



Make a clay bee!

Make a bee from polymer clay.

Polymer clay is available in craft stores. It is easy and fun to work with, and can be baked in the oven to harden.

For this bee, you will need:

- Polymer clay in white, black, and yellow (or light brown or orange)
- Small paper clips (2)
- Large paper clip (1)
- Patterns for pieces (optional, found at end of packet).



Tips for working with polymer clay:

- Read instructions that come with the polymer clay.
- Work with lighter colors first.
- Keep sculptures small. Use every scrap and throw nothing away!
- Look on the floor for stray pieces.

IMPORTANT! Polymer clay is non-toxic, but don't eat it! If the oven is too hot when you bake it, it can burn and might create irritating fumes.

Instructions:

1. To make the bee, first create the shapes for the wings, body, head, stripes, and eyes. You can use the page at the end of this packet to guide you on shapes. You may make the bee smaller, if you like.
2. Put the pieces together to make your bee. To make the body parts stay connected, straighten out a small paper clip and "thread" the parts onto it like beads on a string.



Find this activity online and learn more about bees by visiting NASA's Climate Kids website: <http://climatekids.nasa.gov/bees>.
Find more fun activities at <http://climatekids.nasa.gov/make>.



3. After you have rolled a small piece of black clay into the skinniest "snake" possible for the stripes, wrap it around the bee's abdomen, pinching off the length you need. Make three or four stripes, if you can.
4. Gently press on the tiny eyes.
5. Straighten out the other small paper clip and, using scissors or wire cutters, cut two short pieces from it for the antennae. Use tweezers or needle-nosed pliers to curl the tips. Stick the antennae above the eyes or, more accurately, between the eyes.
6. Straighten out the large paper clip. Curl the middle part of it around a pencil. Stick one end of the paper clip into the bee's bottom.
7. When you are happy with your bee, place her on a piece of foil in a glass baking dish.
8. To bake, preheat oven to 275°. Use an oven thermometer to make sure of the correct temperature.

PLEASE ask an adult to bake the bee for you! Do NOT use a microwave oven.

9. Bake 30 minutes. After baking time is up, turn off the oven, but leave the bee inside to cool off slowly.

Do not bake too long or bake hotter than 275°. Clay may burn and produce irritating fumes.

How about a whole hive?



For another project, make a bee hive and some bees to buzz around it.

- To make the hive, first roll the clay into a long snake.
- Then wind the snake into a coil.
- Make the little bees with just two parts (body and head) instead of three. There is no need for paper clips.
- Bake the hive with little bees the same way as the big bee.

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Eyes



Head


Wing 1


Thorax


Wing 2


Abdomen


Stripes

Bee Pattern

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