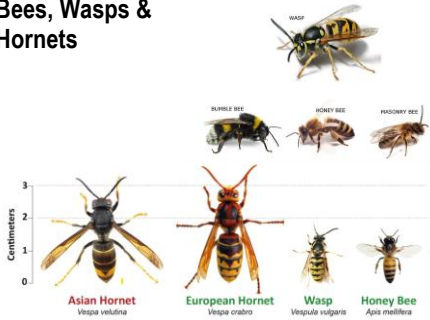


There are no deadly or severely poisonous bugs in the UK, however several insects and arachnids deliver painful, venomous bites or stings, and during summer months and periods of warmer weather we are more likely to come into contact with them. Insect bites or stings are not usually serious and get better in a few days, though sometimes they can become infected or cause a serious allergic reaction. If in doubt seek professional advice*. The most notable culprits include the Noble False Widow spider, biting horseflies, ticks that can spread diseases, and invasive Asian hornets. Bites from some insects can also cause illnesses, such as [Lyme disease](#) from ticks and [malaria](#) from mosquitoes in certain parts of the world. These are the UK's most common biting and stinging bugs:

Spiders & Arachnids		
Noble False Widow		The noble false widow is the most commonly reported of all the false widow spiders in the UK, and is the largest of the 3 most common false widow spiders. It reaches a body length of 8.5mm-11mm. Sometimes sensationalised in the media, this spider is the UK's most venomous species. While their bite is rarely severe, it can be extremely painful (comparable to a wasp sting) and cause localised swelling.
Woodlouse Spider		Recognisable by their bright red fangs, they will bite in self-defence if handled, which can be quite painful
Ticks		Tiny arachnids found in wooded and grassy areas. Often found in areas where there are or have been sheep or deer. While not venomous, their bites can transmit diseases like Lyme disease. An upsurge in ticks could follow a long hot summer. Tick bites are not always painful at the time, and you may not notice a tick unless you see it on your skin. Regularly check for ticks on your clothes and skin, and on children and pets after being outdoors. Due to the risk of Lyme Disease and the potential serious illness, if you have been bitten by a tick go to A&E!
Stinging Insects		
Bees, Wasps & Hornets		The most common stinging insects in the UK. They generally only sting in self-defence or when their nest is threatened, though a sting can be life-threatening to those with severe allergies. European Hornets The UK's native hornet. They are larger than wasps and pack a more painful sting, but they are not aggressive unless provoked. Asian Hornets An invasive species occasionally found in the UK. They pose a massive threat to local wildlife and bees. If you spot one, you are encouraged to report it via the Asian Hornet Watch App .
Biting Flies		
Horseflies	 	These large flies are notorious for their aggressive, painful bites, which can leave itchy and sometimes infected welts. Horsefly bites can be large, painful and may bleed. They often become infected and can cause cellulitis.
Midges		Common in damp, rural areas (especially in Scotland). They swarm in large numbers and their bites can leave highly itchy, irritating marks.
Mosquitoes		Present in the UK, particularly near standing water. Unlike tropical mosquitoes, native species do not carry life-threatening diseases, though their bites can be itchy.

⚠ What to do if bitten or stung

*For most minor bites or stings, you can wash the area with soap and water, apply an ice pack to reduce swelling, and use creams to stop the itching. You can find comprehensive advice and monitor symptoms using the [NHS Insect Bites and Stings Guide](#).

Seek immediate emergency medical help if you experience difficulty breathing, chest pain, or rapid swelling of the face or throat.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/injuries/skin-injuries/tick-bites/>