



SPRING GARDENING ACTIVITY

Make your own bee hotel.

1.5 hours – all ages – outdoor fun – learn & create*

We need bees. They are important pollinators for flowers, fruits, and vegetables. One third of our favourite foods like apples, almonds and strawberries only grow as a result of bee pollination! Travelling from flower to flower spreading the pollen that crops need to grow.

Creating a bee-friendly space in your outdoor area is a great way to help them continue their important work. Bee hotels can provide shelter for solitary bees, as they don't live in colonies – unlike bumblebees and honeybees. The UK has over 250 species of solitary bees but those most likely to take up residence are: mason bees, leaf cutter bees and white-faced bees.

In this guide we will show you how to make use of foraged and recycled materials to create your own bee hotel, providing somewhere safe for our pollinators to nest, rest and lay eggs.

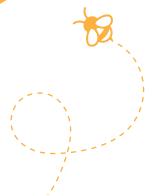
Create a **BUZZ** in your garden by following these instructions:

What you need

- Empty tin
- Foraged hollow stems
- Sticks and twigs for decoration
- Gardening string
- Scissors
- Pencil & ruler
- Wide sticky tape
- Screw or nail to mount
- Wildflower seeds



B E E V I V E



#DIY Instructions

* Please note: Children must be supervised at all times.

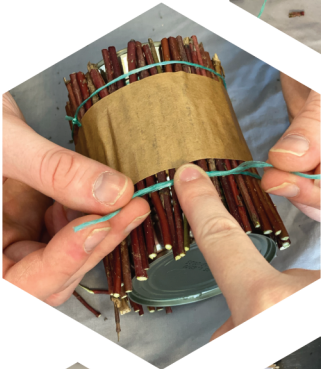
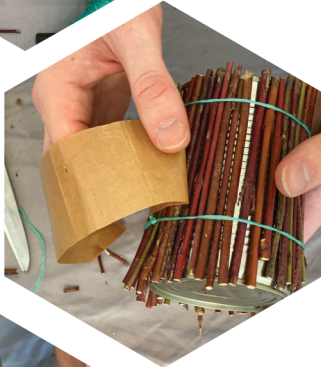
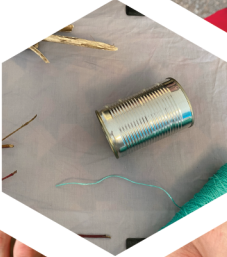
1. First – we must forage for hollow stems, sticks and twigs to build our bee hotel. You could try looking in your garden or visiting a local park/forest. Good stems are bramble, reed or bamboo! The stems must be hollow and smooth on the inside with a variety of hole sizes between 2-10mm diameters and at least 15 cm in length, anything longer can be cut to size at home. Once you have a good collection, take home to dry thoroughly.

2. Prepare your area, clean your tin and remove outer packaging. Measure from one end of the tin to the other and make a note of the length. You will need to trim enough twigs to this length which will cover the outside of the tin.

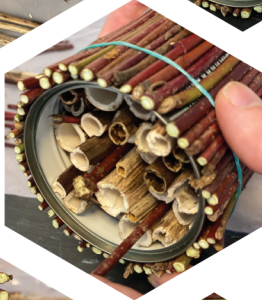
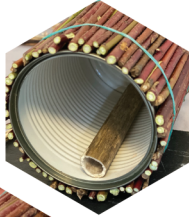
3. Cut a length of tape long enough to go around the tin once. Lay down your sticky tape on a hard surface sticky side up and one by one line up your sticks close together ready to wrap around the tin. Once ready, start rolling nice and steady!

4. Ask for some help to tie a piece of gardening string tight, one on each end of the tin can to secure the twigs into place. Carefully peel off the tape and insert extra sticks so there are no gaps. This will help to protect the tin, camouflage it, and keep it cool.

5. Cut the hollow stems 1 cm shorter than the depth of the tin, by cutting them shorter we create a canopy at the entrance of the bee hotel which will help protect the stems against the rain.



B E E V I V E



6. One by one insert your hollow stems into the tin can. When you are sure they're tight enough you can shake it upside down to check! If there are a few small gaps you can use leftover twigs to squeeze them together.

7. Personalise your bee hotel, decorate it to make it your own. We decided to glue our 'VIB' pin badge to the end of ours!

8. Tie another 2 lengths of gardening string to each end of the tin and then tie those two strings together to create a hanging loop. Like you would find on the back of a photo frame.

9. Find the perfect sunny spot in your garden (preferably South/SE facing) and with adult supervision, hang securely from a wall or fence using a nail or screw. Locate at least 1 metre above ground, with no plant life blocking the tunnels.

10. Finally, scatter bee-friendly wild flower seeds nearby the hotel. The bees will love you for providing breakfast too!

Keep an eye on your bee hotel throughout the year for any visitors returning with pollen on their hind legs, carrying leaves or mud to make nests inside!

Parents

As this is a temporary design, we recommend carefully moving your bee hotel into somewhere dry and cool during the winter months (October to February). Place outside again in the Spring and once the new bees have hatched please replace the tubes with new fresh ones. Please explore our blog to learn more about how to look after your bee hotel.



BEE proud of your bee-friendly space and don't forget to tag us in your photos!