



How a Beginning Gardener Can Build a Bee-Friendly Green Space

Though everyone knows that recycling, using less water, and turning off the lights when you leave your home are small ways to help the environment, not everyone knows about one of the easiest and most-impactful things you can do - make your yard a bee-friendly zone. Bees are one of - if not the most - important pollinators in the world. Much of our food production depends on bees' pollination and the fact is that bees are in danger from widespread pesticide use, habitat destruction, and the effects of climate change. If you want to do something for the environment (and yourself in the process), make a green space that's a safe space for bees.

So, where do I begin?

So you're a beginning gardener. You don't even know if your thumb is green, red, blue, or whatever color. How do you start building a bee-friendly space? Well, the first thing you can do is nothing. Stop pulling those dandelions and clover, more specifically. As [The Guardian](#) notes, honeybees, bumblebees, and solitary bees are all attracted to dandelions (as are butterflies and birds - other pollinators). They are a very easily-accessible food source that grow in a lot of environments and can be a great food source for bees - especially in the early spring.

What kind of stuff should I plant?

If you can stick to any general rule, it should be this: the plants in your bee-friendly space should be easily accessible and available throughout the entire blooming process. For that first part, it's crucial that you plant more single flower tops than double tops. "Double headed flowers look showy but produce much less nectar and make it much more difficult for bees to access pollen," notes the [Honeybee Conservancy](#).

To make sure bees have access to flowers as long as possible, make sure you do your research and plant a variety of species - some that bloom early, others that bloom later. This way there will always be something blooming in your garden. For more tips on great plants for pollinators, check [here](#).

Is it just about the flowers?

No! A great bee garden is more than just a good selection of attractive plants. It's important that you think about creating a habitat for bees - many of which burrow into the ground and/or debris at ground level. For so-called "ground nesters", [GreatPollinatorProject.org](#) suggests leaving an area of loose, dry soil that's pretty much vegetation free. For "cavity nesters", leave dead wood and other debris on the ground. In the same way dandelions are actually good for bees, leaving your yard a little unkempt is one of the best ways to support your local bee population.

Bees also need plenty of water to survive and to start the digestion process, so it's paramount that you have some sort of bee bath in your garden. Unlike a bird bath, bee baths should be very wide and shallow and contain rocks/stones so that the bees can land on them. You can use almost anything that will contain water - so repurpose something from around the house and save yourself some money.

You don't have to be a professional green thumb to build yourself a bee-friendly garden in your own back (or front) yard. All you need is a little know-how and some info on what bees like, and how you can better accommodate them. Two final, crucial tips to end on are this: avoid pesticides if at all possible, as they can do great harm to bee colonies, and plant as many plants native to your area as possible. Check out [these tips](#) for more information on how to grow a beautiful, bee-friendly garden.

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