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# Winged Insect Key

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## The Winged Insect Key relates various questions to an insect in an attempt to decipher its order for further identification.

Our twenty-one point winged insect key can assist you in identifying a winged insect. Beginning with Question #1, determine which statement ('a' or 'b') is true for the insect in question. From there, simply follow the directions at the end of the *true* statement until you are ultimately given the name of the Order your insect belongs to. Finally, visit our list pages to specifically identify your insect.

### Question 1

- a. Insect has 1 pair of wings - YES, Order Diptera ([flies](#), [mosquitoes](#))
- b. Insect has 2 pair of wings - YES, go to Question #2

### Question 2

- a. Insect has extremely long prothorax (neck) region - YES, go to Question #3
- b. Insect has "regular" length or no prothorax at all - YES, go to Question #4

### Question 3

- a. Forelegs come together in a "praying" position - YES, Order Mantodea ([mantids](#))
- b. Forelegs do NOT come together in a "praying" position - YES, Order Raphidioptera ([snakeflies](#))

### Question 4

- a.** Wings are "armor-like" with membraneous hind wings underneath - YES, Order Coleoptera ([beetles](#))
- b.** Wings are NOT "armor-like" - YES, go to Question #5

### Question 5

- a.** Wings twist when insect is in flight - YES, [Order Strepsiptera \(twisted-wing parasite\)](#)
- b.** Wings flap up-and-down without twisting - YES, go to Question #6

### Question 6

- a.** Wings are triangular in shape - YES, go to Question #7
- b.** Wings are NOT triangular in shape - YES, go to Question #8

### Question 7

- a.** Insect lacks a proboscis and has long filaments at abdominal tip - YES, Order Ephemeroptera ([mayflies](#))
- b.** Insect has a proboscis and lacks long filaments at abdominal - YES, Order Lepidoptera ([butterflies](#))

### Question 8

- a.** Head is elongated (snout-like) - YES, Order Mecoptera ([scorpionflies](#))
- b.** Head is NOT elongated (snout-like) - YES, go to Question #9

### Question 9

- a.** Insect has 2 pair of cerci (pincers) at tip of abdomen - YES, Order Dermaptera ([earwigs](#))

**b.** Insect does NOT have 2 pair of cerci (pincers at tip of abdomen - YES, go to Question #10

### Question 10

**a.** All 4 wings are both similar in size and in shape to each other - YES, go to Question #11

**b.** All 4 wings are NOT similar in size nor in shape to each other - YES, go to Question #16

### Question 11

**a.** Eyes nearly cover or make up entire head - YES, Order Odonata ([dragonflies](#))

**b.** Eyes do NOT nearly cover nor make up entire head - YES, go to Question #12

### Question 12

**a.** All 4 wings are finely veined and are almost 2x longer than abdomen - YES, Order Isoptera ([termites](#))

**b.** All 4 wings are NOT finely veined and are NOT almost 2x longer than abdomen - YES, go to Question #13

### Question 13

**a.** All 4 wings are transparent with many crisscrossing veins - YES, Order Neuroptera ([lacewings](#))

**b.** All 4 wings are NOT transparent with many crisscrossing veins - YES, go to Question #14

### Question 14

**a.** Mouth parts are beak-like and are far back beneath the head - YES, Order Homoptera ([leaf hoppers](#))

**b.** Mouth parts are NOT beak-like and are NOT far back beneath the hear - YES, go to Question #15

**Question 15**

- a. Fan-like hind wings fold flat under forewings covering most of abdomen - YES, Order Plecoptera ([stoneflies](#))
- b. Hind wings fold "roof-like" and are wider at the base than the forewings - YES, Order Megaloptera ([dobsonflies](#))

**Question 16**

- a. Insect is less than 3mm long and has 3 simple eyes as well as compound eyes - YES, [Order Zoraptera](#) ([zorapterans](#))
- b. Insect lacks 3 simple eyes in addition to lacking compound eyes - YES, go to Question #17

**Question 17**

- a. Insect has long hind legs used for jumping and a flat-sided head - YES, Order Orthoptera ([crickets](#), [grasshoppers](#))
- b. Insect lacks long hind legs and has a typical rounded head - YES, go to Question #18

**Question 18**

- a. Membraneous wings have tiny hairs on (around) them; body also has tiny hairs - YES, Order Trichoptera ([caddisflies](#))
- b. Wings lack tiny hairs on (around) them - YES, go to Question #19

**Question 19**

- a. Forewings are half-leathery (at base) and half-membraneous (at tip) in texture - YES, Order Hemiptera (squash bugs)
- b. Forewings are uniform in texture and appearance - YES, go to Question #20

### Question 20

- a. Body is both oval and flattened - YES, Order Blattodea (cockroaches)
- b. Body is not both oval and flattened - YES, go to Question #21

### Question 21

- a. Insect has a constricted waist - YES, Order Hymenoptera (bees, wasps)
- b. Insect lacks a constricted waist - YES, Order Embioptera (web-spinners).

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