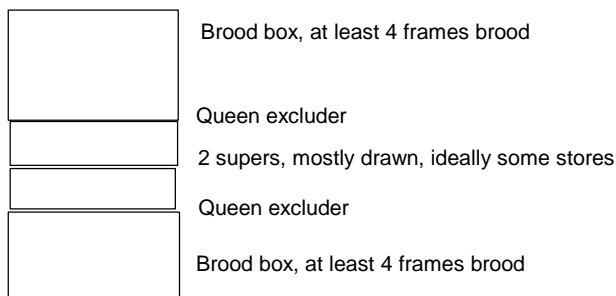


Basic Artificial Swarm - my technique - Keith Allen
(based on Ted Hooper and a lot simpler than Tom Salter's variations)

- 1) Build colony to at least 6 frames brood.
- 2) Put 2nd brood box on top of first, under any super, with at least 4 frames drawn comb.
- 3) Wait 7-10 days
- 4) If colony now at least 8 frames, prepare to split. Make up as:



If not big enough, wait another 7 - 10 days. If not then, give up

Queen can be in either box, no need to check

5) 3 - 7 days later:

- a) Place new floor alongside.
- b) Lift top brood on to new floor
- c) Move supers aside, open both boxes and swap 2 frames brood
- d) Add queen excluder and a super with some stores to each

6) 5 - 10 days later:

Check 1 box has eggs (and thus a queen) and the other queen cells. If no queen cells then transfer a frame of eggs, with or without bees (maybe even with the queen) from the other box.

7) Repeat 6 up to 3 times if necessary. If still no queen cells, recombine over newspaper.

Simple really!

Notes:

The new floor doesn't have to be alongside, but it makes things easier if there are problems.

If colony is the bare minimum 8 frames it is best to check relative sizes of the new colonies the day after the split. If there's a major imbalance, swap a frame or 2 of bees, OR if the largest box is on the original site, and the boxes adjacent, just swap them, so the flying bees redress the balance.

Obviously cold/wet weather may slow or prevent progress. Bees can't make queen cells if they can't fly!

Step (4) can be omitted, but reduces success rate. Occasionally, if the queen is in the bottom box at this stage, the top box will start making queen cells. The main reason for this stage is to reduce pheromone in one box, and thus the shock of queenlessness, while keeping the brood warm.

Handling within boxes is mostly while the boxes are separate. So less bees and easier work.

Don't be afraid to reduce the queen cells to 2 or 3 good big ones, or even to split again if the good queen cells are on different frames.

Most years I get 5 of 6 splits making queen cells happily. Even in the wet summer of 2007 3 of 6 succeeded.