

Year in the Apiary – Monthly Beekeeping Calendar (UK)

Printable overview of key beekeeping tasks and themes for each month in a cool, temperate UK climate.

January

Bees tightly clustered, relying on stored food.

You focus on hive security, weatherproofing and emergency fondant if hives feel light.

February

Brood rearing often restarts; food use rises sharply.

Heft hives regularly and be ready with fondant for light colonies.

March

Colonies begin to build up as weather allows.

First full inspections on warm, calm days; check for food, brood and queen-right status.

April

Rapid brood expansion and early nectar flows in many regions.

Manage space, watch for swarm preparations and add supers when needed.

May

Peak swarming season in much of the UK.

Weekly inspections for queen cells, swarm control and supering strong colonies.

June

Main honey flow month in many areas.

Continue swarm control, maintain space and ventilation, and monitor super fill.

July

Honey flow often continues or begins to tail off.

Manage heat, ventilation and space; prepare for honey removal if appropriate.

August

Many beekeepers remove supers and assess colony health.

Begin varroa control and plan feeding once honey for extraction is off.

September

Focus on winter preparation: feeding and varroa treatments.

Aim for strong, well-fed colonies with healthy brood going into autumn.

October

Colonies settle for winter as temperatures fall.

Finalise feeding, reduce entrances, check insulation and protect hives from pests.

November

Very quiet month inside the hive; bees form a tighter cluster.

Minimal disturbance: occasional hefting, security checks and top-up fondant if needed.

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December

Deep winter; bees are clustered and mostly inactive outside the hive.

Some beekeepers apply mid-winter oxalic acid treatment when colonies are brood-light, following current guidance.