



Build a bumblebee box

Mark Rayner shows how to craft a haven for these garden friends.



You will need:

- 19mm plywood or untreated timber cut to the following dimensions:
 - 260mm x 330mm (roof)
 - 260mm x 40mm (overhang)
 - 300mm x 220mm (rear wall)
 - 260mm x 220mm (front wall)
 - 220mm x 225mm (floor)
- Two pieces 260mm (wide) x 300mm sloping down to 260mm (side walls)
- 220mm x 440mm piece of carpet underfelt with hessian removed
- Two small zinc-plated or stainless steel hinges
- 40mm galvanised jolt head nails
- Tape measure, pencil and exterior PVA glue
- Saw, screwdriver and hammer
- Paintbrush and sandpaper
- Drill with 1.5mm and 25mm drill bits
- Resene Multishield+ gloss



1

Measure and mark the plywood or timber pieces in the dimensions listed above.



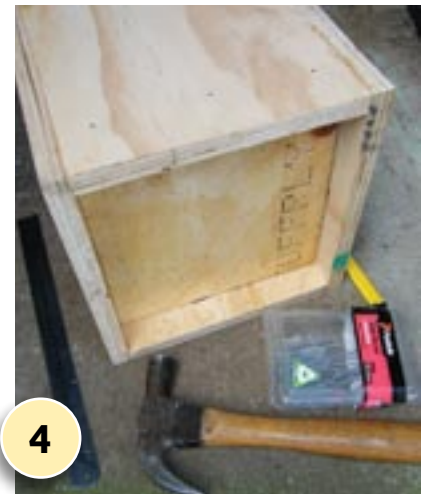
2

Cut the plywood pieces and smooth any rough edges with sandpaper.



3

Assemble the four walls, as shown, fixing along the edges with PVA glue and galvanised nails. Sand or lightly file the rear wall's top edge so it aligns with the pitch of the side walls.

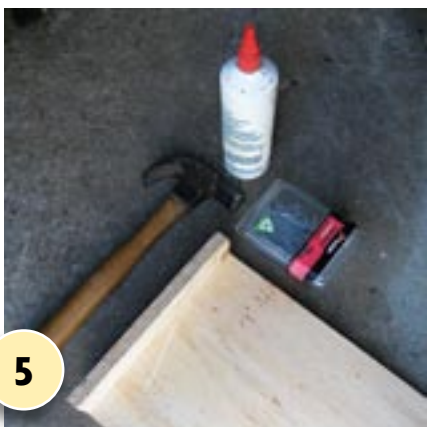


4

Position the floor approximately 30mm from the bottom edge, as shown, fixing it in place with PVA and nails.

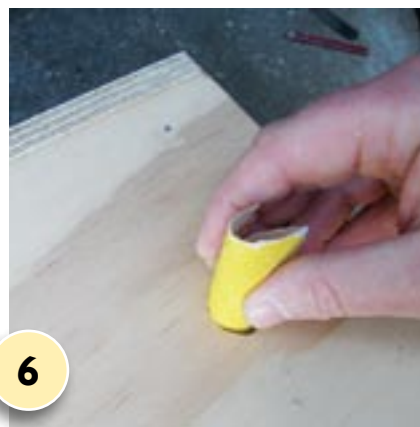
Top tips:

- Put the box in a well-drained spot not facing south, so it is about 3cm above the ground and protected from excess winds, shade and sun, and ideally is close to nectar-rich, early spring flowers. A site against a tree or building will aid bumblebees' orientation.
- Use older plywood or seal the box insides and edges with very low VOC paint like Resene Ceiling Paint tinted brown and use old underfelt to reduce the risk formaldehyde fumes.



5

Fix the roof overhang to the roof with PVA and nails – always drill 1.5mm pilot holes before nailing to prevent the plywood from splitting.



6

Drill a 25mm entrance hole in the front of the box (approximately 50mm from the lower edge). Smooth edges with sandpaper.



7

Apply three coats of Resene Multishield+ gloss to the box's exterior surfaces and roof, allowing two hours for each coat to dry.



8

Fix two hinges to the front wall's top edge and roof, leaving an about 50mm overhang. Fold the underfelt in half and place in the box.