

# How a Hive Works



## with the Bee Friendly Trust

A hive contains a colony of bees - tens of thousands of bees that are all related to each other. Each bee within the colony has its own important jobs to do.

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### The Queen Bee

The 'mother' of the hive. Every hive begins with the queen laying an egg in a cell of honeycomb. She can lay 2,000 eggs every day. In time, larvae will hatch out of these eggs.

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### Larvae

Larvae are fed on pollen and honey by other bees within the colony so that they grow into strong adult bees.

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### Young bees

When the larvae are strong enough, they emerge from their honeycomb cell as either a drone (a male bee), a worker bee (a female bee) or another queen. Every hive has just one queen. When bees swarm, half the bees leaves the colony with the old queen; the bees that are left behind make a new colony to take over the hive.

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### Worker bees

Worker bees are female bees. All worker bees begin their career as cleaners, ensuring the hive remains tidy and free of waste. Eventually, they will be promoted to 'larvae feeders', and, after that, they will take on more specific roles. Older worker bees do everything from building wax comb to receiving pollen from forager bees to guarding the entrance of the hive from predators.

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### Forager bees

The final job of worker bees is to leave the hive to find pollen, nectar and water for the rest of the colony. When they find a good source, they communicate its location with other forager bees by performing a 'Waggle Dance'.

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### Drone bees

Drone bees are male bees. They don't work. Their only role is to leave the hive to fertilise new queens from other colonies. Drone bees are pushed out of the hive in the autumn to maximise the colonies chances of surviving over winter.

