What to feed a wolf spider

FOUND A WOLF SPIDER INDOORS?

1. Wolf spiders are not dangerous.
2. Don't pick it up by hand. Herd it into a cup or jar with a stick or card, cover it and carry it outside.
3. Release it near cover, such as leaf litter, a woodpile or stones.
4. Carrying an egg sac or a mass of babies? Release her outside too.
5. Keeping one? House it alone and don't try to raise a whole brood.

Wolf spiders (Penn State Extension): extension.psu.edu

Wolf spiders (University of Kentucky Entomology): uky.edu

✓ Safe staples

- **Crickets** – Main feeder, sized to the spider
- **Dubia and other roaches** – Roach nymphs no longer than the spider
- **Fruit flies** – Flightless cultures for spiderlings
- **Fresh water** – Bottle-cap dish; mist for spiderlings

! Small amounts only

- **Mealworms** – Crush the head; they burrow
- **Mealworm beetles** – Adult extra, not the main diet
- **Superworms** – Adults only, head crushed, not near a molt
- **Waxworms** – Fatty treat; easy to overfeed
- **Houseflies and bluebottles** – Hatch from pupae; never swatted flies
- **Moths** – Feeder-raised only, not porch-light moths
- **Grasshoppers and locusts** – Captive-bred, sized to the spider
- **Earthworms** – Rare extra, small piece
- **Woodlice (isopods)** – Zoo-used; some spiders ignore them
- **Pre-killed prey** – Fresh, on tongs; remove within hours

✗ Never feed

- **Bees, wasps and ants** – Stings and bites can kill a spider
- **Fireflies** – Defensive toxins; spiders reject them
- **Wild-caught insects** – Pesticides and parasites
- **Other spiders** – Cannibals; one spider per enclosure
- **Pinky mice and lizards** – Rare in the wild; not for pets
- **Meat and hamburger** – Not prey; spoils in the enclosure
- **Fish food and dried bugs** – Dry food a spider can't use
- **Fruit and vegetables** – Spiders are predators
- **Bread and grains** – Spiders eat only animal prey
- **Milk and dairy** – Plain water only
- **Honey and sugar water** – Live prey and plain water only

Feeding schedule

Age	Looks like	Food	Amount	How often
0–2 weeks	Tiny spiderlings riding in a mass on the mother's abdomen	Nothing. The mother doesn't feed them	None	Leave them on the mother
2–8 weeks	Free-roaming spiderling a few millimeters long	Flightless fruit flies, pinhead crickets or tiny isopods	1–3 fruit flies or one pinhead cricket	1–2 times a week; check 2 days later and feed again if it ate
2–8 months	Juvenile; body roughly 1/4 to 1/2 inch	Small crickets or roach nymphs	One prey item no longer than the spider's body	Every 4–7 days, going by abdomen size
8 months and up	Subadult or adult; large Hogna females reach about 1 to 1 3/8 inches of body	Adult crickets or roaches; mealworm beetles as an extra	One prey item about the size of the front body section	Every 5–7 days
Around a molt	Refuses food and hides or seals itself in its burrow	Nothing	Take out all live prey	Wait about a week after the molt before feeding (a few days for spiderlings)
Gravid or egg-sac females	Swollen abdomen, then a round silk egg sac on her spinnerets	Crickets or roaches	One prey item, as for other adults	About twice as often as other adults