

Discriminating among *Drosophila* Instars

1st Instar



2nd Instar



The difference between the first and second instar lies in the size of the mouthparts. In 1st instars the mouth hooks are so small as to look like two pairs of tiny black spots. In 2nd instars the mouth hooks are larger and their structure is clearer.

2nd Instar



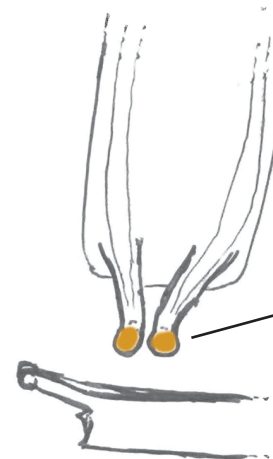
Clubbed anterior spiracles

3rd Instar



Branched anterior spiracles

The difference between the 2nd and 3rd instar lies in the spiracles. In the 2nd instar the anterior spiracle is club-like, while in the 3rd instar it is branched. The posterior spiracles of the third instar also have a dark orange ring at their tip, which is lacking or weakly present in the 2nd instar. You can use this band to identify 3rd instars when they are feeding and only their posterior spiracles are visible.



Orange ring