

Build an Insect

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Materials Needed:

Craft materials (cardboard, egg cartons, pipe cleaners, modeling clay, tissue paper, plastic bag pieces, beads, twigs, yarn, etc.), fastening materials (glue, tape, rubber bands, string, etc.). You can use whatever supplies you have!

Instructions:

Step 1: Decide what kind of insect to build. Look at the pictures of flying insects on the next page for inspiration. How are they similar and different?

Step 2: Start with the three main body parts: head, thorax, and abdomen. Build them out of any materials you have (clay, cardboard, egg cartons, etc)

Step 3: Add eyes, a proboscis (mouth), and two antennae. Some insects have long thin antennae, while others have shorter and wider ones.

Step 4: Make six legs (pipe cleaners or folded cardboard). Attach legs on each side of the body. All insects have six legs!

Step 5: Make wings (tissue paper, cardboard, plastic bag pieces, etc) attach one to each side of the body. Most insects have four wings, but some species, including mosquitoes, only have two.

Step 6: Decorate your insect! Make it look realistic, or use your imagination. An insect's color can help them camouflage, communicate with mates, warn predators, or even absorb heat.

Flying Insects

Insects were the first animals to evolve wings. Winged insects first appear in the fossil record between 350 and 400 million years ago.

Dragonflies and mayflies have flight muscles attached to their wings. In other insects, muscles in the thorax move the wings.

Insects may have two, four, or no wings.

Most insects do not have wings when they are in the larva or nymph stage. They don't have functional wings until they become adults.

In some insect species such as ants, the queen and the males have wings, but the female workers do not.

In addition to flying, insects use their wings in many different ways, including camouflage, armor, attracting mates, warning off predators, regulating body temperature, producing sound, and even sailing.

**Insects have wings in many shapes, sizes, and colors.
Here are some examples:**

Boreal Whiteface Skimmer Dragonfly
(*Leucorrhinia borealis*)

White Admiral Butterfly
(*Limnitis arthemis*)

Transverse Lady Beetle
(*Coccinella transversoguttata*)

Yellowjacket
(*Vespula* sp.)

Grasshopper
(*Melanoplus* sp.)

Mosquito
(Family *Culicidae*)

Image Credits: Butterfly [Kenelm W. Philip](#) All others: [Derek Sikes](#).