

# Mason Bee Care

<b>Winter / Early Spring</b>	Order mason bees. If you can choose a delivery date, try to time it about two weeks before your fruit trees or berry bushes bloom.
<b>March / April</b>	Mason Bees Arrive! Keep them in the refrigerator. If any of your bees have emerged, place them in a paper bag (still in the refrigerator) with a cotton ball soaked in a 1:1 sugar-water solution. Have bee house and nesting materials ready. Make sure there is a clay mud source available.
<b>April</b>	Keep in the refrigerator until daytime temperatures are consistently above 55°F and there are open fruit blossoms or dandelions. Nighttime freezing temperatures are ok, but avoid releasing when there will be several days of rain. Release 1/3 of the mason bee cocoons by placing them in the attic of your bee house. Keep the rest of the cocoons in the refrigerator.
<b>2 weeks later</b>	Two weeks later, release another 1/3 of the mason bee cocoons outside. Keep the last 1/3 of your mason bee cocoons in the refrigerator.
<b>April / Early May</b>	Another two weeks later, release the last 1/3 of the mason bee cocoons, no later than mid-May.
<b>Mid-June</b>	Collect nesting materials from your bee house and place them into a fine-mesh bag to protect from parasitic wasps. Keep the opening of the nesting tubes facing up. Store outdoors in an unconditioned, unheated garage or shed. If the garage or shed gets hotter than temperatures outside, find a cooler location to store your mason bees. Monitor for emerging parasitic wasps and squish them if you see them.
<b>October / November</b>	Retrieve your nesting materials and bring them inside. Harvest and clean cocoons, then store in the refrigerator.
<b>Winter / Early Spring</b>	Check cocoons monthly for mold. Clean if present.
<b>April</b>	When daytime temperatures are consistently above 55°F and there are open fruit blossoms or dandelions, start releasing your next generation of mason bees!

# Leafcutter Bee Care

<b>Spring</b>	Order leafcutter bees. Time their arrival so that daytime temperatures are 75-89°F.
<b>Mid-June</b>	With the mason bee nesting materials removed, add your leafcutter nesting materials to your bee house.
<b>June / July / August</b>	Leafcutter Bees Arrive! <b>If temperatures are 75-89°F:</b> Release your leafcutter bee cocoons by placing them in the attic of your bee house. They should emerge in 1-10 days. <b>If temperatures are &gt;90°F:</b> Cocoons will need to be kept indoors. Release adults outside as they emerge. Intact cocoons can't survive temperatures over 90°F. <b>If temperatures are &lt;75°F:</b> Release the bees anyway, but expect the bees to take longer (up to three weeks) to emerge.
<b>September / October</b>	In early fall when the temperature drops to <60°F, collect leafcutter nesting materials from your bee house and place them into a fine-mesh bag to protect from parasitic wasps. Keep the opening of the nesting tubes facing up. Store in an unheated, unconditioned garage or shed through fall, winter, and early spring.
<b>April</b>	Around the time that dandelions begin to bloom and you're releasing your mason bees, harvest leafcutter cocoons, place in a fine-mesh bag, and incubate in a warm, dark location (like your water heater room). Leafcutters will emerge in about 42 days at 70°F or 20 days at 84°F. Monitor for emerging parasitic wasps and squish them if you see them. Consider planting beans, peas, or strawberries about the time you start incubation.
<b>Summer</b>	Once leafcutter bees begin to emerge, you can release both the hatched adults and intact cocoons outside (unless temperatures are >90°F, in which case only emerged adults should be released. Intact cocoons should be kept inside until outdoor temperatures are <90°F).