



Further information about the Practical

As the Practical takes place outdoors in the training apiary, each training session will be weather dependant. If there is adverse weather, the trainer will decide whether the session will go ahead or be rearranged. Please be flexible in this regard. Not opening hives in inclement weather is for the benefit of both bees and beginners!

The Wednesday course will start at 6pm promptly due to the few hours of light that will be available. This time may change as the daylight hours change. Please do allow enough time to get kit on and smokers ready prior to this start time. The Saturday course will start at

Kit required:

1. Bee suit of your choosing
2. Hive tool
3. Smoker
4. Smoker fuel such as woodchip/hessian or proprietary smoker fuel
5. Some form of ignition to light smoker
6. Wellington boots (preferably full length, not short ones)
7. Beekeeping gloves of your choice (leather not advisable, marigolds one size down work well)
8. You may wish to bring along antihistamine tablets, liquid or cream and have this in the car just in case. However, you will need to make your own decision as to what medications are appropriate for you personally.

Suggestions for clothing under the bee suit:

- cap (snugly fitted) under your suit to protect your head and keep the veil off your face
- a long sleeved top
- long trousers (you must wear these if you are wearing a bee jacket rather than a full suit)
- depending on the fitting of the wellington boot you have, do not leave a gap between the boot and your leg to allow a route for bees to travel down
- depending on the Covid situation we may ask you to wear face masks, just in case
- perfume/aftershave/bananas should be avoided as these smells can make the bees grumpy

Due to Covid we cannot suggest that any equipment is shared and it is important things are kept separate.

Beekeeping can be hot and sweaty and so a drink and towel may be useful in the car. Alternatively, you may decide to bring your own flask of tea/coffee/water or food for a level of socially distanced discussion after the class. This is isolated farmland and there are no facilities on site including no toilets. We will comply with all Covid guidelines and/or sensible precautions that need to be followed, and these will be communicated to you nearer the time.

What happens after I have done my Theory and Practical courses?

The really exciting bit! If you are still committed to becoming a beekeeper, then the next step is to acquire a colony of bees, which the Association can guide you through. You can also make use of the Association's informal Bee Buddy scheme; to seek advice and guidance from experienced beekeepers in your area. Many beginners find this additional ongoing support very helpful in their early years.

Beginner training is, of course, only the start! We expect all beginners to do their own reading, watching videos, attending lectures and making use of the many beekeeping resources available. Attending the Association meetings is an excellent way to meet other beekeepers and learn something new, as well as joining the Facebook group, and we encourage all beginners to actively

participate in the Association. Being a beekeeper is a lifelong journey of discovery - we cannot possibly teach you everything there is to know about bees in these courses - for a start, there is so much more we have yet to discover about these complex and amazing little creatures. But our training courses will give you a solid foundation from which to kick-start your own beekeeping learning and enjoy this absorbing and fascinating craft.

Further training

We encourage all our members to do the Basic Assessment which is a practical assessment (like a driving test equivalent for beekeeping). You can take the Basic once you have been keeping bees for at least one year. We also encourage those wishing to advance their beekeeping learning via the BBKA Modules and husbandry certificates for advanced beekeeping. These are optional, of course, but we do encourage members to get involved with the study groups even if they are not intending to take any Modules, as the aim is to perpetuate continual learning in the craft of beekeeping.

We hope this information page has answered all your questions but if not please don't hesitate to get in touch.