



User Manual

AntsCanada Ant Tower™

Contents

1 Ant Tower



1 Nest Reducer



1 Lid



1 Food Cap



1 Base (water reservoir)



1 Bag of sand



1 Test Tube



2 Plugs™



1 Test Tube Adapter



Large Vinyl Tubing™ (6 inches)



1 Red Transparent Nest Cover
[Picture not available]

Introduction

Congratulations on choosing AntsCanada for your ant keeping needs, where professional ant keepers design and use the products. Your new AntsCanada Ant Tower™ is a fully contained ant environment, complete with a nesting area and a foraging area. It comes with an easy-to-use hydration system to keep your ant colony well hydrated and provides easy and secure access for feeding.

As a member of our line of soil formicariums (fancy word for “ant farm”), your Ant Tower™ allows your ants to create their own nest by digging tunnels and chambers. And the best part is – you get to watch them do it!

Features

The AntsCanada Ant Tower™ has several features that make it the best soil formicarium available.

1. Hydration
 - a. The bottom-up hydration approach more closely mimics the natural environment that ants live in. In nature, the deeper portions of an ant nest are typically moister than the upper portions.
 - b. The water reservoir provides water for at least a week, sometimes longer depending on local conditions. This way you can leave for a time period and not be worried about your ants dying from lack of water.



Features (continued)

2. Nest Reducer

- a. The nest reducer allows you to make the width of the digging area narrower. For smaller ant species, this can be desirable as it forces them to dig more tunnels and chambers against the side of the Ant Tower™ for better viewing. For larger species, its use is not recommended.



3. Small feeder opening

- a. Reduce the chances of ants escaping by only removing the small feeding cap. No need to remove the entire lid when feeding your colony.



Features (continued)

- b. NOTE: As your colony grows and you have several ants in the foraging area, it is recommended that you apply an insect barrier around the top of the foraging area that the ants cannot cross. This will keep them off the lid completely. A couple of options include making a liquidy paste with baby powder and alcohol and applying it with a cotton swab or using a product called Fluon (Insect-a-Slip). NOTE: Make sure to apply the barrier on the inside surface of the Ant Tower foraging areas as shown below.



4. Cornerless
 - a. Some ant species can climb through any barrier applied if they have a corner to navigate. The cornerless design of the new AC Ant Tower™ helps you as the ant keeper to avoid this problem.
5. Seamless
 - a. There are no seams or glue used in the construction of the new AC Ant Tower™.

Features (continued)

6. Built-in expansion and connection points
 - a. The built-in expansion and connection points make it very easy to connect your new Ant Tower™ to other AntsCanada gear. If you have a young colony living in a test tube setup, your test tube can be connected to the Ant Tower™ with the use of the included adapter, or the Valve Connector in the Deluxe Kit, allowing for a simple way to introduce your young colony into the Ant Tower™. As your colony grows, you can also use our plastic tubing to expand your setup by connecting the AntTower™ to more AntTowers™ or other AntsCanada equipment.
 - b. **IMPORTANT:** Your Ant Tower™ comes with two built-in connection points. Remember to block any unused connection points with cotton or an AntsCanada Plug™.



7. Microholes in the lid for good air movement.
 - a. An important aspect of any ant setup is air circulation. Without good air circulation, you may see mold begin to develop. And of course, all living organisms need a fresh supply of oxygen to survive.



Features (continued)

8. Air hose port
 - a. To allow for even more air movement, your new Ant Tower™ has one air hose connection point. If desired, you can connect a standard aquarium air pump to increase air circulation in the foraging area of your Ant Tower™.



9. Red Transparent Nest Cover
 - a. The Nest Cover wraps around the lower nesting portion of the Ant Tower™ and provides a dark “underground” environment for your ant colony. It is made of red transparent plastic so it is still possible to view your ant colony through the cover.
 - b. The wonderful thing about red light is that many ant species can't see red light, so they think they are in darkness. Without the cover, ants may attempt to block light from entering the nesting area by placing dirt up against the sides of the Ant Tower™ obstructing your view, but with the cover in place, they will think they are in the dark.
 - c. The Nest Cover is easy to remove and replace as well. It is perfectly fine to remove it occasionally for better observation of your ant colony, but is best left in place during non-observation times.
 - d. You may optionally shorten the height of the nest cover by cutting it with scissors so that it fits just on the lower digging half of the Ant Tower.
10. Strong design
 - a. Made from clear polycarbonate and ABS plastic. Stands up to dings and bumps much better.

Assembly

Your new AntsCanada Ant Tower™ comes fully assembled.

1. The entire lid can be removed. Gently apply upward pressure to one side of the lid and it will pop off. The small round cap (Food Cap) can also be removed.
2. The base water reservoir can also be removed for cleaning.

Add Soil

Your new AntsCanada Ant Tower™ comes with a bag of soil which you can use as the digging medium for your ant colony. You may also use a soil mixture of your own making from your local area. To add your soil:

1. Decide whether you want to use the Nest Reducer or not. As its name implies, the Nest Reducer reduces the width of the digging area. It can be used for smaller ant species to force more digging against the side of the Ant Tower™ for better viewing.
2. Pour in soil up to the top of the inner cylinder or Nest Reducer.
3. Lightly tap the bottom of the Ant Tower™ for a minute or so against a table or desk to compact the soil. **NOTE: Pushing the soil down with fingers or some other tool is not recommended as it may scratch the inside surface of the Ant Tower™.**
4. Pour a little water into the Ant Tower and let it soak all the way down. Excess water will drip down into the water reservoir. This will help with soil compaction and provide a good digging medium for the ants.
5. If the soil level drops too far, pour in more soil to bring it level again with the top of the inner cylinder.

Decorate

You can optionally decorate the foraging area of your Ant Tower™ however you'd like. Here is an example of a decorated Ant Tower™. You can use pebbles, sticks and leaves from your yard or purchase an Ant Tower™ Biome Kit from our web shop – www.AntsCanada.com/shop.

Fully Decorated Ant Tower™



Add Ants

The last step is to add your new ant colony. While the Ant Tower™ can be used to house worker ants from a colony in your neighborhood that you collect, it is ideally suited to house a growing ant colony, complete with an egg-laying queen.

With an egg-laying queen, you can watch the full life-cycle of ants, from egg, to larva, to pupa, to ant. You can observe the various ant duties being performed and enjoy watching your ant colony grow from one or two workers to thousands of workers.

How Do I Get A Queen Ant?

Queen ants are all around you. You just have to know when to look for them and how to identify them. We have created several video tutorials that can be found in our AntsCanada YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/user/AntsCanada>

Another option for getting a queen is to use the Global Ant Nursery (GAN) Project. People who live close to you have already collected newly fertilized queen ants and will sell one to you.

You can read about it here: <https://www.antscanada.com/queen-ants-for-sale/> .

Cleaning the Ant Tower™

Like any other pet, ants will create messes. Fortunately, they will usually pile their garbage in the foraging area for you. As the ant keeper, you are responsible to occasionally do a little clean-up work for them.

We also recommend that the entire Ant Tower™ be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water at least once a year. Of course in order to do this, your ant colony will need to move out into another location. A second Ant Tower™ would be ideal for this. Connect a second Ant Tower and over a period of time, encourage them to move by using light and heat.

Watch a video tutorial here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/AntsCanada>

NOTE: You must not use boiling water when cleaning your Ant Tower nor should you run it through a dishwasher cycle. Damage may occur if either of these things is done.

Expanding Your Nesting & Foraging Areas

As your colony grows, they will need more nesting space and larger foraging areas. Additional Ant Towers™ can be added as well as dedicated outworlds and other types of formicariums. Some ant colonies have been known to occupy an entire desk or table! Providing for the space requirements of your ant colony is another one of your responsibilities as the ant keeper. There are many options to choose from as you expand.

You can see a complete set of all AntsCanada gear here:

<https://www.antscanada.com/shop/>

Two Connected Ant Towers™



Three Connected Ant Towers™



Other AntsCanada Gear



AntsCanada Outworld™



AntsCanada Hybrid Nest™



AntsCanada Omni Nest™

Air Circulation & Air Hose Port



Air circulation in an ant setup is critical. Since the ants will leave their garbage in the foraging area, toxic ammonia can be generated. Proper air circulation removes this ammonia. Air circulation is also important in keeping condensation out of your Ant Tower™ which will minimize the growth of mold.

The air hose port allows you to increase the air circulation in your Ant Tower™. This port uses standard 3/16 inch (4.7625mm) diameter tubing. Feel free to add a fish air pump to create air movement within the Ant Tower™ to discourage mold growth. You can find air hosing and an air pump wherever you buy aquarium supplies.



Preventing Escapes

It is common practice to add a barrier to prevent the ants from crawling up the sides of the foraging area and escaping as you try to add food, or tidy up the Ant Tower™. The top ½ inch of the cylinder is the ideal location to apply this barrier. Some of the more common barriers include baby powder (sometimes mixed with rubbing alcohol), fluon, and petroleum jelly. Apply one of these barriers on the inside of the foraging area and reapply when you notice the ants are able to begin crossing it in certain spots.



Deluxe Version

The Ant Tower™ Deluxe version comes with some additional goodies for you. We'll explain them all for you here.

Red LED Light

The Red LED Light can be placed under the Ant Tower™ in the void created by the inner cylinder. The small wire attached to the battery case can fit through one of the two tunnels of the base, allowing the Ant Tower™ to still sit flat on the table or desk.

When turned on, a red light is emitted from the inside making the tunnels, chambers and all the ant activity much easier to see. Again, the red light is not viewable by ants, so it won't disturb or alarm them.

Magnifying Glass

The small magnifying glass can be used to view some of the harder to see aspects of ant life, like eggs, larva, and ant body parts.

Water Pipette

The water pipette can be used to add water into the base water reservoir or also into specific locations above ground in the foraging area to recreate a rainy day for your ant colony.