

PAPER BEEHIVE

Materials needed:

Hot glue gun
Hot glue sticks (lots of them)
Florist foam blocks (can buy at Walmart, Hobby Lobby, Michaels, Amazon or craft store)
Brown craft paper (NOT construction paper!)
18 gauge metal wire (spool or floral stem wire)
Vellum art paper
2" dragonfly craft punch
3" daisy craft punch
20 mm foam craft balls
1" foam craft balls
Black acrylic craft paint
Mustard yellow acrylic craft paint
Foam brush
Medium fine tip artist paint brush
Aleenes quick dry tacky glue
Tooth picks
String, twine
Tan packing paper (the kind that comes in an Amazon box)

The Hive:

Lay cardboard down on work surface to protect from hot glue and hot glue 2 foam bricks together at the ends. Cut and round off edges of florist foam bricks to create an oval shape around first two foam bricks. Glue all pieces together. Wad up packing paper to fill in any spaces that are void to get a nice oval shape all the way around.

Wrap string around the foam structure, similar to putting curling ribbon on a gift. Make sure to tie it off at the top so you have something to hang the hive from.

Tightly twist craft paper into vine shape(s). I did mine in segments because it was easier to work with 2' pieces when gluing. Start at the bottom of the hive and glue the twisted paper in a spiral pattern. Have plenty of glue sticks on hand because you can't skimp on the glue! This part takes 2 people...one to use glue gun and one to hold paper in place as the glue sets. Tuck and glue paper vines as needed as you work up the hive. At the top leave a space around where you tied off the string so it can be hung.

The Bees:

Poke a toothpick in a 20mm foam ball, just until it holds NOT all the way through!! Paint each foam ball with black acrylic craft paint. Use another clean toothpick to pop the painted foam ball off and let it dry on a piece of cardboard. Careful! The little foam balls roll around easily and will definitely blow away in a breeze!!

Do the same for the 1" balls but paint with mustard yellow acrylic craft paint. Set aside away from black foam balls so they don't touch and stick together. Once dry you may see imperfections or spots where they stuck to the cardboard. NO WORRIES! You can touch up once bees are assembled.

Paint black lines all the way around (bullseye pattern) on the mustard yellow foam balls with the medium fine artist brush. Give some bees fine lines, others thick black lines or a combination of lines. Be creative! There is no wrong way to add variety.

Use the dragonfly and daisy paper craft punch to punch out shapes with vellum paper. Cut head and tail off dragonfly but leave wings intact. Cut daisy punch like a pizza in pie shapes so that 2 petals makes up each

"slice". Do not cut petals apart. Let each set of two stay attached together. Use quick dry craft glue (very small amount!!!) to glue 2 dragonfly wings together at center. DO NOT GLUE length of wings together just the center of one wing to center of another wing. Do the same for Daisy pie shapes, where they are attached at the ends. Glue some daisy pie shapes slightly off center to give look of movement. Once dry fold up top dragonfly wings to give illusion of movement. *Too much craft glue will make vellum curl . No worries! Just hold at the center till glue sets (15 seconds) and vellum will stop curling.

To assemble the bees: glue vellum wings to one side of black foam ball, then glue that to a yellow body base so that wings are sandwiched between the head and body. Make sure your bumblebee body stripes are going the right way before attaching together. You'll have to hold the head onto the body to let the glue set before setting aside to finish drying. You can also try using hot glue but I didn't want to constantly burn my fingers on the glue plus I was afraid it might melt the foam or at least disfigure it. The tacky glue sets up pretty quick and washes up with soap and water.

Touch up any paint spots as needed once bumblebees are assembled.

Putting it all together:

Tie a length of twine, string or fishing line to top of beehive. Long enough to hang the distance you want from the ceiling with extra to spare. You can even use wire to hang if needed.

Attach various lengths of straight or mostly straight wire all around the beehive by poking through the paper and into the florist foam center. Make sure the wire is into the florist foam and feels secure. Put a foam bee on the ends of each wire. Make some bees right side up, some upside down. Remember bees don't all fly in the same direction. Be creative!! Glue a few bees without wire right onto the beehive in various directions.

Hang your masterpiece!!

*I opted to make the bees from foam and vellum so they would be lightweight. If you choose to make your bees from a heavier material (chenilles or pom poms or beads) you might have to go down in wire gauge to hold the weight. Foam is also easy because wire pokes into it and holds pretty well.