

MAKING A BEE HOUSE

Mason bees are a gentle, rarely-stinging, solitary species of bees that make their nests in small gaps and holes. Female mason bees collect pollen and nectar from plants to pack into their nesting sites, lay their eggs, and cover the egg with mud. Since female mason bees tend to visit multiple plants to create their nests, they're effective pollinators. One of the main causes of the decline of bee species is a loss of habitat. We can help alleviate this problem by giving solitary species like mason bees nesting sites in a homemade bee house!

Materials

- Medium-sized can
- Acrylic paint (optional)
- Sheets of paper—we used a paper shopping bag, but you can use pieces of junk mail, old newspapers, or other recycled paper
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Pencil or Round object—we used a knitting needle, but any object about 0.25-0.5 inch in diameter will work
- White glue or wood glue
- String

Procedure

1. If you would like, you can start by painting the outside of your can. Otherwise, move on to step 2.

2. Measure the length of your can, and cut out rectangles of paper that are as long as your can and about 2 inches wide. Create the nesting straws by wrapping the paper around your round object, placing a line of glue on one long side of the paper, pressing together, and removing from the round object. Repeat until you have enough straws to fit snugly in your can—we needed about 50 straws.

3. Spread some white or wood glue in the bottom and sides of the can and place the paper straw in the can. Once the glue has dried, trim any straws that are sticking out beyond the lip of the can.

4. Tie string around the bee house and hang it outside to start attracting those pollinators!



Source: McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center
www.starhop.com

