

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## What Do Stink Bugs Eat?

Stink bugs are interesting insects with a diet that can vary depending on their species. Most stink bugs are herbivores, which means they eat plants. However, some species are omnivores, which means they eat both plants and other insects. Let's take a closer look at what stink bugs eat and how they get their food.

### Plant Eaters

The majority of stink bugs feed on plants. They use their long, straw-like mouthparts, called a proboscis, to pierce through plant stems, leaves, or fruit to suck out the juices. Their favorite foods often include fruits like apples, peaches, and tomatoes. They also feed on vegetables and other crops like corn and soybeans. This diet makes them a common pest in gardens and farms, as they can damage plants by feeding on them.

### Meat-Eating Stink Bugs

While many stink bugs stick to plants, some are considered predatory. These meat-eating stink bugs hunt other insects, such as caterpillars or beetles. This makes them helpful to farmers, as they can reduce the population of pests that harm crops. Predatory stink bugs use their proboscis to pierce their prey and consume the fluids inside.

### Omnivores

Some stink bugs are omnivores and eat both plants and insects. This flexible diet helps them survive in different environments. If plant food is scarce, they can switch to hunting other insects or scavenging.

### How They Find Food

Stink bugs rely on their strong sense of smell to locate food. This sense helps them find juicy fruits, tender leaves, or prey from a distance. Once they find a good food source, stink bugs can feed for several minutes or even hours.

Stink bugs' diets make them important players in their ecosystems. Whether they're feeding on plants or insects, stink bugs play a role in maintaining balance in nature.