

Draper's Super Bee Apiaries, Inc.

Observation Hive Instructions

Hive Installation:

Instructions are based on having the ideal conditions available for installation. This does not mean that you cannot have an observation hive if you cannot meet all of these specs.

A southeast entrance is preferred. If you are a business and have customers walking by the hive entrance, then you can build a wooden fence (like a swimming pool fence) or have a hedge fence. The fence or hedge should be at least a couple of feet higher than the observation hive entrance and constructed in a U shaped manner four to six feet back from the wall. A locked gate into this area is desirable.

Inside the building, the observation hive should be installed as close to the wall as possible. There is a rectangular hollow shoot made for the bees to enter and exit. A hole in the wall that matches the size of the shoot is best, but you can also use a piece of 1 1/2" PVC pipe to extend the entrance. All cracks or spaces should be filled with plastic wood or similar substance. The hive must be able to rotate 360 degrees freely. Sunlight should not hit the glass directly. A sugar syrup feeder is built into the observation hive. To feed the bees, use any quart jar that will accept a deep 70mm feeder lid. We have these lids available if you do not have one.

Bee Installation:

To install bees into your observation hive for the first time you can make a split from an existing hive or install a package of bees in the spring. To install a package we recommend that you use a five frame empty nucleus box (1/2 a hive) or an empty deep super. It's a good idea to shake the package bees out close to the entrance of the observation hive, this way any bees that are flying around will find their way into the entrance eventually. Spray the new frames with some sugar syrup and then insert the frames into the empty nuc or super. Remove the sugar syrup can and the queen cage from the package. Shake the bees into the nuc or super and give them some time to collect on the frames. Of course, you should have your observation hive right next to you at this point. Once most of the bees have collected on the frames you can carefully lift them up and insert them into the observation hive. Remove the cork from the sugared end of the queen cage and place on the bottom frame near the observation hive's sugar feeder. Close the door carefully and take the observation hive back to and set on the base and open both sliding doors. Any bees left in the nuc or super can be shaken out near the entrance...they will find their way in.

Cleaning:

For manipulation, a five frame empty nucleus box (1/2 a hive) or an empty deep super should be kept available by the outside entrance. First close both sliding doors and then carefully lift the observation hive off the base, this is easier with 2 people. There may be a few bees between the sliding doors, you can have someone insert a damp paper towel in the pipe to keep them there until you put the observation back in place. Take the hive around by the outside entrance - open - if needed place the frames of bees in the nuc box or super. If you need to clean beeswax off of the glass; use a razor blade scraper and hot water only. Frames of bees can then be placed right back into the observation hive when you are finished. Bees that have taken flight will be in the entrance shoot and will return to the hive as soon as you open the sliding doors. Remember to remove the paper towel if you used one to block in some bees.

For answers to any other questions - please call Drapers at: 800.233.4273

Thank you for buying the number one observation hive in the world !!