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Hand-picking Insects

Today on Gardening in a Minute: hand-picking insects.

If pesky insects are causing problems with your plants, now's the time to develop an integrated pest management strategy.

For large insects like caterpillars, a good first line of defense is to remove them by hand.

Put on a pair of gloves, pull the insects off the plants, and drop them in a container of soapy water. The soap breaks the surface tension, so the insects will sink to the bottom and drown.

If you feel squeamish about handling insects, ask a child to help. Kids are naturals at catching insects! Remind them to wear gloves and check the undersides of leaves, since pests often hide there.

Hand-picking insects is a great integrated pest management strategy because it causes zero harm to you or the environment. And it won't cost you a penny!

For more information about integrated pest management and many other gardening topics, contact your county Extension office or visit Gardening in a Minute dot com.

Gardening in a Minute is a production of the University of Florida's Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology, IFAS Extension, and WUFT-FM.

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