

Luxury Ant Farm: The mANTsion

by [noahw](#) on April 25, 2007

Table of Contents

License: Attribution Non-commercial Share Alike (by-nc-sa)	2
Intro: Luxury Ant Farm: The mANTsion	2
step 1: Background and materials	2
step 2: Window treatment part 1	3
step 3: Window treatment part 2	4
step 4: Make a cutout at the top of the windows	5
step 5: Hardware to hold the windows together	6
step 6: Prep and paint	7
step 7: Install the hardware	7
step 8: Ground cherry husk light	9
step 9: Sew the curtains and make the lid	10
File Downloads	12
step 10: Final Assembly	12
step 11: Populating the ant farm	13
Related Instructables	14
Advertisements	14
Comments	14

Intro: Luxury Ant Farm: The mANTsion

A few weeks ago a friend of mine was reminiscing about their old ant farm and so I decided to make an ant farm and give it to them as a gift.

This ant farm is made from old windows, has a warm LED "sun", some structures for the ants to play on, and is tricked out with a few laser etched/cut accouterments that hopefully make this more than just any regular ant farm. I like to think of it as a luxury ant farm, or mANTsion.



step 1: Background and materials

Background

I remember back when I had an ant farm as a kid and it used to be one heck of a toy. I think I had an Uncle Milton ant farm, since until recently that was the only type of ant farm kids could buy. Uncle Milton did well for himself - he sold about 20 million of these things, so I am betting that a few other people out there had one too.

There was the flowing green outline of the farm equipment above ground, the exciting tunnels that the ants created, and then of course the surprise and disappointment when it all came crashing down after a few weeks when the ants died. But still, considering you were watching ants behind a piece of plastic, it was one wild ride.

A few years ago NASA helped develop the Space Age Gel Ant Habitat and stirred things up by replacing the ants normal tunneling environment of sand or dirt with a gel that not only serves as their habitat, but that is also their source of food. A friend of mine got one of these and it turned out to be disappointingly small, and after a while the ants went crazy from the gel and began nightly attempts at escaping. The holes at the top of the container were just a little too big and I think that eventually a few of them actually made it out into the free world.

I wanted the core of my ant farm to be built from cheap materials, stylish, and safe (I didn't want the ants to escape under any circumstances. Fear of ants escaping into your room = sleepless nights. Sleepless nights = unstable day time function. Unstable daytime function = reduction in caloric intake, and nobody wants that.)

Ant farm design and construction is pretty flexible. I read a little bit about ants online and learned that they prefer a little bit of privacy, a bit of moisture in their sand and some food to eat. Other than that they pretty much take care of themselves so the design process was left wide open.

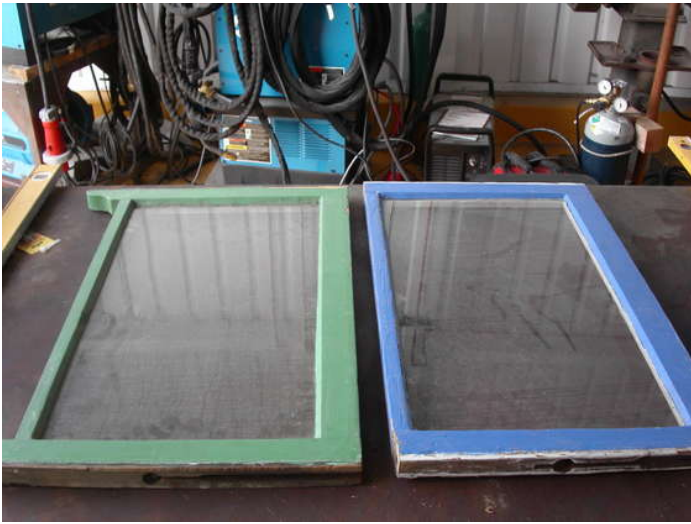
I decided to use two old windows to build the base of the ant farm and then add in some customized options as things went along.

Materials

- two matching windows
- wood or metal lid
- window screening
- 40 lbs. children's play box sand
- adhesive foam weather stripping
- hardware - bolts, washers and wing nuts
- water bottle w/cotton
- ant food

Luxury Add-ons (optional)

- laser etched curtains and curtain rod
- LED ground cherry husk lamp with appropriate resistor and power supply
- ceramic letters
- laser cut ant stencils
- magnetic lid



step 2: Window treatment part 1

If you live in a neighborhood that has lots of old houses it's easy to find old windows on the street. Usually people just throw them away when they get new windows put in in place of old ones. I needed two windows that were exactly the same size though for the ant farm so I headed over to Urban Ore in Berkeley, CA. If you haven't been there and you live in the area I highly recommend it. Their prices for some things are totally overinflated, but sometimes you can walk away with a good deal.

I picked up a few different windows that were about 30" wide by 19" tall just in case I broke one (which I did during the building process - so don't be alarmed if you see some inconsistency in the pictures).

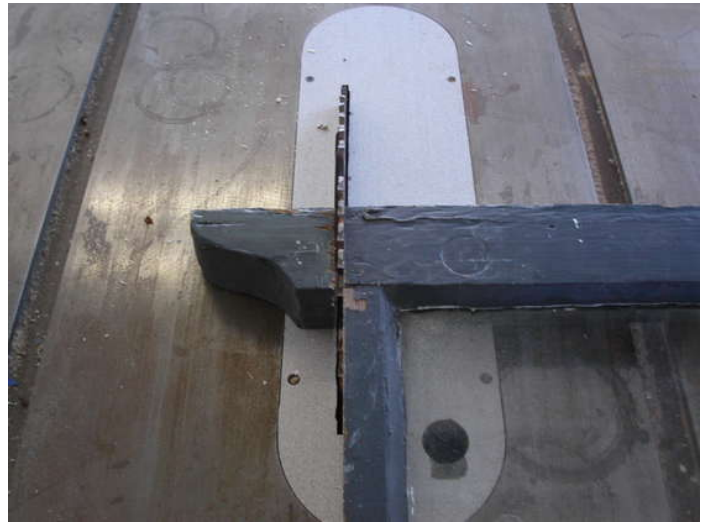
The first step was to remove all of the hardware on the windows. Look for lock catches at the top of the window and counter weights in the side channels.

Then I took the windows over the table saw and cut off the little decorative tabs that were on the bottoms of the windows. I needed my window to sit flat on a surface and I thought the little nubs that were sticking out of the bottom would make nice stabilizing feet for the completed ant farm. I put them aside for later.

I trimmed the windows all to the same size and sanded the feet flat on a stationary belt sander.

You can do all of these steps with hand tools and it will be totally fine. Nothing I did required the precision of the stationary tools in the Squid Labs' workshop, but since they were available, I used them.

Remember to take all appropriate safety precautions when using power tools. I cut through a nail that was used to construct the window while I was trimming it on the table saw and I was glad that I was wearing safety glasses!



step 3: Window treatment part 2

Next the windows needed to be made flat so that they would fit together tightly when they were sandwiched together to form the ant farm. The windows had a 1/4" piece of molding on them that I sanded off using a belt sander.

Safety Warning

It is very likely that these windows came from a house that was old enough to have been painted with lead paint. If you are using old windows and are going to be sanding the paint be sure to use a respirator, goggles, and collect as much of the dust that is created. It's not the end of the world to sand through lead paint, you just have to be sure to handle it properly, avoid breathing in the dust and be sure to wash the dust out of your clothes, hair and off your skin before you do anything else once your done working.

Sand off any other bumps or paint globs that will prevent the windows from meeting when they get put together.



Image Notes

1. It took about 5 minutes with the belt sander to sand down this piece of molding that I didn't want.

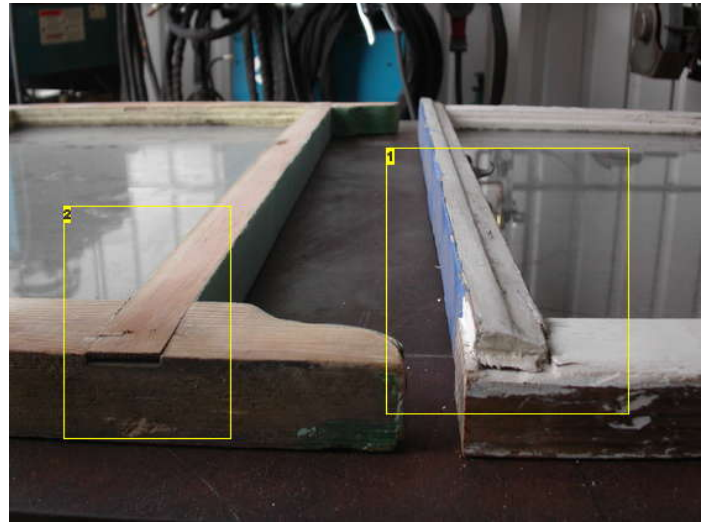


Image Notes

1. Not good.
2. Good.

step 4: Make a cutout at the top of the windows

Once you decide which way you want the window to go (I put the fat end of mine at the bottom) the next step is to make a cutout in the top of the window. The cutout lets you feed get inside the ant farm while it's filled with sand so that you can perform some ant maintenance like replace their water and drop in food.

I used a combination of a router, a jig saw and spindle sander to do this.

I ran the top piece of the window past a straight bit on a router to cut a groove in the piece of wood. I then made increasingly deeper passes on the router until I notched away enough material where I could just go in with the spindle sander and clean things up. A small drum in the spindle sander makes really nice curves at the end of the cutout.

I repeated this process on the other window (creating half of an oval in each) so that when I put them together I would have one complete cutout.

You can use a jig saw to make a cutout in the top piece of the window just like the one I made with a router. Just make sure you clamp the window to a stable surface before you start making your cut. Draw a line with a straight edge so that you have something to guide you.

I found that the jig saw was by far the easiest and the fastest way to make the cutout.



Image Notes

1. The top of the window edge is on the router table. I plunged into the window bit by bit until enough material was removed to make the cutout.





step 5: Hardware to hold the windows together

Once the windows were sanded smooth and the cutout was in place it was time to drill some holes to fit the hardware that would connect the two windows.

I bought 3.5" brass bolts, washers and wing nuts to connect the two windows together. The brass looks nice and the wing nuts allow the ant farm to be assembled by hand without the need for any tools.

First I clamped the windows together so that my holes would line up, and then I drilled holes through both windows where I wanted the bolts to go.

I then put a spade bit into the drill and drilled out the countersinks for my washers.

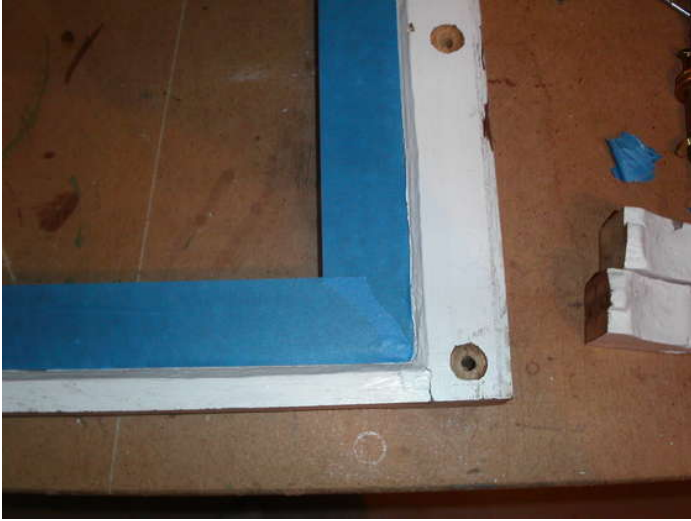


step 6: Prep and paint

With most of the woodworking complete it was time to paint the windows.

I taped off the glass with painters tape, scrounged up some "vintage green" paint I had left over from painting a wall in my bedroom, and went to town on the thing.

Two coats later it was starting to look pretty snazzy.



step 7: Install the hardware

Once the paint was dry it was time to install some of the hardware.

I first attached the feet to the bottom of the windows. I took the nubs that I had cut off earlier, turned them around, and glued them into position on each of the windows. I put a screw through the back of the window into the feet to hold them in place as the glue dried.

Then I put some adhesive foam stripping all around one of the windows to make a seal to keep the sand held into place when I joined the two windows together. They were already fitting together pretty tightly, but I just wanted to be sure that sand wouldn't leak out.

Aside from adding on the hardware and building a lid for the ant farm, I could have been done with the project at this point. The ant farm was basically just two windows sandwiched together with a hole on the top and some feet to keep it upright. But, I wanted to make more than just a simple ant farm, so I kept going.

I wanted to give my ant farm curtains and a light of some kind to both illuminate what was going on inside the ant farm and give the ants an artificial sun to enjoy. I went out and bought some velvet and two cheap brass curtain rods at the fabric store. I also braided some wire together to power the light that would go inside the ant farm.

I then screwed the hooks that hold the curtain rod in place onto the window and drilled a small hole in the side of one of the windows and passed my wire through to the inside.



step 8: Ground cherry husk light

To make the light I found a ground cherry husk and wired an LED inside of it. It already looked like a lamp shade of sorts and had some really nice coloring on it, so I thought that it would make a nice warm glow with an LED inside of it.

First I dipped the ground cherry in water based polyurethane several times to keep it from drying out and to give it some strength so it wouldn't be so brittle. Then, I cut the front and back of the ground cherry using some sharp scissors to make a hole big enough to pass a wire and an LED through.

I used a 9V battery to power the 2.4V red LED and wired in two resistors to equal 330 ohms in order to protect the LED from burning out. See LEDs for beginners for more information about how to wire up and LED.

Once the LED was lit it looked a little too bright for the ground cherry, so I wrapped it up in several layers of saran wrap to diffuse the light. Randofo recommends using a plastic bag from the store to do this as well. Both methods seem to work well.

I then carefully threaded the LED and the wire into the ground cherry and put a dab of hot glue on the back of the ground cherry where it met the wire and on the wires inside the ant farm to hold the whole thing in place.

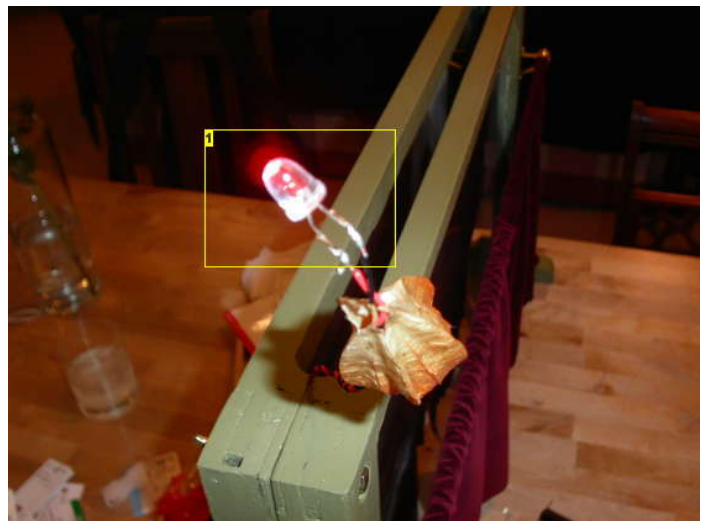
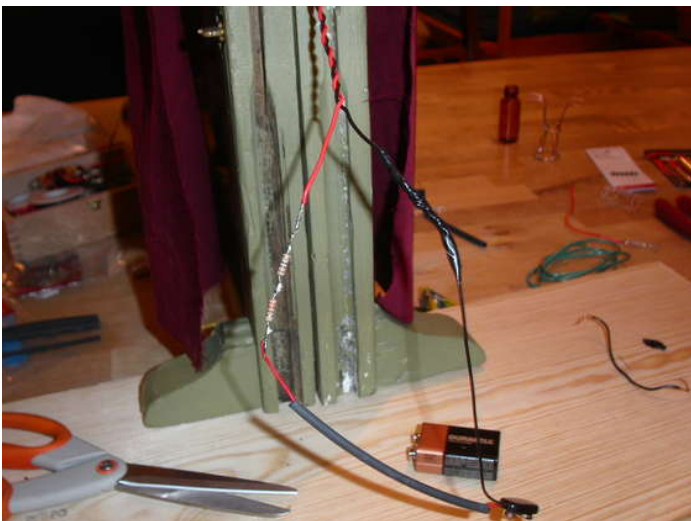


Image Notes

1. The light was too bright and focused.

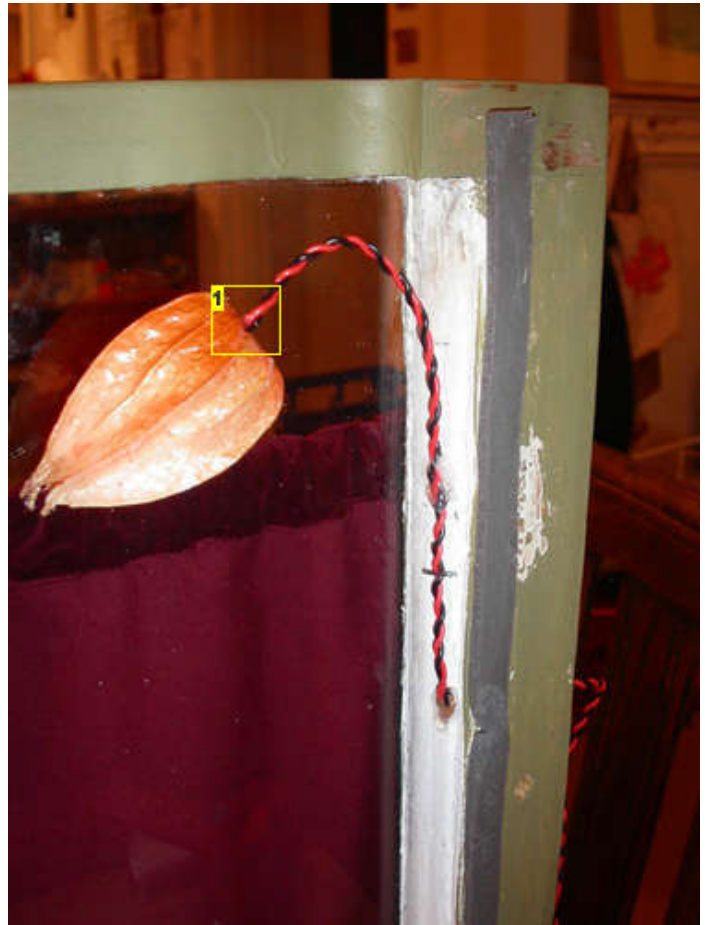


Image Notes

1. Hot glue

step 9: Sew the curtains and make the lid

Curtains

With the curtain rods in place but no curtains it was time to do a little work on sewing the velvet. I bought about a yard of red velvet and cut it up into four panels that fit my ant farm. I sewed a small hem at the top of each of the panels for the curtain rod to slip into. I then took the curtains to the laser etcher at Instructables HQ and burned an ant graphic into the front of the curtains. The big blob on the left curtain is supposed to be a piece of kale, but I etched the velvet with just a little too much power to pick up all the detail in the image. For etching velvet I recommend settings of 100% speed, 70% power - this usually produces nice results.

I then sank some small screw eyes into the sides of the window and tied some gold rope around the curtains to hold them back so that the curtains could be retracted for ant viewing.

The .eps and .ai files that I used to etch the ants are included below.

Lid

I may have overdone things with the lid of the ant farm just a bit, but I have heard that ants can lift 20 times their own body weight, and so if I had enough of them in there, they might all be able to band together and bench press the cover right off! Well, not really, but I still wanted to make sure things would stay put.

I found a scrap piece of steel laying around the shop and drilled some 1/2" holes in it on a drill press. I then covered the back of the lid with window screen materials to make sure that the ants couldn't crawl through the holes. I then used the laser cutter to cut a quick stencil out of extra sticker paper I had from printing Instructables stickers of some ants just walking around aimlessly. I applied the stencil to the lid and spray painted the top of the lid. When I removed the sticker material the paint was left right where I wanted it and the ants came out looking great.

Laser cutters and large pieces of sticker paper make awesome stencils. These are big time perks of working at Instructables HQ, but now with our new Win a Laser Cutter Contest you might be able to make you own laser cut stencils too!

The tried and true method of using a piece of paper with an image printed on it and an exacto blade works just fine too.

The final step to make the lid was to drill holes in the top the window frame to hold a couple of rare earth magnets that I had lying around. The magnets hold the lid in place with quite a bit force - so I am pretty sure that the ants won't be able to escape even if they do combine their strength and try to pry off the lid.

The illustrator file that I used to make the vector cut for the stencil is included below as well.





Image Notes

1. These are the rare earth magnets to hold the lid in place. There are 6 magnets in total sunk into the top of the ant farm to hold the lid in place.

File Downloads



ants etch left panel.eps (1 MB)

[NOTE: When saving, if you see .tmp as the file ext, rename it to 'ants etch left panel.eps']



ants etch.eps (861 KB)

[NOTE: When saving, if you see .tmp as the file ext, rename it to 'ants etch.eps']



single_Ant.ai (65 KB)

[NOTE: When saving, if you see .tmp as the file ext, rename it to 'single_Ant.ai']



ants vector cut.ai (491 KB)

[NOTE: When saving, if you see .tmp as the file ext, rename it to 'ants vector cut.ai']

step 10: Final Assembly

I notched out a small hole in the side of the window frame to fit my 9V battery that powered the LED light and tucked the battery away inside of it to hide it from view. There was already a channel cut into the window from where the counterweight used to sit when it was an actual window, so it didn't take too much time to use a chisel to carve out a hole big enough to fit the battery.

I then filled the ant farm with children's play sand (I specifically chose this stuff because it's washed and kiln dried so it won't hurt the ants). It took about 40 pounds of sand to fill the ant farm almost 3/4 of the way to the top. This makes the whole thing pretty heavy, but it's very stable.

The ant farm is pretty big, so if you are looking to make something a bit more portable I would recommend starting with some smaller windows.

The ants need food and water inside the ant farm since they don't have any way to forage it for themselves. I stuffed a piece of cotton inside of small glass jar filled with water and turned it upside down inside the ant farm so that the ants could have access to water. I also glued some legs made out of copper wire onto the back of the water jug to keep it inverted inside the ant farm.

The ants don't drink much, so even the small amount of water should last them a little while. I then took another glass vial and filled it with some sugar so that the ants could have a burst of energy to start their tunneling. I plan on feeding my ants a healthy diet of vegetable and fruit scraps once they get going, but I have read that sugar is a nice treat to get them going.

The last step in finishing the ant farm was to drop a few ceramic letters through the top of the ant farm and down onto to the sand to spell out my friends name. J, E, S, S spells Jess.

Oh yeah.

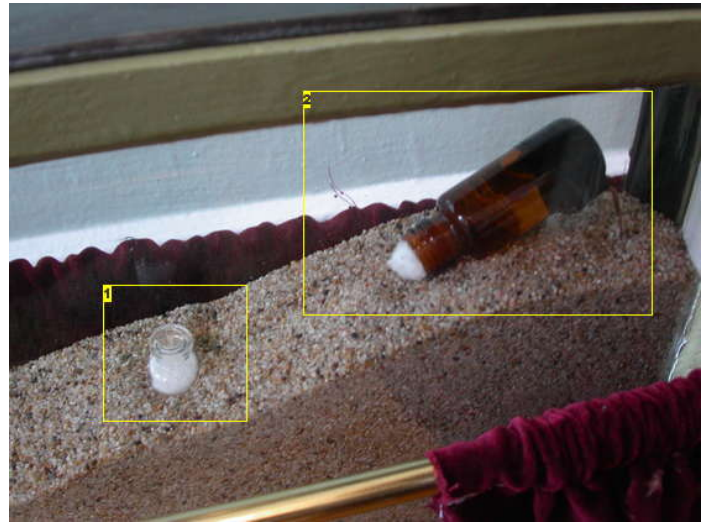


Image Notes
1. Sugar
2. Water



step 11: Populating the ant farm

In order to start this first ant farm I decided to buy ants from a supplier online. Fifty ants are currently on order from AntsAlive. They are due to arrive in the next few days and I will post pictures of their tunneling when they start digging.

AntsAlive reports that the ants could last anywhere from one month, to up to a year - although ants living for such a long time is "very unusual". Most of the ants will probably die in three months, at which point we can make changes to the ant farm and try catching some ants ourselves.

It's possible to catch ants in the wild. If you know what you are doing you might even be able to find a queen. If you are lucky enough to find one and get it into your ant farm then the ants can reproduce and they won't die after a few months. This is quite an achievement in the ant farm world, and so once things are up and running, maybe I will go ant hunting and see what I can find.

If things work out, a "How to hunt ants" instructable could be on the horizon...



Related Instructables



How to ready your Uncle Milton ant farm by kalamistix



Amazing Ant Farm by catwood



Quick And Easy Indoor/Outdoor Ant Poison by tanmanknex



Pets Month '08: Tips to Keep the ants out of your dog's food! by alvincredible



How to Kill Fire Ants and Commit Genocide by KentsOkay



How to Get Rid of Ants (or) How to Kill an Ant Invasion by ScruffyRasputin



aNtistic design by somebullcrap



How to get rid of Ants!! by ducktapedude

Comments

[41 comments](#) [Add Comment](#)



mrsayao says:

May 23, 2007. 5:10 PM [REPLY](#)

I love this idea. Be warned though, make sure the holes on the top aren't too big. The ants you buy from suppliers online are much bigger than normal household ants. I bought an ant farm when I was a kid and after a few weeks of having it, I woke up one day to the bigger ants being attacked by the smaller ants that were native to my area. One smaller ant was pulling at each of the limbs of the bigger ants. I was devastated. Maybe utilize some sort of mesh, like the ones used for screen doors? With that said, good job!



bob.smitty says:

Aug 14, 2008. 11:34 AM [REPLY](#)

fighting ants!

very cool!



bounty1012 says:

Apr 4, 2009. 7:14 PM [REPLY](#)

Lol he needs to make an instructable on an ant coliseum XD "The queen sits up in an area and watches her children fight to the death for her amusement" Bwahahaha!



ta says:

Mar 4, 2008. 11:44 AM [REPLY](#)

Can anyone help?PLEASE!!!

I work in an infant school and think it would be cool to have an ant farm on the wall outside for the children to watch.Have no idea where to start or if possible? Just began the research but would sure appreciate some straight forward advice! Have some perspex 3ft by 2 ft and about an inch thick on a metal frame, thought that could be the front and havent got much further!



Gamernotnerd says:

Jan 26, 2009. 6:22 PM [REPLY](#)

Try fish, fish don't bite. And at my best guess children would like colorful fish more. But that's just my opinion. But I have no idea as far as making an ant farm.



i make shooting things says:

Feb 6, 2009. 8:36 PM [REPLY](#)

And if the fish manage to escape they dont start a new colony in the playdoh.

You could always make one out of plastic or go see if a local high school/middle school works with plastic. They would just need a jigsaw/bandsaw and the right plastic.

a few years ago in biology we had a unit involving small aquariums with brine shrimp guppies, snails, and plants. At the end of the unit we could take the stuff home, i dumped it in the pond and several winters later the fish are still alive. See if a school in the area does something similar or you can order guppies online and buy sea monkeys.

Also might want to post a topic/question to get more answers



bounty1012 says:

Apr 4, 2009. 7:11 PM [REPLY](#)

XD



iPodGuy says:

Feb 24, 2009. 5:03 AM [REPLY](#)

I've never been successful finding queens, but I'd love to build my own ant farm.



Omensign says:

Jan 14, 2009. 6:54 AM [REPLY](#)

My father and I used to make ant farms when I visisted in the summertime, including collecting our own ants. We would begin by looking for a type of large red ant, I have no idea what the specific scientific name is. Afterwhich my father had no problem letting them crawl all over his skin before dusting them off in the prepared jar ant-farm. I was too afraid to do that and I would collect the eggs that popped up instead. The farm would last virtually all summer before the ants would stop appearing in the winter. Eventually my dad took the jar out and emptied it in a field only to discover a giant ball of ants still living in the center. This didn't always happen and future projects didn't seem as successful. I've always been fascinated by ant farms and simply reading this article makes me want to bash one up.

Maybe a wall mounted ant farm.



ARVash says:

Apr 26, 2007. 8:43 PM [REPLY](#)

I ate an ant today OO



sgt.paper says:

Sep 26, 2007. 7:45 PM [REPLY](#)

i got ten bucks at school one time for eating ants by a teacher.....uh long story



Derin says:

Nov 1, 2008. 12:03 AM [REPLY](#)

my friend ate grass yesterday

he wanted to throw up and leave school because his friend did

but he and another friend are the kings of disgusting

they ate an icecream on the ground that was stomped on



ARVash says:

Sep 26, 2007. 7:47 PM [REPLY](#)

That sounds like it would be a long story, but probably a reasonably interesting one.



i make shooting things says:

Apr 26, 2007. 6:49 PM [REPLY](#)

nice just one thing, you said theirs a LED heat lamp. LEDs produce little heat if any at all, and normal bulb would "heat". just saying great jobs

BUT HATE ANTS THEY MUST ALL DIE!!!!!!! just a personal thing sorry.



bob.smitty says:

Aug 14, 2008. 11:35 AM [REPLY](#)

thank you for sharing your phobias without explanation. I will sleep easier tonight.



noahw says:

Apr 26, 2007. 8:55 PM [REPLY](#)

I think I wrote that there is an led "sun" light inside. No mention of heat lamp here, but thanks for the support.

Hopefully enough ants can live inside the mANTsion so that they won't have to bother you.



samisugar says:

Jun 13, 2008. 1:53 PM [REPLY](#)

hiya i was just wondering how thick was the glass u used? as i was thinking of using woodn picture frames with the glass in them however i dont no whether they would be thck enough, i dont want it to be too thick so there wont be as much sand in there wat do u think?? thanks



noahw says:

Jun 13, 2008. 2:44 PM [REPLY](#)

The glass was standard single pane window glass. That's usually 3/32".

I imagine that picture frame glass might actually be a bit thinner, so you might want to have some regular window glass cut for it.

That being said, you'll be using way less sand then I was, so the glass won't need to be as strong. I'd suggest some experimentation and airing on the side of caution - no one like spilled sand, or loose ants for that matter.



NakedSPOCK says:

May 31, 2008. 7:53 AM [REPLY](#)

Well, I think any activity away from the boob tube is excellent. However, I am going to create an Ant farm and see where it goes. I will have a old medical tattoo removal laser, that I would like to add so when an ant tries to escape it gets fried. I wonder will they eat their dead? NakedSpock...



emopants92 says:

May 27, 2007. 12:45 AM [REPLY](#)

ya i really like this idea and im going to try it but i got a question on the top you put wireing so the ants dont get out but obviously they can so how or what else can you do so they cant? o and also how could i build this with out 2 windows? i was thinking like plexi glass or something idk but if you could help thanks



noahw says:

May 29, 2007. 7:58 AM [REPLY](#)

The top of the ant farm has a piece of steel on it. The steel has some small holes drilled into it. Covering the small holes is screen material - like the kind in windows, so the ants are securely kept inside the ant farm.

You could certainly build the ant farm out of plexi glass. It would be a good choice since you could make it any size and shape that you liked, and it wouldn't be too expensive.

If you are going to make a medium or large sized ant farm I would recommend buying plexi that is at least 3/16" to 1/4" thick. The ant farm I built took 50 pounds of sand to fill up, so strong walls would be best.



emopants92 says:

May 29, 2007. 9:18 AM [REPLY](#)

ya i would like to really thank you soo much for your instructable now im going to have a large really nice ant farm and not some crap piece of plastic that i have to go out and buy 10 dollor antslol ya i used 2 picture frames with i think 1/3 of an inch thick wood in between it and glue the glass in then im going to use liquid nails to completly seel the whole thing shut and whooola but ya thankz so much i should be finishing it up in the next couple of days



noahw says:

May 29, 2007. 9:35 AM [REPLY](#)

Using two picture frames is a great idea! If you get a chance once it's done, post some pictures of the design. I would love to see it.



emopants92 says:

May 29, 2007. 2:13 PM [REPLY](#)

ya no problem it should be done within the next couple days im waiting for the sealent to dry over the wood cuz i didnt want to risk ants eventually eating throu the wood i have on the sides but ya ill post some pictures on here the moment its all together and constructed



noahw says:

May 29, 2007. 2:57 PM [REPLY](#)

Where are you getting your ants from? Are you digging up a colony or ordering some online.

I ordered from www.antsalive.com and so far they have been really great diggers. As soon as a tunnel collapses they are all their to fix it. They burrow 24/7! Of the 50 ants that came about 2/3rds are still alive after the first month.

I look forward to seeing the pictures.



emopants92 says:

Aug 13, 2007. 5:59 PM [REPLY](#)

hey man i havent been on in a while soooo srry camera problems but ya ill try to get pics up really soon in a couple days but ya i cant find anything to work for giveing water to them where did you get the vile thingy?



noahw says:

Aug 13, 2007. 6:11 PM [REPLY](#)

It's the bottom of a dropper bottle (like for medicines and tinctures etc...) You could use any kind of vile or jar though with a narrow neck. It actually didn't work all that well at delivering the water to the ants though. I think that just taking a spray/mist bottle and wetting down the top of the soil works best for giving the ants their water.



xenobiologista says:

FYI it's spelled vial...no big deal but i was a bit confused at first cos i thought you really meant vile as in disgusting =)

Mar 7, 2008. 6:44 AM [REPLY](#)



emopants92 says:

alright once i can get my camera working or borrow one ill put some pictures up

Aug 13, 2007. 7:02 PM [REPLY](#)



noahw says:

Sounds good!

Aug 13, 2007. 10:25 PM [REPLY](#)



emopants92 says:

ya i am planning on getting some ants around my house cuz i really dont have the money to keep buying ants i am going to make my ant farm so that i can put regular sized like idk the smaller ones so i dont have to spend soo much on ants every like 3 months but ya i put the sealent on sunday at around 12 and its still not dry but hopefully it will dry within the next couple of days

May 29, 2007. 5:28 PM [REPLY](#)



hydrnium.h2 says:

I hear the water soaking gel in diapers is the same as that space age stuff they use in the new ant farms, is that true?

Nov 30, 2007. 3:58 PM [REPLY](#)



yarboroughc says:

Hi, I am going to construct a 3Ft by 2Ft Ant Farm made out of glass and wood. I am planning on hanging this ant farm up like a picture in my living room. I was wondering if anyone has plans for a large scale farm such as this i know it isn't that hard to make plans for one but a hint in the right direction would be nice also i do not want to be buying and digging up ants all the time i am very new at this and i have no idea how to find or dig up a queen ant also any other info that you guys might know i'd really appreciate it thanks alot.

Jun 6, 2007. 5:39 PM [REPLY](#)



noahw says:

I originally was going to make an ant farm that was as big as some of the large windows in my apartment (8ft x 4ft) so that I wouldn't have to draw my curtains any more to get privacy. I had secured some old glass windows that were the perfect size but then realized that the ants might not like cooking in the sun all day so I put that plan on the back burner.

Jun 7, 2007. 5:30 PM [REPLY](#)

I think that hanging an ant farm on the wall sounds like a great idea.

Indeed - if you were going to have it be rather large and permanent you would want to find a queen so that it could be self-propagating.

I wouldn't make the ant farm too deep, since things tend to get heavy pretty quickly. My ant farm was about 2' by 1.5' and it weighs over 70 lbs when it's filled with sand.



yarboroughc says:

Hey Noahw, thanks for the reply. Yea i'm going to try to keep the inside as narrow as possible. do you know of any good ant sights i'm very interested i just don't have much knowledge in the field. Also any ideas of catching a queen ant? thanks for the help Noahw. talk to you later

Jun 7, 2007. 9:03 PM [REPLY](#)



noahw says:

I think that if the internet has good info on finding queen ants you should be able to find it using one of the links from here: [Ant Farm Reading Room](#). This is another resource for catching queens.

Jun 8, 2007. 12:36 PM [REPLY](#)

I haven't ever tried to do it myself, but from everything that I have heard it seems like it takes some work. Keeping the queen ant happy so she produces offspring also seems to take some knowledge/experience.

Good luck on your search for the queen!



one of many says:

i've been wanting to make an ant farm forever. now i'll definately have to do it. thanks.

Apr 27, 2007. 10:28 AM [REPLY](#)



HamO says:

Well done, excellent instructable. Thanks for sharing.

Apr 27, 2007. 9:16 AM [REPLY](#)



HamO says:

Oh yeah, love mANTSion

Apr 27, 2007. 9:17 AM [REPLY](#)



MrK says:

Apr 27, 2007. 6:23 AM [REPLY](#)

it's a nice antfarm, but not practical
better to have a independent and more accesible place to put and remove food (yes, remove waste food before it gets mouldy, it may kill your ants)
you can connect your antfarm to the foraging place with transparent plastic tubes.

Also it is easier to use plaster instead of sand

Finally it's more satisfying to get a queen ant and see how your colony grows

more info: myrmecology

antcam

la marabunta (spanish)



stranoster says:

Apr 26, 2007. 5:50 PM [REPLY](#)

Well written, well explained and well DONE!
WOO