

In the Workshop

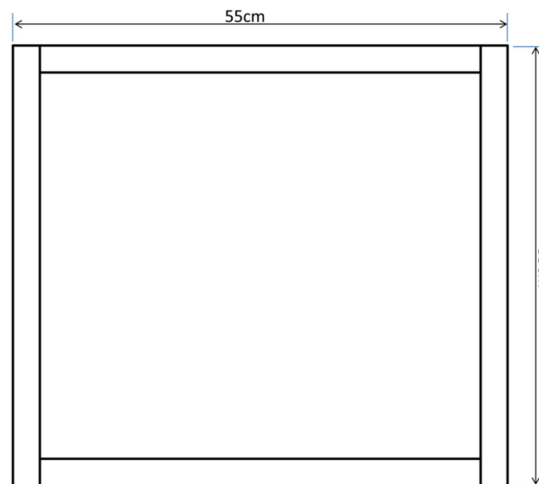
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If you have made some lifts for your WBC style hive, the next challenge is to make a base that allows your national sized hive to fit snugly inside.

We will once again use standard sizes of wood where practicable. Parts of this hive base can be built from pallet wood but there are benefits from buying some wood from your local timber merchant. You may have to adapt the design dimensions to suit your particular design of hives but the basic principles are the same throughout.

Make the basic box

It may sound very obvious but the outer dimensions of the WBC hive base must be sized to allow your lifts to fit snugly on top. Most of you making the lifts to last month's dimensions should find that a base of external dimensions 55cm x 55cm should be a sensible fit for your lifts. Use 15cm wide wood (minimum) to 200 wide wood (maximum).



What about the entrance part?

You can reproduce the original design of the WBC hive if you wish. I have been asked on more than one occasion to produce replacement entrance slides as they are frequently either lost or snapped for various reasons.



Front view of base with landing board. National floor and entrance block can be seen inside.

The front of the hive can be very much down to your personal preferences but it is useful to consider the following:

- A landing board is useful for your bees and your monitoring of activity at the hive entrance.
- The entrance to your National hive (inside the WBC outer shell) should be level and a snug fit with the top edge of the landing board.
- You should be able to remove/adjust your entrance block via without having to take out any of the National hive boxes.



Cross-sectional view of the front of the WBC base and landing board. National floor and entrance cross-section is also shown in situ.

The front of the WBC base can be almost any design you wish. Pallet wood will suffice in most cases. The author has made several designs and considers the following to be important for the bees:

1. The landing board should be up to 15cm wide so there is plenty of space to observe the bees. Notice that the wood has been trimmed to fit snugly with the National floor.
2. Underneath the landing board, a small spacer may be required to keep the landing board in position.
3. The piece at the bottom is some pallet wood. This is screwed and glued in position to make the base more rigid.
4. The 'porch' roof above the landing board is optional. The bees seem to appreciate it on rainy days as it helps keep the landing board around the entrance dry. Not strictly needed as the lifts provide a similar effect anyway.
5. If you have disassembled a few pallets in the past, you can salvage the support blocks in some cases. These make good feet to lift up the hive from the ground. Screw but don't glue them in position. As they eventually rot, they can be replaced as a set.



Top view of the WBC base. This one was cut to provide the sectional view shown previously

Nearing completion



By now, you should have the WBC base and the lifts. One of your National hives should fit inside. You won't need the National roof, just the crown board.

Next month, we shall discuss the roof and the various finishes you can have on your wooden hives.

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Example hive with lifts sitting on the base