

Keeping Snakes Away From Your Home

What attracts snakes into the yard or house?

Snakes are often attracted to yards and houses, when food and shelter are unknowingly provided by the human inhabitants. Brown snakes and taipans eat rodents and are attracted to garden or farm sheds to hunt rats and mice. Pythons regularly enter chicken pens and aviaries to prey on the occupants. They are also found in roof cavities hunting for rats and possums. Brown tree snakes are specialists at invading aviaries, often becoming trapped inside after they have eaten a bird. These snakes can also be found at night hunting for geckos around window sills in the home. Common tree snakes actively hunt frogs during the day and are often seen around the house and garden where frogs occur.

Houses and yards can also be used by snakes for shelter. Carpet pythons are regularly found curled up in ceilings, enjoying the security and warmth. A variety of snake species is often encountered in places such as timber piles and under sheets of corrugated iron.

How can I keep snakes out of my yard?

You can take measures to reduce the attractiveness of your yard or house to snakes. If you have a rock wall or other structure that has the potential to house frogs and rats, and in turn attract snakes, discourage these animals by blocking holes. Avoid creating habitat for snakes by keeping a tidy, well-maintained yard and shed. Actively discourage rats and mice, and snake-proof your aviaries and poultry pens.

How do I snake-proof my house?

Ensure that the yard is tidy with shrubs and gardens kept away from the house. Snakes will shelter in houses, under shrubs and in timber stacks to avoid the hottest parts of the day. It is also important to ensure that food scraps are disposed of properly to discourage rats and mice as snakes are attracted to places where they can obtain food. Bird owners should also discourage rodents by ensuring that aviaries are kept clean and hygienic and that the mesh is small enough to stop snakes entering.

Blocking off as many potential access points as possible can significantly reduce the chance of snakes entering your house. Install screens on doors and windows. Block any holes around the house including those between the roof and ceiling. Extra care should be taken during summer when the snakes are most active. In areas that experience flooding, snakes will move to higher ground during a flood. Take extra precautions at these times.

Backyards



Make your backyard unsuitable for snakes by having garden beds away from the house. Keep the lawn well maintained and low in height. This is an example of a snake-safe yard.

Homes

Stop snakes entering your home by screening doors and windows, and blocking all potential entry points.

If a snake finds its way into your home, close your internal doors, open your external doors and give the snake a chance to leave.

Never interfere with snakes. They will defend themselves. A high proportion of snakebites have resulted from people trying to handle, interfere with or kill snakes.

Timber piles and compost

Always ensure that timber piles are neatly stacked preventing shelter for rodents and snakes. Tidy up your yard during the colder months when snakes are less active.

Place food scraps in closed compost bins to make sure that rodents aren't attracted to your home.

Nurseries and aviaries

Keep your nursery and greenhouse tidy. The warm environment can attract snakes.

Notice that this nursery has elevated trays to ensure visibility, and a clean and tidy working environment.

Rats and birds attract snakes. Make your bird aviaries rat and snake-proof. Talk to your pet shop about ways to prevent snakes entering aviaries. Store bird seed in rodent-proof containers.

Gardening and yard work

When gardening, wear gloves, long pants and covered shoes.

Always lift objects so that they face away from you. This reduces the likelihood of putting yourself in a dangerous situation if a snake is sheltering underneath.

The outdoors

When hiking:

- always stay on formed paths or tracks so that you can see and avoid snakes,
- carry a first aid kit that contains pressure bandages with you,



- · always wear protective clothing such as covered shoes and trousers, and
- carry a torch at night so that you can see where you are going.