Every garden has insects. Use these tips to safely identify and manage insects in the garden.

**Focus on the Basics**

Give plants the best growing conditions possible by using compost, weeding often and irrigating regularly. Don't forget to rotate crops and clean-up dead and diseased plants.

**Observe**

Keep an eye out for insects and insect damage. Are leaves being chewed? Is sap being sucked? Are fruits being pierced? Can you observe the insect in action?

**Identify the Insect**

Gardens are full of bugs. Some are helpful. Some are not. See the resources below or online to help identify the bug in question.

**Choose your Method**

- **Do nothing**
  
  No joke! In some cases, the damage caused by an insect will be minor or the insect will move on.

- **Hand pick ‘em**
  
  Large insects can be picked off by hand. Look for the insect’s eggs underneath leaves and scrape those off with a knife.

- **Time plantings to avoid pests**
  
  Some insects come out early in the season, others late. If possible, plant crops at times when pest numbers are lower.

- **Use natural insecticides**
  
  The safest bet is to use common household items like soap, garlic, and hot pepper. Ask your local store about other safe items.

**Know Any Bad Bugs?**

- **Aphids**
- **Squash bug**
- **Striped cucumber beetle**
- **Spotted cucumber beetle**
- **Cabbage worm**
- **Tomato Hornworm**

**Common Garden Pests & Problems:**


**Organic Pest Control Techniques:**


Brought to you by Grow Well Missouri. Contact Bill McKelvey, University of Missouri, 573.882.4973.

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