



Cambridge University

Botanic Garden

FAMILY ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Make a bee rainbow

You will need:

- A large piece of card
- Gardening magazines / catalogues
- Scissors
- Glue

Ages
4+

If you don't have gardening magazines you can still make a bee rainbow using other art materials.



Nobody really knows exactly what the world looks like to a bee but one thing's for sure, what a bee sees is very different to what we see.

Read on to find out some amazing facts about bee vision and then make a rainbow based on the colours bees can see.

Bee vision facts

1. Bees have 5 eyes! They have 2 big compound eyes on the sides of their head and 3 little eyes on top.
2. Bees can detect a special light from the sun. This light is called polarised light and it is invisible to humans. They use this light to find their way.
3. Bees can't see the colour red. This is why lots of bee friendly flowers are shades of yellow, blue, purple and white.
4. Bees can see a special colour that is invisible to most humans. This colour is called ultraviolet. Flowers can have special ultraviolet markings to attract bees and guide them towards the pollen.

Make your bee rainbow

To make a bee rainbow, first think about what colours bees can and can't see. Make your rainbow as you would normally (you can collage or make your rainbow in any way you want) but make sure you don't include any red as this is one colour bees can't see.



If you want an extra challenge, you could try and find a way to represent ultraviolet (the secret colour bees can see that is invisible to humans). Some humans with a rare eye condition called aphakia have been able to see ultraviolet and reported that it looked like whitish lilac or whitish blue.

Remember,
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creations and you can
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