



21 May 2015

Several of you have asked about what equipment is needed for a start-up pack for beekeeping.

Essential you will require i) a hive; ii) some bees; and iii) protective clothing:

- i) **Hive:** All of the hives in the apiary are *British Standard National* hives – having one type of hive in the Apiary enables us to swap around the components as the demand arises. Best value is to invest in a cedar hive, bought in the flat and assembled by yourself - a start-up hive should include a single brood chamber and one super. The shopping list for a start-up hive is as follows:

QTY	NATIONAL HIVE COMPONENT	COMMENTS
1	O/M Floor	An open wire mesh floor top allow V. Destructor drop through
1	Brood Box (Cedar-Flat)	
1	Super (Cedar -Flat)	
1/10	self-spacing DN4 Frames Flat National Brood Foundation Wired	These are the nailed frames a V-wired foundation for self-assembly, tedious to assemble but more reliable than the alternative, the assembled, hot-wired frames
1/10	self-spacing Super Frames SN4 National Super Foundation Wired	ditto
1	National Q/Excluder Frame	Timber frames with underside bee gap – easier to manipulate on the hive
1	National Crown Board	
1	National Dummy Board	Corrects the frame spacing in the brood chamber
1	National Cedar Shallow Roof	All cedar roof with galvanised outer roof – can be decontaminated by blowtorch – avoid plastic components in the roof and other hive parts because of the difficulty of decontaminating these.
1	50g packet frame nails (Gimp pins black)	

A good quality hive, made up of the above tabulated components will cost about £250.

Because of the risk of disease introduction and spread within the Apiary, second-hand and previously used hive components cannot be accepted into the Apiary.

- ii) **Bee Nuclei:** 5-Frame nuclei with a 2015 mated Queen should be available up until the end of May but you need to order now – these come in a sealed cardboard or plyboard nuclei box but avoid paying a returnable deposit for the nuclei box.



Once that you have taken delivery of the nuclei, spray the bees through the top ventilator with a dab of water every few hours, as soon as possible place the nuclei box on the intended hive site and release the bees – transfer your bees into your new hive once that it has acclimatised on the stand for at least one day. If the new hive is to be on stand unoccupied for more than 1 day, fit a metal gauze strip across the bottom entrance to inhibit entry by other insects and pests.

A reliable 5-frame nuclei of manageable bees (about 2 to 2.5kg) will cost between £160 to £200.

An alternative is to purchase some 'package' bees, comprising about 1.5 to 2kg bees, without frames and foundation, with a separate caged, mated Queen, for about £150 to £175. The advantage of package bees is that the absence of frames and drawn comb of the nuclei bees means that the transfer of V. destructor and some brood diseases is minimized, although to disadvantage sometimes package bees are more difficult to settle into a new hive.

A local beekeeping supplier is Park Beekeeping <http://www.parkbeekeeping.com/> located on Blackheath Hill and there are several others within convenient driving distance or via the internet – eg Thorne, Paynes, etc..

- iii) **Protective Clothing:** Best that you personally try out various bits and pieces of beekeeping equipment (tools, smokers, etc) before purchasing for yourself.

For a beesuit I reckon the bees-knees, so to speak, is Sherriff at <http://www.bjsherriff.co.uk/product-category/bee-suits/> for both full overall and tunic suits - all Sherriff suits have fencing hoods (like the suits at Oxleas Wood Apiary) although you might prefer a full rimmed or retro hat that supports the veil further away from the face (and hence lessens loss of focus through the veil gauze) - if so try BB Wear at <http://www.bbwear.co.uk/clothing.html>. A good quality suit will cost around £120+ compared to the dark green suits that are used for the class at about £40.00 each from Simon the Beekeeper at <http://www.simonthebeekeeper.co.uk/>.

You will also need some gloves - the choice is between leather gauntlets and plastic (blue) semi-gauntlets - again its personal preference. A general rule for gloves is that i) you should be able to easily decontaminate them and ii) that they fit tightly at the fingertips.

John Large