



Build a Bug Hotel

What is a Bug hotel?

Bug hotels are constructions that offer shelter for invertebrates, either to overwinter, breed or spend their daily lives. There are no hard and fast rules-they can be made to any size or shape and from a variety of materials to cater for different bugs.

Why build a bug hotel?

Bug hotels can be a focal point for any wildlife garden, even formal gardens where habitat piles might seem a bit messy. Building a bug hotel can encourage pollinators and pest predators into your garden and they are a great way to repurpose unwanted materials.

Bug Hotel Materials

Some suggested filler materials

Natural

Sticks	Dry leaves
Hollow stems	Straw or Hay
Bamboo canes	Deadwood
Stones	Pine cones
Dry seed heads	Bark

Artificial

Corrugated card	Tiles
Tubes and pipes	Bricks
Plant pots	Rubble

Bug hotel ideas



Bug bottle

Simply cut the bottom off of a plastic bottle, add a rolled up piece of corrugated card and string the bottle to a tree branch to create a winter home for ladybirds and lacewings.



Bug Pot

Stuff a plant pot with straw and attach it somewhere upside-down in the garden, either on a sturdy cane or hanging from a tree. This gives bugs a cosy shelter out of the rain.

Bug box

Find or make a wooden box with an open front and attach it securely to a wall (make sure it can support a heavy weight!). Shelter it from the rain or waterproof the top.

Stack materials in the box e.g. drilled logs, air bricks and bunches or tubes of canes.



Bug Tube

Make a tube out of mesh with a scaffold of twigs poked through the bottom and fill it with dead leaves. Lay a waterproof roof on top.

Big Bug Hotel

Make a multi-storey bug hotel standing on the ground. See how to build one overleaf.



Building a Big Bug hotel

There are several ways you can make a Big bug hotel. One of the easiest is to use a framework of reclaimed pallets.

1-Choose a spot for your Bug hotel that combines sun and shade. If you want to include a bee hotel, make sure the south-facing side is in full sun.

2-Lay the foundations Prepare the ground so that it is even and lay bricks to support the corners.





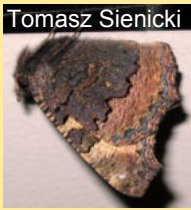
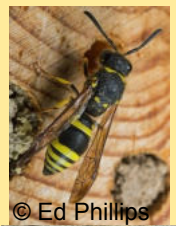


3-Build it up by stacking the pallets to no more than a meter high (about 5 pallets), preferably facing alternate directions if they are square. You might want to peg down the bottom one and secure each pallet to the one below to be on the safe side.



4-Fill it in Add the materials to fill the gaps, the more nooks and crannies the better. Make sure that non-waterproof materials don't stick out too far where they may get rained on. If you are including a bee hotel, put the entrance at the south-facing side. It's good to have deadwood nearest the ground where it will stay cool and humid.

5-Add a waterproof roof. You could use roof tiles, roofing felt (either corrugated or laid over planks), a green roof of turf or a 'brown roof' by putting gritty soil or rubble on top and letting plants take root.

6-Enjoy your bug hotel. Going on a night safari with a torch may reveal the nocturnal invertebrates residents of your bug hotel. Adding a sign to your bug hotel will let friends and neighbours know that you're doing your bit for bugs-especially if it is in a public place.

What will live in my Bug hotel?		
Year-round	Wintering	Breeding
Woodlice Centipedes Millipedes Earwigs Ground beetles Spiders   	Ladybirds Lacewings Butterflies Moths Hoverflies  	Solitary bees Solitary wasps Deadwood beetles   

Further information

Gardening with Invertebrates in mind: www.buglife.org.uk/activities-for-you/wildlife-gardening