

thinkproject

Build your own bee hotel



1. Materials

In the wild bees lay their eggs inside the hollows of reeds, you can mimic this with untreated hollow canes, such as common reed or bamboo of 10cm or more in length and 2 to 10mm in diameter.

You will need

- A cylindrical container for your canes. A washed and dried 2L bottle should do the trick!
- Modelling clay or something similar (important to ensure it's non-toxic).
- Sandpaper
- Twine

2. Preparation

- Thread a length of twine through your container so you can hang your hotel later
- Bind your canes together using twine and insert into the container
- Start packing extra canes into the container if it seems loose, they should not be able to move around so pack tightly!
- Use the modelling clay to plug-up one end of the canes, you can also use some clay between the canes to keep them secure



3. Assembly



- Cut the top and bottom off your container
- Trim your canes down to size, there should be a 1cm distance between the lip of the container and your canes to make sure water can't drip in
- Take your sandpaper and sand down the edges of your container and the ends of the canes – rough edges can hurt bees or tear their wings

4. Maintenance

- Hang your bee hotel somewhere secure where it cannot be blown around by the wind
- The hotel should be at least 1m off the ground, clear of vegetation blocking the entrance and away from bird feeders
- Move your hotel into a shed or similar during the winter and re-hang in March
- Keep an eye out for signs of moisture in the hotel and replace the canes periodically to make sure bee-killing parasites don't check in

Tip:

Make sure the canes are fully dried out and do not retain moisture, you want to make sure the cavity stays as-dry -as-possible to discourage mould and pests.

Tip:

Your hotel should be positioned in full sun, facing South or South-East.

Fact



A bee's diet consists mainly of wildflowers. You can dedicate a space outdoors for a wildflower patch, and also ask your local government if they have a policy for creating wildflower patches in unused green spaces, for example motorway embankments, to make sure bees have a good supply of food on their travels.

