



CREATE A BEE HOTEL!

Buglife is pleased by the upsurge in demand for artificial bee nests for gardens. There are a number of commercial varieties available, but why not save some cash and make your own?

You will need:

- Tubes – hollow plant stems or bamboo canes
- Garden twine/string/wire

HOW TO MAKE IT

1. **Prepare the tubes:** any hollow plant stems can be cut into 10-20 cm long sections. Bamboo canes have sealed nodes, cut them so that long hollow sections are exposed; they come in a variety of internal diameters, those up to 1 cm will be used by some species of bee. When cutting down plant stems in the autumn, keep some sections of hollow stems of shrubs and/or fairly tough herbs (even down to 2mm diameter hollows). Cut bramble and rose stems have pith into which tiny bees make their own burrows. If reeds are available, then dead hollow stems can be broken into sections.
2. **Tie a bundle of tubes together:** with garden twine, string or wire.
3. **Hang them up:** place and anchor your nest on a sunny or partly sunny shelf on a shed, or similar location. Ensure that the nest is protected from the rain.
4. **Observe and enjoy:** sit back and watch the different types of solitary bee using their new homes, you may also see species of wasps using the tubes whose larvae feed on the bee grubs.

As an alternative you can drill deep holes of various diameters into a block of untreated wood and place this in a similar position in the garden.



Note: these nests will attract solitary bees, not those that live in groups. Some of these bees are very small and black in colour so they may not even look like what many of us think of as bees!

You will know if your nest is being used as ends of tubes will be sealed with leaves or mud. Your nest may also be used by other bugs such as ladybirds and lacewings, looking for a safe place to shelter in!

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