

How to make a bug hotel

Create a space for bugs and amphibians to live from natural materials, old pallets, recycled containers, bricks and pieces of old wood. Use leaves, cuttings and general garden waste to provide lots of hidey-holes for all sorts of creatures.



Time to make: 1-2 hours

Suitable for: all ages - children need to be supervised

You will need:

Old pallets/planks of wood

Bricks preferably with holes in them

Roofing felt/tiles

Sticks/cuttings/prunings/dead wood/hollow stems/logs

Stones/tiles

Old toilet rolls/discarded cartons/cardboard

Soil/sand/pine cones/bark/wood chippings/dry leaves/straw/moss

Make the framework

Place some bricks on the ground in an H shape then stack as many old wooden pallets as you like on top of each other no more than 1 metre high. If you don't have pallets you can use wood laid over bricks or stones. Leave larger openings at the bottom for hedgehogs. The structure should be quite strong but, if needed, secure each pallet to the one below.

Fill in the gaps in your bug hotel

The idea is to create as many nooks and crannies as possible that will provide shelter and a cosy bed. Use up any old sticks, twigs, logs, cuttings, stems, moss, straw, paper straws, pine cones, bark, wood chippings, dry leaves and discarded cartons like toilet rolls, boxes and cardboard.

Dead wood and loose bark for creepy crawlies like beetles, centipedes, spiders and woodlice.

Holes and small tubes (not plastic) for solitary bees made out of bamboo, reeds and drilled logs.

Larger holes with stones and tiles, which provide the cool, damp conditions frogs and toads like – if you put it in the centre you'll give them a frost-free place to spend the winter (they'll help eat slugs).

Dry leaves, sticks or straw for ladybirds (they eat aphids) and other beetles and bugs.

Corrugated cardboard for lacewings (their larvae eat aphids, too) – roll it up.

Dry leaves which mimic a natural forest floor.

Straw and hay for invertebrates to burrow in and find safe hibernation sites.

Loose bark for Beetles, centipedes, spiders and woodlice all lurk beneath decaying wood and bark.

Nectar-producing plants - plant some nectar-rich flowers in and around your new bug mansion to provide food for butterflies and bees.



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