

Love them or hate them, bugs and creepy crawlies are a part of our world and they play a really important part in our eco system.

We all need somewhere to call home, and building a bug hotel is a really good way of helping bugs and insects work their eco-magic!

Building a bug hotel is important in any season because it gives the inhabitants somewhere to shelter away from the elements. Insects encourage pollination of flowers and vegetables and help defend the land from unhelpful bugs that would do damage. Bugs do a really important job so we really need to look after them!

If you'd like to help, you could have a go at making a bug hotel like this one. The great news is that it's easy to make from things that are easily found at home and outside while taking our daily exercise. We've even put together a scavenger hunt for you to make it lots of fun finding everything that you'll need to make your bug hotel.

Maybe you're wondering what kind of bugs might move in once it's ready?

Wood lice, snails, bumble bees, ants, slugs, ladybirds, butterflies, beetles, worms and caterpillars are just some of the creatures who might want to move in!

Finally, maybe you're wondering what kind of things you'll need to make your bug hotel?

Things to look out for at home include: toilet paper rolls, scrap paper, cardboard, milk/juice cartons, clear plastic packaging, margarine tubs, lolly sticks, garden twine or wire, small plant pots/tubs/cartons, wine corks or bottle tops.

Things to look for outdoors include: leaves, pinecones, bark and twigs, flowers, seed pods, moss, wood chips, nut shells, bamboo, grass, straw, gravel, shells and twine.

So... are you ready to get started?

Let's go on a scavenger hunt for what we need!

How to Make a Bug Hotel

Can you find these things?

There are things to find at home - like cartons and packaging, tape and scissors - and things to find outside, like twigs, leaves and grass. Do you think you can find them all? Ready, Steady - Go! Tick off each thing as you find it. Don't worry if you can't find exactly the same things as in the pictures. There are lots of things that you could use instead, use your imagination! Make sure that you have a permanent marker pen though, like a Sharpie, and some strong tape. Ok, now let's get on with some making!



How to Make a Bug Hotel



Step 1: First, pull the side tabs up at the top of the milk / juice carton. Remove the plastic lid and put it to one side as you'll need that later. Ask a grown up to help with this next bit, as you'll probably need some help. Tell your grown up that they may need to use some sharp scissors to do this bit - nail scissors work well for making the first cut into the carton. Cut a window out of the front of the carton, leaving about 1cm all round. Cut a smaller window out of the back of the carton, as shown. Insert some clear plastic food packaging into the carton, to make a window at the back. You might need to cut this to size so that it fits properly. This is so that you can see what the bugs are all up to once they have moved in! There are no right and wrong ways



to do this, it's fine to improvise so long as it all fits in and nothing falls out!

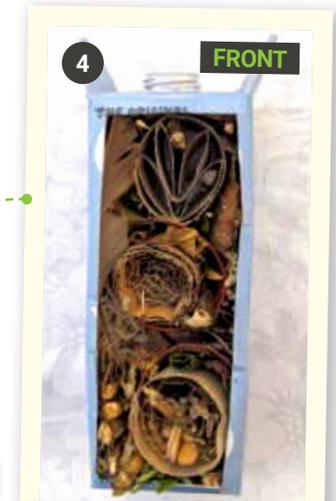
Step 2: Now for the really fun bit! Cut the cardboard tubes to size and pack them into the carton. You can also use other card, tubs or little flower pots to make dividers. Try bending, folding and rolling the card and think about what patterns you can make with it. Make sure that the card is packed in closely together so that it doesn't wobble around and can't fall out.

Step 3: Next, pack all of your 'outside' materials (leaves, grass, twigs etc) into the carton. You might want to add some 'inside' things too – like lolly sticks, wine corks or shredded paper. It's important to pack



everything in as tightly as you can so that it won't fall out, but also try and leave some different sized gaps and holes for larger insects and bees.

Step 4: Next, using the bits that you cut out of the carton at the beginning - or using a second juice carton, margarine tub, or any other plastic sheeting or packaging - cut out



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How to Make a Bug Hotel

window shapes, two roof pieces, and any extra pieces for hotel signs etc that you may want to add to your bug hotel. Make sure that you only use carton or plastic packaging and decorate these with a permanent marker pen so that your signs and windows are waterproof. Attach these to your bug hotel . using duct or gaffa tape if you have it. If not try using some clear sticky tape or double-sided sticky tape instead. When you stick the roof on try and leave a little gap along the top so that the bugs can enter the hotel that way too, and drop through the hole in the top of the carton - like bug superheroes dropping in for a visit!

Step 5: Finally, if you want to use that plastic lid that you put aside at the beginning, you could have a go at making some little friends to greet your new hotel visitors. Bottle tops, gardening wire and plastic packaging are all great for making your very own bottle top bugs. You could use permanent marker pen for the eyes, or you could add some googly eyes if you have any. You could

stick your bottle top bugs onto the hotel to decorate it - or keep them separate, to play with. It's up to you!

Step 6: Finally, you need to find a good spot outdoors for your bug hotel, ready for its new visitors! Try and find somewhere that is semi-sheltered from the elements if you can, and safe from disturbance by other animals or people. Give your new guests time to move in, and then in a few weeks time you'll be able to very carefully check for signs of life through the window! Make sure to be very gentle and very careful when you do this, so that you don't disturb them. Well done for making such a fantastic bug hotel – your guests are sure to love it!

Sophia

