Tick Environment
Ticks don’t fly or jump. Rather, a tick climbs to the ends of blades of grass or weeds and waits with its front legs extended until it can grab onto a passing host.

Ticks are most common in woodlands or overgrown places where the ground is covered with leaf litter, thick weeds, or tall grass. These are the areas where ticks are not only protected from the harsh and drying effects of the sun and wind, but also where their animal hosts (such as mice and deer) live.

Ticks may occasionally be found on well-mowed lawns, or even inside your home, as they can drop off of pets or other animals. Effective tick control requires: maintaining good landscape practices; conducting frequent tick checks of yourself, children, and pets; and the proper use of EPA registered insect repellents.

Tick Control around the house
1. Tick habitat Avoid wooded and brushy areas where deer, rodents, and ticks are common
2. Woodchip barrier Use a 3 foot barrier of wood chips or rocks to separate the “tick zone” and rock walls from the lawn
3. Wood Pile Keep wood pile on the wood chip barrier, away from the home
4. Lawn Make sure lawn is mowed frequently to prevent ticks from migrating into often-used areas of the yard
5. Family Activity Area Enjoy daily living activities such as gardening and outdoor play inside this perimeter
6. Gardens Plant deer resistant crops. If desired, an 8 foot fence can keep deer out of the yard
7. Play sets Keep play sets in the “tick safe zone” in sunny areas where ticks have difficulty surviving

Chemical control options
Application of pesticides for tick control is less effective than habitat modification techniques. Always, “Read the Label First”, when applying pesticides. Treat tick habitat with a product specifically labeled for controlling ticks. On-post residents should consult with Preventive Medicine staff to survey your area for ticks and determine if chemical control is needed. Applying pesticides should be considered only as a last resort. If living off-post, it is best to hire a professional pest control company.

Personal protective measures
Despite your best efforts, keeping your yard entirely free of ticks and their animal hosts may be impossible. Personal protective measures are, therefore, very important. This includes wearing clothing that will prevent ticks from reaching your skin, such as long sleeve shirt and long pants. Tuck your shirt into your pants and your pant cuffs into your socks or boots. Use an insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on your exposed skin (i.e. skin that is not covered with clothing). Use permethrin on your clothing. Always FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS when applying repellents. Be sure to check your clothing and body carefully for ticks when you have been outdoors. See also the DOD Insect Repellent System.

Additional resources
APHC Fact Sheets
- Protect Yourself from Tick-Borne Diseases
- Tick Control Around the Home

Videos
- How to Remove Attached Ticks
- Reducing the Threat of Ticks Around Your Home
- How to Prevent Tick Bites

Contact the Entomological Sciences Division for more information on ticks, tick-borne diseases, and prevention at 410-436-3613 or email at usarmy.apg.medcom-aphc.mbx.pesticide-hotline@mail.mil