

Build Your Own Mason Bee Block

Materials

Untreated scrap 2x6 (8" or so is enough)

5/16" to 3/8" drill bit (12 inch drill bit)

Parchment paper (makes it easier to reuse your block)

2 wood screws

#2 pencil or dowel the same diameter as drill bit used

Saw

Step One:

Cut about a 1/2" off your scrap wood lengthwise.

This will provide a "hatch" for easier replacement of tubes.



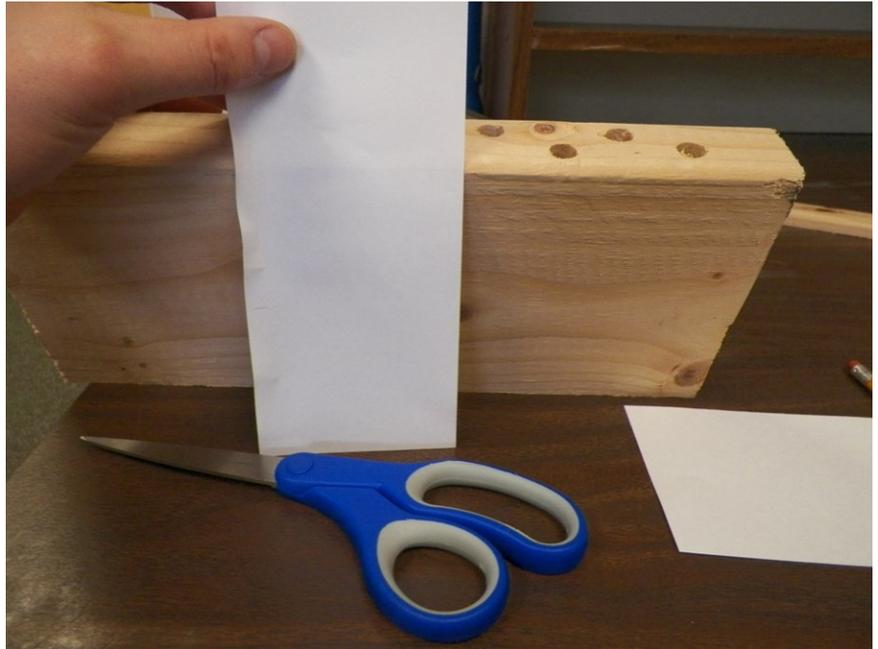
Step Two:

Drill holes completely through the larger piece of 2x6. This will be where the mason bees nest. Keep about 3/4" of space between holes. (The bees aren't going to measure this. If they end up a little too close there's nothing to worry about.)



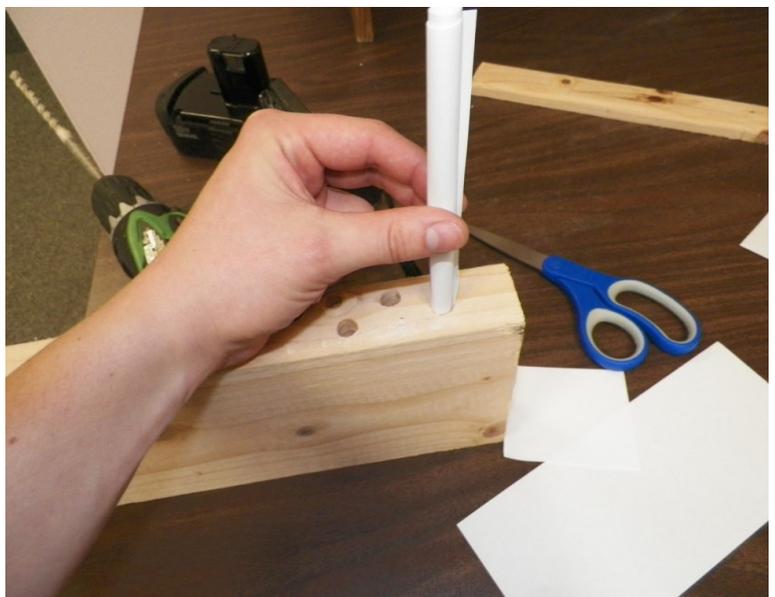
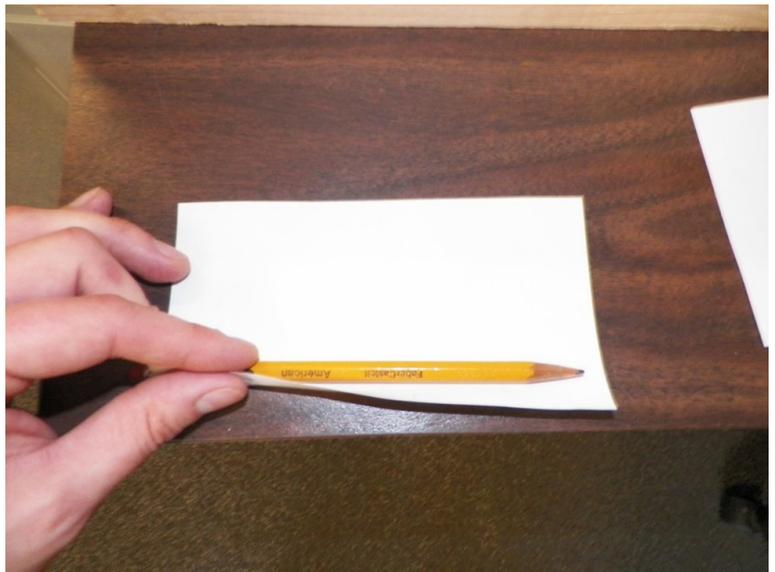
Step Three:

Hold a piece of parchment paper up to the side of your block. Leaving about 1" of overhang, cut to fit the block. These pieces will be rolled into tubes and placed in the block.

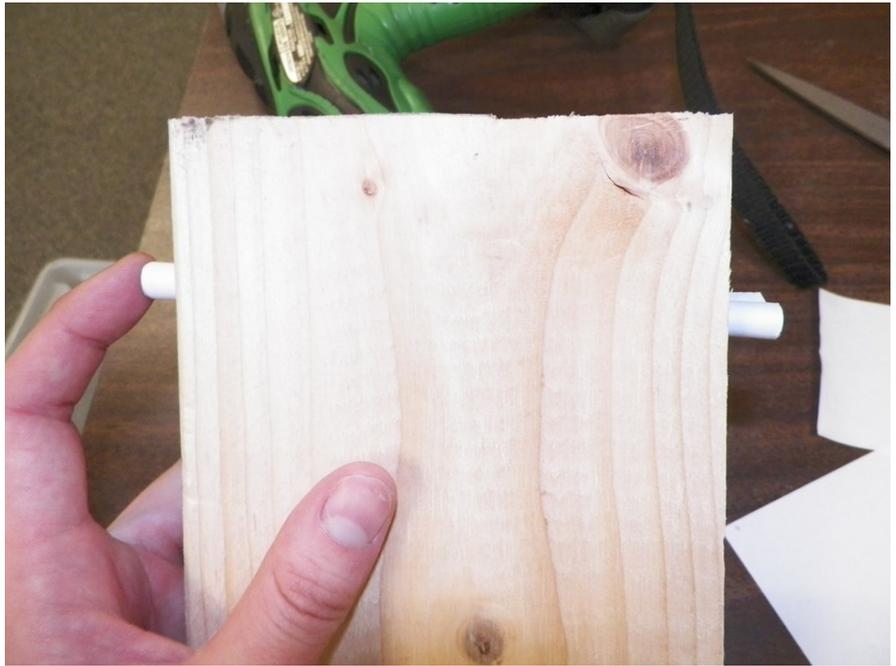


Step Four:

This is the most time-consuming step in the process. Fill all your cells (the holes you drilled) with parchment paper tubes by rolling them onto your #2 pencil or dowel. Make sure they stay flush with the front of the block.



Tip: If you lightly tap on both ends of the tube, it will expand to fit the holes better.



Step Five:

Fold over the 1" of overhang on the back end of the block.



Step Six:

Put your hatch you cut earlier on the overhang you left on the back of the block. Fasten with wood screws. If the seam between the nesting block and the hatch is noticeable you can run a seam of duct tape around it to keep out anything that might want to crawl in.



Step Seven:

Mount your mason bee home! You can be as creative as you want to in this regard. Ideally, they would be placed in a southeast facing area, but it's not entirely necessary. You can mount with small screws and brackets. The only thing I've found to be necessary when dealing with replaceable tubes (parchment or the store-bought cardboard ones) is that they're placed out of direct wind and rain.