



Congratulations on your purchase of the AntsCanada Hybrid Nest!

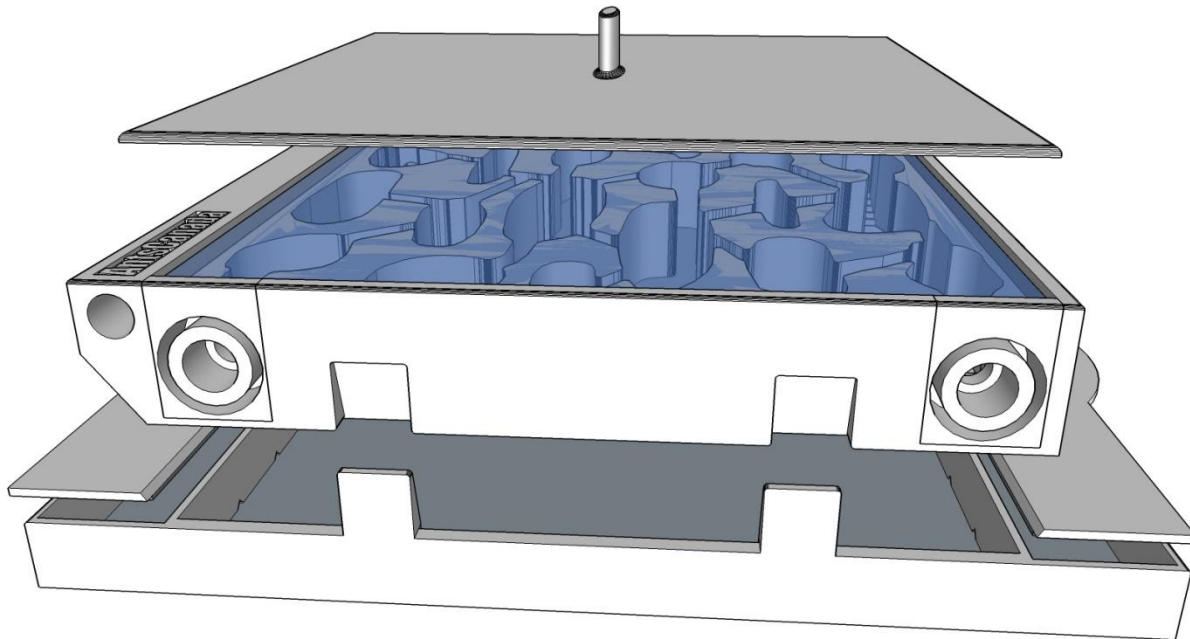
Hybrid Nest Components

Each Hybrid Nest ships with:

1. One base
2. One nest
3. One glass cover
4. One nest cover
5. Two water basin covers
6. Either two or four entrances
7. Hydration medium (usually cotton)
8. Poly tubing
9. Test tube

Figure 1 below shows how the various pieces of the Hybrid Nest fit together.

Figure 1- Hybrid Nest Assembly (6x6 nest shown)



Assembly

The Hybrid Nest is shipped partially assembled already.

1. Remove all pieces and set on a table or desk.
2. Remove elastics.
3. Slowly remove the nest cover. **IMPORTANT:** The glass cover beneath the nest cover is shipped without adhesive. It may lift off slightly as you remove the nest cover.
4. Optional - Remove the entrances by pulling out on the upper tab/lip. **NOTE:** Entrances are shipped without adhesive.
5. Carefully remove the glass cover and set aside. **EDGES ARE SHARP** so be careful.
6. Hold the base with one hand and the nest with the other. Separate the nest from the base by slowly prying up on the sides. Try to lift it as evenly as possible to avoid snapping off the tabs.
7. Fill the large central hydration basin with your choice of hydration medium. Some options include: perlite, cotton, soil/sand. Make sure the hydration basin is completely full so that the medium used can come into direct contact with the stainless steel mesh on the bottom of the nest.
8. Place the nest back on top of the base and push down nice and snug.
9. Fill small water basins with water until entire hydration system is full.
10. Replace entrances and glass cover. Optionally apply adhesive to hold glass and entrance securely in place. See section below on options for glass cover and entrances.
11. Use cotton to plug unused entrances.
12. Connect your ant colony to the Hybrid Nest. **YOU'RE READY TO GO!**

Assembly Note: It is highly recommended that you use aquarium sealant or silicone to seal the glass cover and the entrances in order to prevent smaller genera of ants from escaping.

Features of Your Hybrid Nest

Your Hybrid Nest has many new and exciting features for the ant keeping community.

1. **Genus-Specific Nest Design** – It is a known fact that different ants create different nests. With this key principle in mind, the designs of the Hybrid Nests are inspired by the natural architecture of several ant genera in the wild. Of course chambers and tunnels are the main design structures of all ant nests, but size, length, curvature, and other factors make each nest design unique and have specific functions at maintaining the ideal nest conditions. We have also found that ants within the same genus have similar moisture requirements, so each genus-tailored design is perfectly designed to offer the approximate moisture amount fit to the particular genus. With extensive research and hands-on experience, we believe we have matched key nest elements in the Hybrid Nest designs with those of several popular ant genera.
2. **Hydration System & Customization** – The hydration system is designed to lessen the maintenance. We feel that the less you have to worry about whether your formicarium is providing the proper amounts of moisture and humidity, the better. The greatest hydration feature is that the ant keeper can use any hydration medium they prefer or any that their ants



prefer, e.g. cotton, soil, plaster of paris, ytong/AAC, perlite, etc. Simply add your hydration medium into the main hydration basin, add water to one or both exposed hydration basins periodically and you're all set. The water basin lids provide a way to keep unwanted stuff from falling in and also to reduce water loss to evaporation. You can also add a thin layer of digging medium like sand to keep humidity levels high and give your ants the chance to customize their formicarium interior.

3. **Connectivity** – The Hybrid Nests can easily connect directly to your test tubes. Once your test tube colony is ready to be moved into your formicariums, simply remove the cotton plug from the test tube and insert the test tube into an entrance – DONE! This makes moving any ant colony into your formicarium smooth and easy, as the colony has virtually no distance to travel. Hybrid nests also easily connect to standard poly tubing, making it easy to connect to other formicaria and out worlds.
4. **Mold-Resistant** – Mold is among an ant keeper's worst enemies. While it may be impossible to eliminate completely, the Hybrid Nest has been designed to greatly reduce mold and to also allow for its cleanup if it does occur. Mold-resistant materials have been chosen in the Hybrid Nest construction and the base can be removed from the nest without allowing ants to escape. If the base needs cleaning or hydration medium needs to be replaced, an ant keeper can do this without worrying about ants escaping.
5. **Separation Of Base From Nest** – As mentioned above, the base (hydration system) and the nest can be separated without allowing ants to escape. This can come in handy when the hydration system needs cleaning or if the hydration medium needs to be replaced.
6. **Heating** – Many ant species thrive in a nest warmer than the temperature of an indoor room in which they are being kept. There are a few options for heating a nest. One popular way is to use a heat cable. The Hybrid Nest comes ready to accept a heat cable to provide heat for the nest. The heat cable tunnel at the top of the Hybrid Nest allows for heat to enter the top of the nest, similar to the sun heating the top of a natural nest. It is also situated to eliminate condensation which is a notoriously common issue with heated formicariums, and it also creates a desirable temperature gradient for healthy thermoregulation of your ant colony.
7. **Modular** – Nesting space can easily be increased by adding additional Hybrid Nests. Small clips are available that connect Hybrid Nests together. All that is needed is a small piece of poly tubing to connect one entrance to another. The clips hold the Hybrid Nests flush against each other.
8. **Cover** – Ants naturally feel comfortable having their nest space cloaked in darkness. Our Hybrid Nests come with a cover so you can keep your ants in the dark when you are not observing your ants.

Glass Cover & Entrances

Hybrid Nests ship with the glass cover and the entrances unsecured with any adhesive. There are some ant keepers who will not want to secure either of these with adhesive, primarily to allow for easy access to the nest if needed.



If you wish to secure the glass cover and/or the entrances, we suggest you use a small amount of aquarium sealant or silicone. Another option that works well on the entrances is to use small squares of paper to “wedge” the entrance in tightly. The wedging method allows for easier removal of the entrance if needed.

If you choose to secure all entrances, leaving at least one entrance “lightly” secured is recommended since it makes removing the glass cover much easier if an entrance can first be removed.

Prior to sealing the glass cover in place, be sure to add any nest material you want to provide your colony, like sand or small wood chips if desired. Also, be sure to clean off any nest material added from the top surface where the glass cover will be so you get a nice, flat and clean adhesion.

Common Questions

Question: The Omni Nest line of formicariums comes with an outworld. Why not the Hybrid Nests?

Response: The manufacturing methods of the two lines of formicariums are vastly different. While it makes perfect sense to include an outworld with the Omni Nest, it was much more problematic to include one with the Hybrid Nest.

Our recommendation is that ant keepers create their own outworlds by following the AntsCanada instructional video – “How to Make a Simple Outworld - AntsCanada Tutorial #32”.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= JIpOLLhH30>

Alternately, outworlds similar to the one shown in the video can be purchased separately from the AntsCanada Store. <http://www.antscanada.com/products-page>

Question: Which nest design should I choose for my genus of ants?

Response: There are currently 7 nest designs for 7 different genera of ants. We chose the most popular genera to begin with. If your genus is not available, the most important consideration in choosing a nest design is to choose one where the sizes of the ants are similar. The nests have been designed to fit the genus of ants, so tunnel and chamber sizes are wide enough for the largest queens or super majors to fit. If you are still unsure, send us an email and we’ll help you out.

Nest Specifications

Specs of the Camponotus Hybrid Nest

Design description: Horizontally linear, smooth, spacious tunnels and chambers inspired by *Camponotus* ant nests within wood.

Hydration Level: 20%-40% humidity

Also suitable for: All common ant species. May not be suitable for moisture-loving ants like *Myrmica*.



Specs of the Formica Hybrid Nest

Design description: Large spacious oval chambers of varying depths and moisture levels connected by narrow tunnels.

Hydration Level: 30%-50% humidity

Also suitable for: All common ant species except for some larger ants like *Camponotus* or *Pogonomyrmex*. May not be suitable for moisture-loving ants like *Myrmica*.

Specs of the Lasius Hybrid Nest

Design description: A network of spacious rounded chambers separated by thin walls and tight passageways.

Hydration Level: 50-60% humidity

Also suitable for: All common small ant species like *Tetramorium*, *Solenopsis*, *Crematogaster*, and *Temnothorax*. Not suitable for *Camponotus*, *Pogonomyrmex*, *Messor*, *Formica*, or any species whose queen or workers exceeds 4 mm in length or girth.

Specs of the Myrmica Hybrid Nest

Design description: A mass of pits and chambers with no defined tunnels designed to keep all areas of the nest damp

Hydration Level: 80-100% humidity

Also suitable for: All common small ant species, but may not be suitable for dry-loving ant species like some *Camponotus* and *Pogonomyrmex* ants.

Specs of the Pogonomyrmex Hybrid Nest

Design description: Chambers mimicking harvester ants' natural disk-shaped nest chambers of varying depths and moisture levels connected by narrow tunnels.

Hydration Level: 20-40% humidity

Also suitable for: All common small ant species. May not be suitable for moisture-loving ants like *Myrmica*.



Specs the Solenopsis Hybrid Nest

Design description: An intense network of rigid tunnels and numerous small chambers characterized by the notoriously active fire ant nests.

Hydration Level: 40-60% humidity

Also suitable for: All common small ant species like *Tetramorium*, *Solenopsis*, *Crematogaster*, and *Temnothorax*. Not suitable for *Camponotus*, *Pogonomyrmex*, *Messor*, *Formica*, or any species whose queen or workers exceeds 4 mm in length or girth.

Specs of the Tetramorium Hybrid Nests

Design description: A maze-like, linear network of rectangular tunnels connected by archways creating the illusion of a society living within the spaces between and under sidewalk blocks and pavement.

Hydration Level: 30-50% humidity

Also suitable for: All common small ant species like *Tetramorium*, *Solenopsis*, *Crematogaster*, and *Temnothorax*. Not suitable for *Camponotus*, *Pogonomyrmex*, *Messor*, *Formica*, or any species whose queen or workers exceeds 4 mm in length or girth.

Feedback

We welcome any feedback you may have regarding your new Hybrid Nest. Also please feel free to share with us any photos and videos of your colonies in your Hybrid Nest.

Send all feedback to: MikeyJBustos@gmail.com

