

FAQ about Buying, Pickup and Installing Package Bees and Queens

If you read nothing else:

Bee package delivery is scheduled for Saturday, April 13, 11 am – 2 pm. Do not arrive early or late. If you arrive early you will be asked to leave until after 11am. If you arrive after 2pm you will forfeit your package of bees, with no refund.

Pick up bees at:

Peninsula Feed Store
346 El Camino Real
Redwood City

Hive your package as soon as possible. Late afternoon/twilight of the pickup day is best.

If your package has a dead queen: Do not hive the bees. Immediately contact Bob Silverstein at 650-255-1026 and send him a video of the dead queen in her unopened cage. We will have a few replacement queens, but they will only be provided if the queen died in her unopened cage before hiving, and if hiving was done within 27 hr of picking up the package (i.e., by 5pm Sunday April 14).

Buying package bees:

Order online in the Guild's store

You will only be able to see or purchase bee packages if you have paid this year's dues and you are [logged into your Guild store account](#). If you're unsure

whether you've paid dues, log into your account and check the orders you've placed.

The last day to purchase packages is April 1 – sales will close at 11:59 pm that day.

Where are the bees from?

We buy our bees from a high-quality Northern California breeder (we do not provide contact details as our agreement with the breeder is the guild will have a single point of contact with them). The breeder has a special place in his/her heart for bee clubs and so gives us a special price for great bees.

Picking up your bees:

When is bee delivery day?

Bee package delivery is scheduled for Saturday, April 13, 11 am – 2 pm. Do not arrive early or late. If you arrive early you will be asked to leave and return after 11am. If you arrive after 2pm you will forfeit your package of bees, with no refund.

Is there any chance the date might change?

In past years, we've occasionally had to delay delivery because of really cold and crappy late Winter/early Spring weather. This year is going well and we're already seeing hive buildup, drone production and good signs of bee health. So that date looks pretty solid for now.

I'm busy that day, can you hold my bees until the next week/can I get them the week before?

We don't have facilities to hold bees. If you are unable make the package pickup, you need to make arrangements with another beekeeper to pick them up. We make only one run per year to pick up bees.

Where do I pick up my bees?

Peninsula Feed Store

346 El Camino Real

Redwood City

How do I pick up my bees?

Bee pickup is in the parking lot of the Peninsula Feed store. You will have received an email order confirmation when you purchased your bees. Please print the confirmation and bring it with you to the pickup.

More IMPORTANT stuff:

- Do not transport bees home in a plastic garbage bag or airtight container – they breathe, too. If you are not comfortable with stray bees in your car, you might want to bring mesh to cover the package box – there are always a few stray bees clinging to the boxes.
- You are responsible for learning how to install a package BEFORE the day you receive the bees.
- We will provide marshmallows for the queen cages.

What time was that again?

You MUST pick up during the 11-2 window. PLEASE don't arrive early or late. If you arrive early you will be asked to leave and return after 11am. If you arrive after 2pm you will forfeit your package of bees, with no refund.

Hiving your bees

When should the bees go into the hive?

We *strongly* suggest that you install into your hives the same day to minimize any harm to the bees. Most experienced beekeepers install them late in the afternoon so foragers don't go too far and get lost finding their way back. Keep the bees in a shady location until they can be hived, so they don't overheat.

IMPORTANT: Check your queen before installing

If the queen is dead in the cage, do not install your package. Take a video of the dead queen in her unopened queen cage and call Bob S. at 650-255-1026.

We will have a few replacement queens, but they will only be provided if the queen died in her unopened cage before hiving, and if hiving was done within 27 hr of picking up the package (i.e., by 5pm Sunday April 14).

Also IMPORTANT: Leave the queen in the cage

When hiving, **the queen needs to be installed still in the queen cage**. The queen in the package is not familiar to those bees. The marshmallow in the end hole provides 2-3 days delay – by the time the bees have eaten through it, they will have imprinted on this queen's pheromones and will love her. Releasing the queen immediately into the hive will likely result in the bees killing her, and you will not be entitled to a replacement queen.

Multiple packages? Multiple orientations!

If you ordered 2+ bee packages and your hives will be sited next to one another, orient the openings in different directions if possible, or keep the entrances closed for a day or so. As noted, the package workers are not daughters of the package queen or oriented to your hives' location. Significant drift to one box may deplete the population of a nearby box.

WOW, that's a lot!

I've provided a lot of information but it's really not rocket science. All will be well.

Oh, I almost forgot. I have created a list of Youtube videos showing how people **install packages** ([click here to download list](#)). I like the first video from Beekind. The segment on how to remove the cork from the end of the California mini cage is good and while he uses a candy tube the marshmallow that is provided works just as well.

