

Honey bees making honey and more!

1 During the spring and summer, older worker bees leave the hive to search for flowers.

2 By visiting these flowers they also pollinate them. Many of these pollinated flowers become the food we eat!

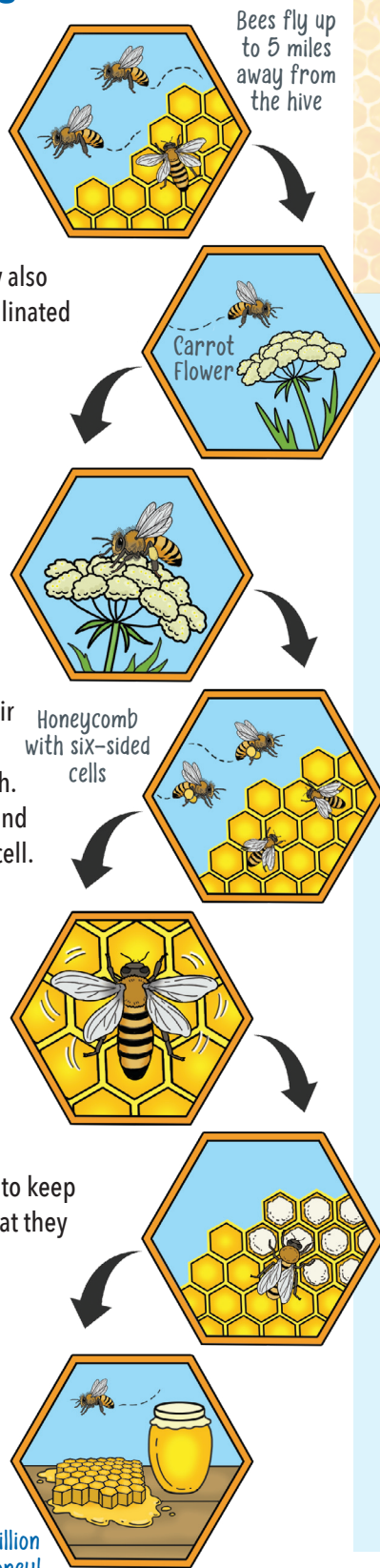
3 These worker bees swallow nectar from up to 100 flowers per flight! They store it in their honey stomach. Once full of nectar and pollen, they fly back to the hive.

4 They pass the nectar from their stomach to a younger worker bee who swallows it into their stomach. The younger worker bee takes it and spits it into an open honeycomb cell.

5 Younger worker bees fan the nectar, so water evaporates. The **dehydrated** nectar gets thicker and sweeter and begins turning to honey.

6 They cap the honey with wax to keep it from spoiling (going bad) so that they can eat it throughout the winter.

7 Honey can be harvested for people to eat. Beekeepers leave some honey in the hive for the bees, too!



Honey bees live in hives.

A hive can be made by people, or it can be made by bees in the wild.

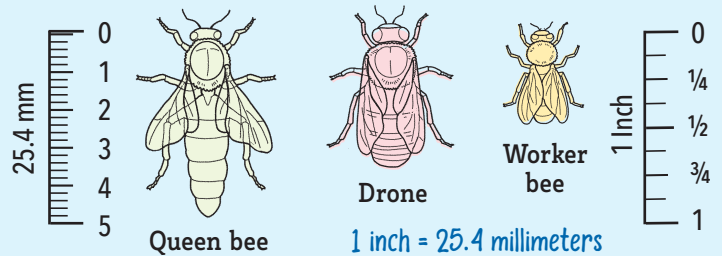
Inside, bees make honeycomb cells, where they raise their young and store honey and pollen.

Only honey bees make honey and wax.



Who is in the hive?

Honey bee hives have caste systems (fixed roles bees are born into) made up of a queen bee, drones and worker bees. These bees play different roles in the hive. Each relies on the others to keep the hive healthy.



🌸 **Queen bee** (about 1 inch long): The queen is the mother of all the bees in the hive. Her job is to lay eggs to make more bees. Most queen bees leave the hive only once in their life, when it's time to mate. Queens can live several years.

🌸 **Drones** (about 3/4 inch long): Male honey bees are called drones. They are produced in the summer and their job is to mate with queens from other hives. They do not have a stinger, don't work or gather food and are fed by worker bees.

🌸 **Worker bees** (about 1/2 inch long): Worker bees are all female and have different jobs depending on their age. When they are young, they start off cleaning the hive and then caring for and feeding young larvae. In their last stage of life, they become foragers, bringing in nectar and pollen to feed the bees in the hive. They send messages to each other (communicate) using a round dance (circular dance pattern) for flowers closer to the nest and waggle dance (figure-eight dance pattern) when flowers are further afar.



Honey bee on Meadowfoam, an Oregon native

Bees have to visit about 2.6 million flowers to make a pound of honey!

Fun Fact! The type of flower the nectar comes from affects the color, flavor, texture and smell of the honey! Wildflower honey, the most common honey, is from nectar from a mix of flowers.

Visit foodhero.org/honey-recipes for great tasting recipes made with honey, but low in total sugars.

Carrot, Pumpkin, Meadowfoam, Blueberry, Blackberry, Sage

