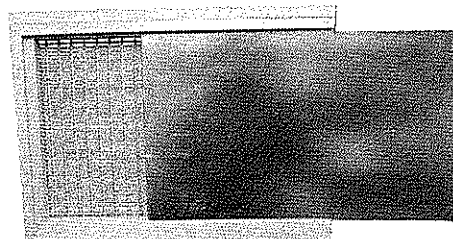




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CLOAKE BOARD USE

A Cloake Board is a special piece of equipment used in beekeeping to facilitate raising queen bees. Invented by Harry Cloake, the Cloake Board consists of a queen excluder mounted to a wooden frame. The wooden frame contains a slot which allows a "temporary" floor or tray to be inserted.



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- (1) Start with a double-bodied queenright colony.
- (2) Separate the two hive bodies.
- (3) Turn bottom brood chamber 180 degrees so the entrance is now in the back and close off entrance.
- (4) Place Cloake Board without sliding tray on top of bottom brood chamber with the upper entrance facing original front of hive, making sure queen is in bottom brood chamber.
- (5) Place second brood chamber on top of Cloake Board, making sure you have frames of uncapped brood in top brood chamber, closing off lower entrance for approximately 12 hours.
- (6) After the 12 hours, slide metal tray in the Cloake Board to separate the lower queenright colony from the upper queenless colony and open the lower entrance.
- (7) Allow 24 hours for the bees to adjust to the new configuration of the hive.
- (8) After a short period of time, the bees in the upper box will realize they are queenless and will start building new queen cells.
- (9) The next day open the hive upper box only and remove all queen cells.
- (10) Remove one frame of uncapped larvae and place it in another colony.
- (11) Install a frame of grafted larvae in the center of the upper body, replacing the frame of uncapped brood.
- (12) If there is no nectar flow, feed with light syrup and Dadant pollen patties.
- (13) Close hive for 24 hours.
- (14) During this waiting period, the bees will hopefully accept the grafted larvae and build up the queen cells.
- (15) After approximately 24 hours, rejoin the two colonies to form a queenright "cell finisher colony," by removing the metal slide from the Cloake Board. The bees will be reunited, but the queen will still be confined to the lower brood box by the Cloake Board queen excluder.
- (16) The nurse bees in the two brood boxes will work together to finish the grafted queens.
- (17) Remove the queen cells from the finisher colony after they are capped and place them in individual nuc boxes or queenless splits. Do not leave the capped queen cells in this colony because if one queen emerges, she will destroy the other queen cells.
- (18) Remove the Cloake Board to fully rejoin the two brood boxes of the original colony.
- (19) Note - Our *Dadant Cloake Board* has the queen excluder incorporated into the board itself.

ALTERNATE METHOD - NO GRAFTING

A Cloake Board can also be employed to create queen cells on existing frames without grafting. The steps are basically the same as above with the following modifications:

- Before sliding the metal tray in place, inspect the top brood box and determine that there is at least one frame with new unhatched eggs. Multiple frames with new eggs will often result in multiple frames with queen cells.
- A frame with grafted larvae is not needed since the bees are being allowed to build their own queen cells on existing brood frames.
- After finishing, you can either cut out the queen cells and place them in mating nucs, or place an entire frame with finished queen cells in a mating nuc.