

Making the Westerham Beekeepers' Queen Frame Trap

The Westerham Queen Frame Trap ("QFT") is so effective at reducing the end of season varroa mites that it **replaces both summer and winter chemical treatments**.

Making the QFT is straight forward and open to all beekeepers (*including those readers who are already thinking: "I can't do this"*). The materials cost £5-10, depending on whether you choose a polyester or aluminium hinge (from experience, the latter is sturdier in use). We have found the "clam style" Westerham QFT easier to use than shop bought ones, which envelop the brood frame and retail at £45-55.

Kit list:

2 wood rectangles:

- 2x1cm pine
- wood glue & staple gun with 10mm staples

Plastic queen excluder ("QX"): (cut up to make the frame cover)

- 1/2" zinc plate screws (to attach the plastic border of QX to the rectangle)
- wire staples (galvanised) 1.6x16mm to pin on the plastic grid of QX



Hinge:

- 1 1/2" aluminium piano hinge x12" long (off ebay: "RBC Supply")
- just 6" of hinge will provide ample rigidity – ask the company to cut the required length
- 3/4" zinc plate screws x6



OR....

- 12" strip of tough polyester – stapled on
- cheaper, but less sturdy when opening & closing

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) **MEASURE** the inside of the brood frame size you use. The QFT sits "inside" the side bars of the brood frame (see tape measure) and is aligned with the top and bottom bars of the brood frame. The long side measurement is shown by the black arrow.



- 2) **MAKE 2x RECTANGULAR FRAMES** (using pine 2x1cm). For a National frame, that's 2 x 33.5cm & 2 x 18cm.

Glue and staple the rectangles - they don't have to be too strong as the queen excluder gives the rectangle rigidity.



3) **QUEEN EXCLUDER COVERS:** Cut the plastic queen excluder to cover the rectangle frames. Attach with ½” screws in the plastic borders and rounded wire staples (1.6x16mm) through the plastic grill onto the wooden frame. From each plastic queen excluder, you get 2 frame sides and some spare for a “queen gate” (useful to pin on the entrance of the hive after housing a swarm or a shook swarm).



4) **HINGES:** Make a hinge to join the bottom of the 2 frames. There’s a choice between polyester strip or aluminium piano hinge:-

The polyester hinge is washable, tough and cheap. It is stapled on whilst the brood frame is inside the QFT, so you get the correct tension.



The 1 ½” aluminium piano hinge (from ebay) provides more rigidity in use. It is secured by 6x ¾” screws. **TIP** Put the brood frame inside the QFT as you secure the hinge, so that it fits snugly. Just 6” of hinge will provide ample rigidity - ask the company to cut the size you require.

Little bit of propolis on this one.



5) For a closing mechanism at the top, we used 2 bits of Velcro glued and stapled on. The Germans use a couple of screws opposite each other and wire. That's probably easier with top bee space.

