

# Cockroaches

## A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

**Note:** This sheet covers American (*Periplaneta americana*) and German (*Blattella germanica*) cockroaches. (The American cockroach is also known as the palmetto bug.) For the Madagascar hissing roach, see the *Hissing Roach CareSheet* in this series.

### Care and handling

Remove cockroaches from the shipping carton as soon as possible. If the roaches are not to be used immediately, they should be placed in a habitat and given food and water.

### Habitat Setup and Maintenance

A 30 × 30-cm (12 × 12") habitat will house up to 24 American or German roaches. Floor space is more important than height. Because roaches can chew through cloth and cardboard, the container should be metal or plastic, such as a waste can covered with a screen top. The mesh should be of wire and fine enough to prevent hatchling nymphs from escaping. It is important that the habitat be secure since these cockroaches can establish themselves in human dwellings.

Cover the bottom of the habitat with a few layers of either paper towel or cardboard. Half of a paper egg crate or the paper tube from a roll of paper towels or toilet tissue will increase hiding space.

Feed cockroaches dry dog food, rolled oats, wheat germ, bread, apples, and potatoes. For water, use a small plastic container with a hole punched in the lid. Insert a cotton wick through the hole down into the water. The wick should extend at least 1" through the lid. Maintain American and German roaches at 21–26 C (70–79° F).

### FAQ's

*Are these cockroaches household pests?*

Yes. American and German cockroaches are common pests that have been introduced around the world. Do not release them in any stage of the life cycle.

*How large are these cockroaches?*

American cockroaches are larger, reaching a body length of up to 4 cm (just over 1½"). German cockroaches reach 1–2 cm (½–¾") in body length.

*Why do we study cockroaches?*

They are important model organisms for studies of physiology, behavior, and nerve responses.

**Problems?** We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

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