

Betterbee[®]

Beekeepers Serving Beekeepers

Adding Additional Wax to Frames

Plastic frames and foundation come pre-coated with beeswax, but we have found that adding additional wax greatly improves the acceptance of these frames by the bees. The bees seem to draw these frames out faster, which is especially important for developing colonies on new foundation. Painting additional beeswax onto the frames is a fun project for cooler weather too!

Please contact Betterbee at 800-632-3379 if you have any questions or need further assistance.

You will need:

- Beeswax
 - 1 lb per 10 deep frames or;
 - 1 lb per 15 medium frames
- 4" Foam Paint Brush or Paint Roller
- Newspaper & Paper towels
- Double boiler or slow cooker

Instructions:

1. Melt beeswax in double boiler or slow cooker. Do not expose beeswax to direct heat as it is very flammable. The melting point of beeswax is 144°F, so this process can take a little while depending on the quantity of beeswax you are melting. Do not leave beeswax unattended while melting.
2. Prepare frames for wax by removing any dust or debris. We recommend having two supers or hive bodies available for this process. One for the unpainted frames and one for the painted frames to cool.
3. Cover your work surface with newspaper or drop cloth.
4. Once the beeswax is liquid, hold the frame on end (as you would for uncapping) and use the foam brush or paint roller to apply wax to foundation. Go up and down, side to side and diagonally across the frame to get all sides of the cells. Avoid filling the cells with beeswax as this creates additional work for the bees. See picture on page 2.
5. As you are painting, remember the general rule, 1 pound per 10 deep frames or 1 pound per 15 mediums. This is a good indicator of when you are using too much or too little wax on each frame.
6. Place frames in a hive body or medium super to let beeswax cool.
7. Cooled frames can be put directly on the hive. If you are storing for future use, store in a cool, dry area away from potential pests.

Tips:

1. If your beeswax is too runny, allow it to cool down a little. The beeswax will solidify as it continues to cool making it easier to apply to your frame.
2. If the beeswax is too solid to apply, increase the temperature slightly.
3. We recommend having two foam brushes or paint rollers for this project. When one brush or roller becomes solid with beeswax, you can switch to the next and continue!
4. Even after putting down newspaper to protect your floor and counter, beeswax tends to make a mess. If you have beeswax on a surface that is hard to remove, try a wax remover or gently use your hive tool (depending on the surface) to remove the wax.
5. Use paper towels or rags for quick clean-up.

