

DonTop

Reduces stress to your bees and you!



Assess temperament before inspection

Controlled viewing

Flexible ventilation

Enjoy watching your bees

Travel screen ability

Sturdy work surface

Be in control with **DonTop** and enjoy beekeeping

Benefits you and your bees

Until now, opening up a hive has been both stressful to you and your bees. Lifting off the roof and then breaking the seal of the crown board to let in daylight to an otherwise dark environment must have an effect on our bees. The **DonTop** will give you those crucial seconds to assess what is going on in the hive. It will also allow your bees time to acclimatise to your intrusion. The fine mesh screen lets you view your bees without fear of them flying up. And if you use a smoker, you can achieve more control in its use. Once you are happy with the temperament of your bees you can then proceed with your inspection.

There is a "Travel Screen" on the market that would do much the same job, but it is generally marketed for use when transporting hives from one location to another, giving just ventilation to the colony. The **DonTop** is designed specifically to be used to improve your interaction with your bees. It comes with a totally flat 18mm OSB (Oriented Strand Board) Crown Board to compliment its functionality. Traditional crown boards use thin plywood, and although these can be used with the **DonTop**, our thicker version gives better heat retention and a very stable worktop. The edges of both the mesh screen and crown board are chamfered to aid removal with your hive tool. This Crown Board comes with domed pins in each corner on one side to allow you ventilation options. Ideally you place the **DonTop** over a queen excluder during the late autumn/winter months. Should you then need to look at the brood box, you will have full visual access to the entire spread of frames, rather than perhaps just the restricted view through the Porter Escape holes. **Safe in the knowledge that the bees are contained.**



Once the season is underway, the **DonTop** can be placed over the top super, giving you much the same control over those initial moments when inspecting. With the Crown Board placed so that the pins are between the Mesh Frame, you can increase ventilation and thus aid ripening of your honey crop. The mesh unit has approx 16 holes per inch giving a high level of protection from other creatures whilst giving remarkable vision of the bees below. Further **DonTops** might come in handy when moving more than one super, allowing you to contain all the bees in their individual boxes. Use your **DonTop** to monitor small colonies with new queens without disturbing them, ideal if you have artificially swarmed.

The **DonTop** has brought a new concept to inspecting your colonies by giving you the ability to assess the bees' temperament, and in the process making the hobby that much more pleasurable. I'm also pretty confident that fewer bees, if any, will be harmed when using the **DonTop**.

Our aim is to make beekeeping as pleasurable as possible. The jury is out when it comes to ventilation, but with the new **DonTop** you have the option to choose what is right for you. Please see our "User Instructions" for further thoughts.

The 46cm square **DonTop** comes treated with two coats of Cuprinol Wild Thyme wood protection on both the mesh unit and crown board.

Contact us if you wish to fit a **DonTop** to your WBC or other hive type.

Order your **DonTop** on-line now.

Fits all National hives



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User Instruction for the DonTop

Before you fit and reap the benefits of the **DonTop**, take a few moments to consider what you are about to do and be prepared for any eventuality, particularly if you are working with an inhabited colony of bees!

Your unit is already treated with a wood preservative, so if handled with care, should last for many seasons. Further wood preservative may be required over the years to prolong its life. The **DonTop** is designed as an aid to help you enjoy your bees during the part of the season when they are not actively producing wax or propolis. Remove and clean the mesh unit as soon as you see a build up of any such activity, using a propolis removal spray or hot water for brace comb. If used over the top super during a flow the **DonTop** may aid ripening, but similarly, remove if brace comb is seen. The Crown Board with studs between the mesh frame will also aid ventilation.

Time to fit

If you are fitting to a hive with a colony with bees installed, then wear your bee suit. This is not a race to fit as quickly as possible, but should not take more than a minute or two if you are fully prepared. If working with a colony that only has a brood box then remove your existing roof, crown board and queen excluder if fitted. Clear away any brace comb, propolis and other debris to the top edges of the brood box and the top of any frames to create as clean and flat a surface as possible. Ideally you will now fit a clean queen excluder over the brood box, followed by the **DonTop** mesh frame. Then place the **DonTop** crown board over the mesh screen, replace the roof and normality is restored.

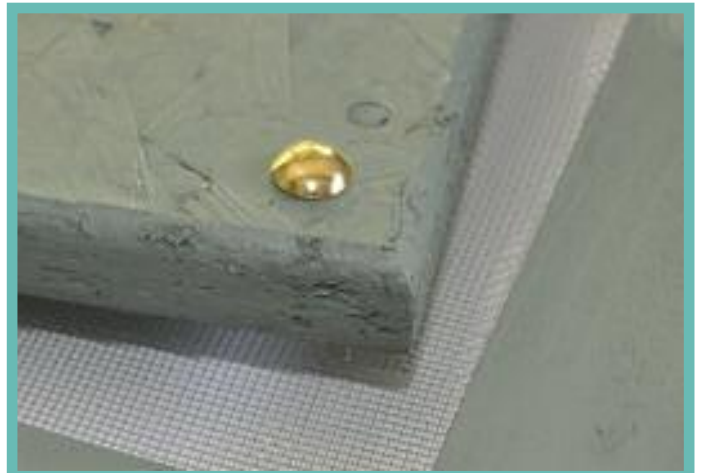
If you do not have a second clean queen excluder, then allow yourself time to remove any brace comb on the existing one before fitting the **DonTop** mesh frame.

It is virtually guaranteed that your bees will propolise the mesh at some point, so we recommend that you remove it from the hive at suitable intervals and use a propolis removal product to bring it back to its original state. Perhaps another **DonTop** at hand to swap?

The **DonTop** Crown board allows you to “Ventilate” your hive - very useful if you currently raise the crown board using matchsticks during the winter months. It is just a case of flipping the Crown Board over should you opt for a “Sealed” hive for heat retention. This could be a consideration for instance when a warm hive is needed to encourage wax building.

Please satisfy yourself for the case of ventilation or heat retention when considering the statement “It is damp rather than cold that kills bees”.

If you use the **DonTop** as a Travel Screen, then do ensure that it is securely strapped to the hive body. Never take risks when moving inhabited hives!



Time to order another one?



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