

BEWARE!

**IT MAY NOT BE IN YOUR SPRING BREAK TRAVEL PLANS BUT
THIS STOWAWAY MAY TRY TO RETURN WITH YOU!**



**Actual size of
adult bed bugs**

Bug at bottom is engorged with blood. Immature bugs may look much smaller.

Hotels, motels, cruise ships, apartments and resorts are only some of the lodgings that are experiencing a growing problem with bed bugs, a kind of blood-feeding insect most of us have only read about in history books. You may have heard reports of travelers unknowingly being bitten by these parasites and then bringing them home in luggage, clothing, or souvenirs. Try not to let it happen to you. **Here's what you can do to avoid bed bugs during your spring break travels.**

1. You're already making a big start simply by informing yourself.

2. Pack a strong flashlight.

3. When you check in at your lodging, the first and most important thing to do is to lift the linens and look at the mattress. You'll be looking for insects or staining that indicates that the insects have been there. The photos below show what to look for. If the mattress looks like the one on the left, ask for a new room. And check that room. The photo on the right shows several different sizes and ages of bed bugs hiding along a mattress seam.



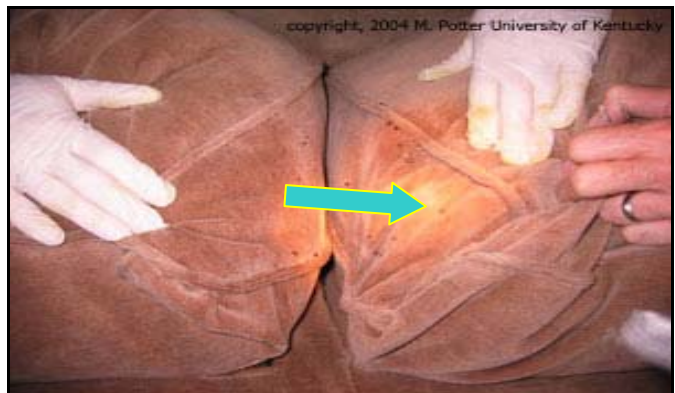
4. If you find no sign of insects on the mattress, move to the bed frame, headboard, and bedside furniture. Here's where a flashlight really comes in handy. Check carpentry joints and trim. If the nightstand has a drawer, check inside corners and along the outside surfaces of the drawer—sides and bottom. The photo on the right shows bed bugs hiding beside a recessed screw under a nightstand. Here again, if you see bed bugs or their stains, ask for a new room. (Perhaps only the mattress has been replaced in an otherwise infested room.)



5. Another place to look is along the baseboard closest to the bed. Using your flashlight, check cracks and crevices. If the room is carpeted, check along the edges where the carpet meets the wall. The photo on the right shows several sizes of bed bugs sheltering between the carpet and the wall. The blue line contains two eggs; the lavender, bed bug fecal stains; the red, a newly hatched bed bug that has not yet taken a blood meal; and the green, an adult. If you see the insects or their signs, ask for another room and begin searching the mattress.



6. Finally, check any upholstered furniture your room may contain. Look between, under and behind all cushions. The blue arrow in the photo at the right points to one of several bed bugs found on this sofa. Even if all other areas of your room are insect free, if an item of furniture has been moved from an infested area into your room, you may pick up one or more bed bugs as you relax in front of the television. By now you know the drill--ask for a new room and begin searching the mattress...



7. If, upon your return, you find that you have a bed bug infestation beginning, do not try to resolve it by yourself. Many pesticide products you would buy over the counter could make the problem worse. **Do call 4WORK.** We can verify the problem and begin to help you or set your mind at ease if we find the insects are not present. But don't wait. We can help. With this insect, delay means unnecessary discomfort for you.

8. Before you leave for spring break, **you may wish to learn more about this increasingly common insect and how to avoid becoming its food source.** Here are some excellent websites to get started:

www.uky.edu/Aq/Entomology/entfacts/struct/ef636.htm
(Thank you for the use of your photos, Dr Mike Potter.)
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/IN297>