

Transferring Your Bees to Their New Home

You've done your beekeeping homework. You've chosen a site for your beehive where it won't be knocked down in a strong wind, or be bothered by pets and humans. You've purchased all the right equipment and are comfortable using it. You've tried on all your beekeeping gear and are comfortable that it fits you properly and are confident that you are reasonably protected from bee stings. During the cold winter months you placed an order for your bees and were notified that your bees were successfully shipped. Now you have gotten the call from the post office where a frazzled postal worker has politely asked you to please come and remove your package of angry stinging insects from their work environment.

You've picked up your bees and noted that other than a few dead ones at the bottom of the container (you should really be prepared for a few to not survive the stressful travel routine they have been asked to endure) the bees look healthy. Now all you have to do is transfer the new bees from the screen container they were shipped in to the hive you have set up for them.

Have your smoker handy when you are ready to transfer your new bees from their shipping container to the hive. Also make sure you have your beehive gear on.

You should notice a small container within the bee's shipping container. This small container is where your new queen is being kept. The top of her personal shipping container is covered with a cork. Remove the cork and you will see a second cap that is made out of sugar.

Hang the queen's container in your hive. Your going to want to put it in between the two frames that are in the center of your newly constructed hive. Pierce the top of the candy top with a nail. The worker bees will have an easier time freeing the queen if there is already a small hole in the sugar barrier. When using the nail be very careful that you do not inadvertently stab the queen. You won't be able to purchase a replacement queen after the winter months. Once the workers have chewed through the sugar barrier the queen will be able to escape into the hive.

Once you have the queen in the hive use your smoker and place a puff of smoke into the shipping package. Gently shake the bee's shipping container, gently allowing the bees to spill out of the container and into the hive. When you are no longer able to coax any bees out of the container, set the container down near the hive, any bees that are still in it will eventually find their way out of the container and into the hive. Make sure you inset a feeder filled with a simple sugar recipe into the hive.

Leave your new bees alone for a week. During this week the bees will become acclimated with their new home. The queen will start laying eggs and the bees will start to make honey.

Bees like to be transferred from their shipping container to the hive either early in the morning or late evening.