

How to check for Varroa mites using the sugar shake method

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You will need the following:

1. Mason Jar with 1/8 wire mesh cover
2. Confectioner sugar
3. Container to shake bees into
4. container of water

Inspect the colony; find the brood nest and a frame with open brood. It is important that you get a frame with open brood as adult varroa mites like young bees. Do not collect the bees for the test from the inner cover, or a honey frame or from the beard hanging on the front of the colony.

Inspect the frame for the queen, if you see her place her on another frame.

Shake the frame over the container for collecting bees (a wash tub works great).

Shake the frame into the tub.

Pour 300 bees into the jar and secure the lid.

Screw on 1/8 mesh lid and add confectioner sugar.

Gently shake the jar to cover the bees in the jar with powdered sugar.

Let sit for about 4 minutes, this is important because the sugar needs to warm to cause the mites to release.

Turn Jar upside down and slowly rotate over the container of water. The sugar will dissolve as it falls into the water. The mites will float on the surface of the water. They usually all fall out within about 30 seconds of when they start to fall.

Count the mites.

Dump the bees at the entrance of the hive.

Mason jar

Bees and Power sugar

Wash tub

