

Hexagonal honey comb from a Cathedral Hive | Natural Beekeeping

To change a cathedral hive to a hexagonal honeycomb, the process involves adding top bars between the existing bars. This allows for the construction of hexagonal cells by the honeybees. The transformation typically takes around two months.

The addition of top bars is done strategically. New bars are inserted in the front of the hive, pushing the older ones toward the back. This approach ensures that the bees gradually move toward the end of the hive as they build new combs. The intention behind this method is to encourage the bees to use the older combs for storing honey. When these combs are full, they can be harvested, preventing the accumulation of old brood combs in the main area of the hive.

Removing Older Combs

Allowing the older combs to be filled with honey and harvesting them from the end of the hive serves several purposes. First, it helps in maintaining the overall health of the hive. Over time, the older combs may accumulate toxins such as pesticides and heavy metals. By extracting these combs once they are filled with honey, beekeepers can prevent the bees from being exposed to these harmful substances.

Additionally, the removal of older combs allows for better hive management. By periodically replacing the combs, beekeepers can maintain a healthier environment for their bees and reduce the risk of disease or contamination.

By converting a cathedral hive to a hexagonal honeycomb and implementing this system of adding top bars, beekeepers can

create a more efficient and sustainable environment for their bees while also ensuring the production of high-quality honey.