
- Sprinkle vinegar in the bin to help neutralise odours.
- Always double wrap food waste, in particular meat and animal waste. Remove as much air as possible before sealing the bag as this will help to slow down the general decomposition of the waste.