

How to build a 5* insect hotel

This is all about building lots of different habitats in one place. You can build your insect hotel out of any materials you have available such as dry leaves, moss, wood chips and old bricks.

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for video
instructions



1. Build your hotel structure

- ▶ First step is to choose an area that's flat and strong. Make sure it's close to nectar-rich flowers, which is an essential food source for pollinators.
- ▶ Lay some bricks on the ground to give your hotel support.
- ▶ Use old wooden pallets as a base structure – if you don't have any try asking your friends, neighbours, builders or industrial yards for free pallets.
- ▶ Use around three to four pallets to lay on top of your bricks. You can make a larger or smaller structure depending on how much space you have.

2. Fill in the gaps

- ▶ Bamboo, hollow reed and drilled logs make a great place for solitary bees to lay their eggs. As solitary bees like the sun, place these in the sunniest part of your hotel.
- ▶ Use deadwood and loose bark for beetles, woodlice and centipedes who break down woody material, enriching the soil and benefitting many other animals and plants.
- ▶ Bundle pine cones together, and use dry leaves, stick and moss to fill the gaps to provide a home for ladybirds.
- ▶ Larger logs, pipes, cardboard tubes and broken terracotta pots can be used to provide cool, damp conditions for frogs, toads and newts (who will feast on the slugs in your garden!).



3. Add a roof

- ▶ When you feel like your hotel is high enough, make a roof to keep it dry.
- ▶ You can use old roof tiles, stones or rubble on top of your hotel.
- ▶ Some plants and wild flowers can even be planted on top to act as a roof. Only ones that thrive in dry conditions though! Here are some suggestions:

Herbaceous perennials

- ▶ Lavender
- ▶ Salvia
- ▶ Valerian
- ▶ Ice plant (sedum)
- ▶ Majoram
- ▶ Michaelmas daisy (aster)
- ▶ Cat Mint

Annuals

- ▶ Borage
- ▶ Nasturtium
- ▶ Night scented stock
- ▶ Dill
- ▶ Poached egg plant
- ▶ African marigold

4. Show us your creation!

Take a photo of your hotel and submit here www.ptes.org/my-garden/tell-us-whats-in-your-garden or post on social media and inspire others to do the same!



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