

# Garden Homes

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Suppose you are going to a hotel with your family. You'd probably expect to find a room with a bed, a TV, and a bathroom. What might you find in an insect hotel?

Insect hotels don't have beds or TVs, but they do offer ideal "homes" for insects. They can be as small as a backpack or as large as a car.

The idea of creating insect hotels began in Germany. The people there noticed that many insects are in danger of becoming extinct because humans are changing their environment. They decided to create an environment that would protect insects and help them do their work.

They found that different insects prefer different materials. Some insects like wet environments, while others prefer dry areas. Wood, sticks, hay, and leaves are some materials bugs find cozy. Insect hotels may also include sections, or "rooms," that appeal to different insects. Damp rotting logs attract beetles, for example, while dry twigs attract ladybugs.

Why would someone attract insects? Insects are helpful in many ways. Some eat other insects that bite or sting us. Some carry pollen between flowers, which helps plants make seeds.

Hotels for insects may be new, but beehives are not. Humans have been creating homes for honeybees for more than 3,000 years. This hobby is called beekeeping. Beekeeping helps both bees and people. Bees make honey that we like to eat. They also carry pollen between flowers. In addition, the number of bees is decreasing because people are changing the environment.

People have used logs, pottery, and straw to build beehives. Today, people often build wooden hives that look like boxes. Inside the boxes are compartments for the queen bee, worker bees, and the honey they create.

Insects help people in many ways, from controlling pests to helping plants grow. Making insect hotels and beehives are two ways we can help these animals grow strong, too.



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