



HOW TO MAKE A BEE HOTEL

1. IDENTIFY THE NATIVE BEES IN YOUR AREA

There are over 1,700 species of bees native to Australia. It's important to identify the bees in your area so you can cater to their specific nesting needs.

2. UNDERSTAND HOW THEY NEST

Different species of bees have their own quirky nesting habits! Some prefer to nest in the ground by burrowing into mud or clay, while others burrow into the soft wood of dying tree limbs or hollow out plant stems. Some bees even snip neat circles out of leaves to create a cosy cradle for their eggs inside their burrow. Because native bees nest in a variety of ways, designing your bee hotel with multiple nesting options will help attract a range of species.



3. PLAN AND DRAW OUT YOUR DESIGN

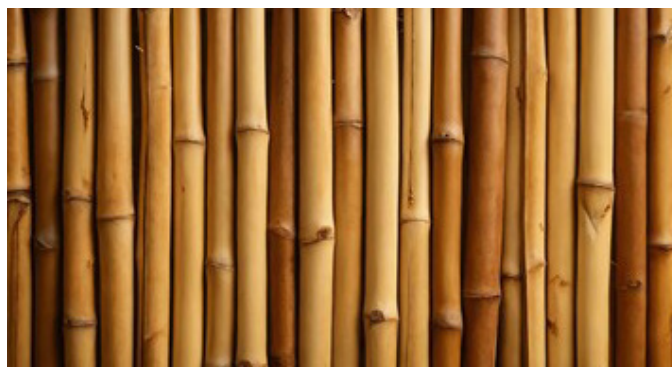
Bee hotels come in all shapes, sizes, and designs, so let your imagination run wild! Your hotel can be as simple or as elaborate as you like so you can design one that suits both your garden's aesthetic and the needs of the bees. See the next page for some inspiration!

4. BUILD THE FRAME

Ensure your frame is sturdy enough to support heavier materials like clay bricks and blocks of wood. Feel free to add a splash of colour! Paint the frame with any water-based outdoor paint you like. Just be careful not to paint the nesting materials themselves—bees aren't fans of chemicals.

5. COLLECT THE MATERIALS

Most of the materials you need can be found right in your own backyard. Look for untreated timber or fallen branches from trees like Poinciana. Many items, like mud bricks, can even be made at home. A word of warning: native bees avoid treated wood, so be sure to use only natural materials in your bee hotel for the best results. See below for information on various materials and how to prepare.



6. PREPARE THE MATERIALS

Native bees are excellent builders, but you can make your bee hotel more inviting by doing some of the work for them! Drill holes or cut lengths of wood to create the perfect nesting spaces. You can design a bee hotel that caters for all types of bees by layering the materials in a way that offers a variety of nesting options for different bee species.



7. CHOOSE THE PERFECT LOCATION

Place your bee hotel somewhere that:

- Gets a little morning light but remains shaded during the heat of the day.
- Is in a sheltered spot, safe from strong winds.
- Has a roof to keep the bees dry (if your hotel is going to be out in the open).

For the best chance of attracting them, position your hotel in a bee-friendly garden, near plants and a water source.

See above for some inspirational gardens.

You can also download our list of bee attracting plants from [here](#).

8. INSTALL YOUR BEE HOTEL

Make sure your bee hotel is securely attached so it won't be knocked over or blown around by the wind. Hotels designed to attract wood-dwelling bees can be placed high in trees or on stands, while hotels that include options for ground-dwelling bees should be installed closer to the ground, as these species prefer to nest low.

9. FILL YOUR BEE HOTEL WITH MATERIALS

Now, fill your bee hotel with the materials you've gathered. Place your wood blocks, tree limbs, and bamboo higher in the frame, and place your mud bricks at the bottom. For ground-dwelling bees, make sure the mud bricks are no more than 50mm above the ground so they can easily access them.



10. ENJOY WATCHING YOUR BEES MOVE INTO THEIR NEW HOMES!!

TIPS FOR SUCCESS!

- ✓ Ensure all materials used for nesting are free of chemicals
- ✓ Place the hotel in a sheltered location with morning sun
- ✓ Make sure nesting materials are placed so the tunnels run horizontally
- ✓ Place water nearby for the bees to drink
- ✓ Provide a roof on the hotel to protect them from the rain
- ✓ Hardwood will last longer than pine for the frame and internal dividers
- ✓ Recycle old timber where possible
- ✓ Plant bee friendly plants to attract the bees



BEE HOTEL MATERIALS



BEE BAMBOO

Using bamboo stems with a diameter of approximately 3mm to 10mm, cut them to lengths of 10cm - 15cm. You can purchase from a nursery if easier, just ensure they have not used any chemicals. These can be bundled and tied together with string or tape. You can also place them in PVC tubes or old tins to contain them.



BEE TIMBER BLOCKS

Using untreated, dry timber, drill holes of 3mm to 8mm in diameter, and 10cm - 15cm in depth. Soft timbers such as Poinciana work best. Do not drill all the way through, they need a back on their hotel room!



BEE MUDBRICKS

Mix clay soil with water to make mud bricks. You'll need to create a casing to pour the mud into to allow it to set to the size and shape you desire. Before it is completely dry, poke or drill holes of 6mm - 7mm in diameter and approximately 6cm - 10cm in length. Place these on or near the ground.

This project is a proud partnership between the Australian Native Bee Association Rockhampton Branch and Rockhampton Zoo.



BEE HOTEL INSPIRATION!

