

How to Create A Bug Hotel



Happy Earth Day! We are so happy you are helping to celebrate by creating a bug hotel for your own backyard! The bugs will be happy and you will have lots of fun making one and seeing who shows up!



Gather your materials

You will need:

An empty, recycled carton - rinsed and dried

Scissors

Pencil or pen and marker

Recycled straws (if you have any) and recycled water bottles

Small sticks and twigs

Pieces of bark and pebbles or small stones

Acorns, sweet gum balls, pine cones and any other found, loose natural materials (never use living materials!)



Draw a rectangle on one side of your carton.

Leave about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch border which will help to keep your materials inside your bug hotel.

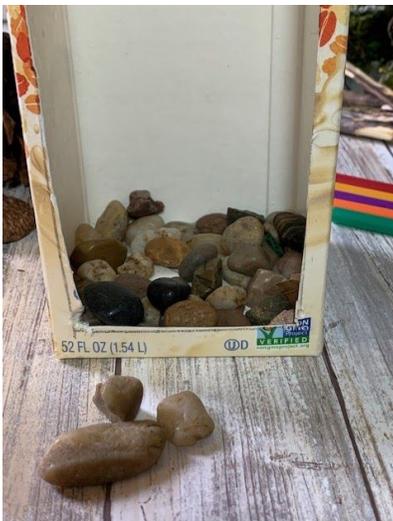


Use your pencil or pen to poke a hole in all four corners. (make sure you leave the container on a flat surface and ask for help if you need it!

Be sure to poke the hole just inside of the line you drew.



Using the hole as a starting point, cut all the way around, following the line you drew

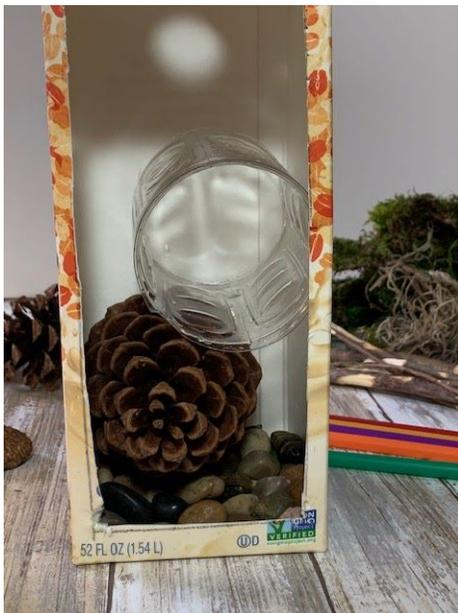


Place your pebbles and stones at the bottom.

This will not only provide some nice crevices for bugs to hide in but it will also give your hotel some stability by weighing down the base!



If you are using recycled bottles, cut off the top and bottom to make cylinders. (you may need some help with this - round things like to roll and can be tricky to cut.



Begin stuffing your bug hotel with your collected materials.

Choose items that look inviting to a bug. They like to hide from predators so find items with lots of nooks and crannies for them to hide in.

You can use the water bottle cylinders to put in items that may roll or fall out such as cut up straws and sticks to help hold them in place.



Stuff your bug hotel full with sticks and loose natural materials. The straws make a wonderful hiding place for insects and they also mimic the shape and structure of many bug “nurseries” where they lay their eggs!



Stuff any small spaces with whatever bits and pieces you can find. This will not only help keep all the materials inside your bug hotel secure, it will also help make your hotel extra inviting for insects!

You can use pine straw, acorn caps, sweet gum balls, sticks, and dried craft moss if you have any.

Please do not use moss you find on the ground - it is living and we don't ever want to take living things out of their ecosystem (which is their home!)



Don't forget to give it a name!

Make a sign and add it to your finished creation!

I can't wait to hear all the wonderful, creative names you can come up with !

Lastly, find a good home for your bug hotel. Look for a place that has some shade and some greenery. Fallen leaves are great - lots of bugs love hiding in there! Don't forget that most bugs are harmless but they do share their space with lots of other creatures and plants so make sure you look carefully and find just the right spot for your hotel!

Please share your bug hotels using the hashtag #unccgardensearthday and we may feature it on our social media!