

Minibeast Hotel

Step-by-step

1. Choose a suitable spot

- It needs to be level and on a flat, solid ground.
- You'll get different residents depending on where you put your hotel, as some like cool, damp conditions and others (such as solitary bees) prefer nice dry sunny spaces.

2. The basic structure

- Your hotel can come in any shape or size you want, but one thing's for sure, you'll want it to stay up!
- It's best to build a strong, suitable framework, that's no more than a metre high. Old wooden pallets are perfect as they're sturdy and come with ready-made gaps!



Have a look around your garden for anything you might be able to use

3. Create your base

- The base needs to be holey. It needs to be able to drain if too much water gets into it and also it allows minibeasts to join from below.
- Leaving larger entrances at one side may even attract our spikey friend- the hedgehog.
- You can also make a smaller structure, depending on the materials and space you have. Whatever size you decide to make is fine- you're still giving nature a home whether it's big or small.

4. Fill the gaps

- The idea is to provide all sorts of different nooks and crannies, crevices, tunnels and cosy beds.
- You can use all sorts of different materials to fill in your framework. Just place, stack, scatter and poke them in to make a clever collection of different habitats.

5. Here are some examples

- Dead wood and loose bark for creepy crawlies like beetles, centipedes, spiders and woodlice
- Holes and small stubs (not plastic) for solitary bees made out of bamboo, reeds and drilled logs- (don't drill without an adult!)
- Larger holes with stones and tiles, which provide the cool, damp conditions frogs and toads like- if you put it in the centre, you'll give them a frost-free place to spend the winter (they'll help eat slimy slugs too!)
- Dry leaves, sticks or straw for ladybirds (they eat aphids, too)
- Corrugated cardboard for lacewings (their larvae eat aphids, too)
- Dry leaves which mimic a natural forest floor

- You can even put a hedgehog box into the base of the hotel.

6. Add a roof

- You don't want a hotel that's full of soggy residents and wet rooms! It's time to pop a roof on top of what you've done so far.
- If you like, you could even give it a green or brown roof by putting a bit of rubble or gritty soil on top. Only plants that love dry conditions cope up there, but if you're lucky some wildflower seeds could arrive on the breeze and take root.

7. Finishing touches

- Every hotel needs a kitchen. Don't forget your guests will want to eat when they stay. Surround your hotel with loads of colourful nectar-rich flowers- essential food for butterflies, bees and other insects that decide to call for room service!
- Now it's time for your grand opening! If you want, choose a name for your hotel and put a sign up outside. You can even have ceremony and cut a ribbon like they do for the real thing.
- Remember to take a photo with the finished build. You can tag me on j2e or email to head@abberley.worcs.sch.uk.