

Hedgehog Hotel



Hedgehog Awareness Week takes place every year at the beginning of May to raise awareness of their declining UK population. We have sporadic hedgehog garden visits during the year, not sure if it is one or more but we feed and water when we see them. I've wanted a hedgehog house in the garden in the hope we can provide a safe environment if they choose to take up residence. Hedgehogs prefer to live in a countryside habitat, woodlands and hedgerows, but as these are also declining more are now living in urban garden areas. We are on a quiet estate so I am hopeful that we may attract some especially as I've always had a soft spot for the cute little critters. As the time of year comes nearer to hibernation/nesting we will add bedding and make the hotel a warm cosy and safe place.

Materials:

- Readymade hedgehog house - after much research I chose this version as it was predator proof, solid and weatherproof. It is made from responsibly sourced timber with a fixed floor, removable roof for easy cleaning and roomy enough for more than one.
- Paints in colours of your choice - I ensured paints used were animal/child friendly, water based with very low VOC (volatile organic compound) and only painted it on the outside.
- Additional decorative 'hedgehogtel' items were made and added but this is personal choice

Instructions:

Using one coat of paint add layers of dark grey, sage green, baby blue and cream in an ombre effect from bottom upwards. I painted with a brush initially and started to finger paint after that to create a weathered look on the walls of the hotel. It is going to get very well weathered in our UK

climate! As May also has Mental Health Awareness Week I thought a bit of messy painting would add a fun mindful element to the making of it. It was fun and actually a good way to paint the uneven surfaces and pull away small splinters as I felt them.



I added a small hedgehogtel complex at the side for something pretty to see looking down the bottom of the garden where it is now homed. There is a smaller ceramic shelter at the other side to add bedding for a 'guest' to move into the main house themselves but also keep water/food dishes in as well. If either proves off-putting I can easily move elsewhere.

The hedgehogtel complex below is made from two offcut pieces of timber we had as door jambs, painted to match and joined together on top of each other with a plentiful amount of hot glue to create a stepped unit. When I looked into hot glue properties they have no harmful emissions so was happy to use. I then painted wooden house blanks and wooden tree blank in the matching colour scheme, arranging them on the steps before hot gluing down securely. Small pebbles and fake greenery was used to infill and landscape, finishing off with a hedgehogtel notice. The miniature fence at the bottom was wrapped around and tied at the back with string in case it needed removal. I added a mini needle felted hedgehog peeping out of the door.



A twig has been added over the doorway to check on any movements in and out. Now we wait to see if we have future guests – free lodging and meals - let's hope they don't have wild late night parties! The hedgehogtel is going to be a nice garden feature either way.

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