

DIRECTIONS

mason beebottle™

MASON BEES | (*Osmia lignaria* spp.) are gentle native bees with extraordinary pollinating abilities. With around 140 varieties of mason bees native to North America, these bees are essential to the pollination of flowers, vegetables and spring fruit trees. Mason bees are known as solitary bees because they nest alone. Unlike honey bees, mason bees do not produce honey and do not defend a hive so stinging very rarely happens. The female's stinger is actually her egg tube, so should a rare sting occur, there is no barb or venom. The name "mason" comes from their use of mud to build nests in gaps, cracks and other small cavities. One mason bee can pollinate what would be comparable to around 100 honeybees.

MOUNTING | The Mason Bee Bottle™ was designed to be modern and minimal in appearance as well as provide the perfect nesting location for your bees. Each cardboard tube will hold five to six eggs and the upcycled beer bottle house keeps the elements at bay. To hang your Mason Bee Bottle™, find an outside spot about 6-8 feet off the ground. Make sure the space is protected from rain and facing south or southeast for maximum sun exposure. Under an eave of a roof or an area protected by limbs of a tree are great locations. A local mud source from spring rains (or a diy mud pie) and plenty of nearby blooms will give the bees exactly what they need.

MUD PIE | If you live in a dry environment it is important to have a clear spot of ground or, in an urban setting, an extra flower pot filled with soil works great for making some 'mason mud'.
[mud pie recipe](#): Dig a shallow hole and line with a piece of plastic. Top with soil and add water until you have the consistency of a damp sponge. Think sticky not soupy.

NESTING | During the spring, male bees, identified by their tiny white moustache, will hatch first and fly between flowers to feed and the nest waiting for the female bees to hatch. After mating with the hatched females, the male bee's life cycle is complete. The female bees now begin flying between blossoms to feed, collect pollen and

search for a suitable nesting spot. Your bottle is the perfect location. To build her nest, the female mason bee will use mud to build a base wall in the farthest end of the tube. She will then fill a portion of the tube with a pollen/nectar bundle (it takes about 75 flower visits per bundle), lay an egg and seal it off with another mud wall. She will repeat this process for 6-8 weeks, laying 1-2 eggs a day, until the tube is full. She will then cap it and move on to the next open tube to repeat the process. Each trip to collect pollen and nectar is helping to pollinate your green space and neighborhood. The mason bee works within a 300 foot (100 meter) radius from their nesting house.

INCUBATION | After a few days, the egg will hatch into a larva and will eat the pollen/nectar bundle. The larva will then spin a cocoon, pupate within the cell and, by late summer, transform into its adult stage. Here, in the safety of the cocoon, it will wait out winter and emerge the following spring.

FALL+WINTER | When the temperatures begin to drop in the fall, remove your bottle and store in a dark, unheated location. In spring, when temperatures are steadily in the 40s, replace your bee bottle in last spring's location. Once temperatures reach 55°F (13°C), your bees will begin to emerge. As soon as all your bees have taken flight, replace the used bee tubes with clean new ones and you are ready to enjoy the next generation.

REPLACEMENT NESTING TUBES | Having replacement tubes on hand before your bees emerge is necessary to continue the pollination cycle. Once bees take flight, approximately 3-7 days with steady temperature, the tubes will need to be replaced for next seasons nest building to begin. Bee Bottle™ nesting tube refills are available at pottingshedcreations.com.

WE STAND BEHIND WHAT WE MAKE | Our goal is to produce products of the finest quality and surpass your expectations. If you have a question or problem, just give us a call.



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