

Plastic Bottle Bird Feeder



Thankfully, fewer and fewer things come in plastic bottles, but most people will still have a plastic bottle somewhere.

What you need

Any size plastic bottle
Two wooden kebab skewers
A drawing pin
A pair of scissors
A piece of string

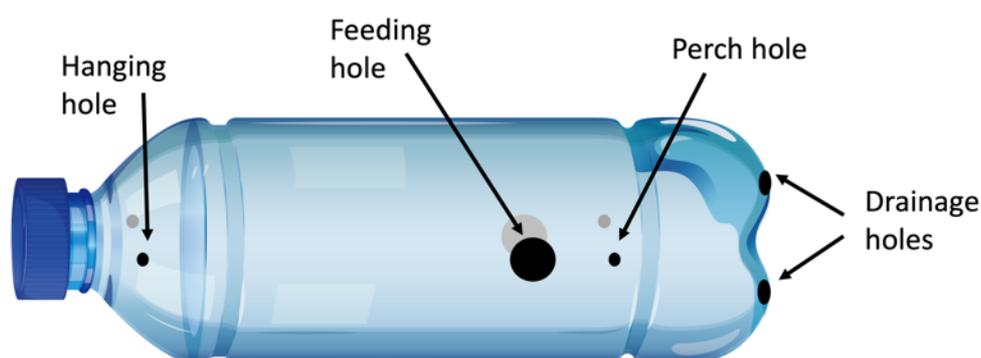


How to do it

Use the drawing pin to make your starter holes in the bottle. This makes it much easier and safer, but you still need to mind your fingers and adults should do it for younger children. Make two or three starter holes in the base of the bottle. Widen them out by pushing a kebab skewer in and out of them and twisting it around (Careful of fingers!). These are going to be your drainage holes, so that if any water gets in, it won't hang around and make the food damp.

Now make two starter holes on opposite sides of the bottle, a centimetre or so from the base, using the drawing pin. On each side make a second starter hole about 4 cm higher up the side of the bottle than the first starter holes. Widen all four holes out with a kebab skewer.

The two lower holes are going to be for your perch and are now the right size. The two higher holes are going to be for the food to come out of. They need enlarging, but how large depends on the food that you're going to put in your feeder. For peanuts, these feeding holes need to be about 1cm in diameter. For smaller-sized food, they should be smaller. Remember, the birds need to be able to pull the food out, but you don't want it falling out on its own.



If the scissors leave rough edges, file any sharp bits off with a piece of sandpaper if you have it, but if not, a nail file or an emery board will do.

Finally, use the drawing pin to make two starter holes at the top – these are your hanging holes.

If you want to, you can turn the bottle around a quarter turn, and make a second pair of perch holes and feeding holes a few centimetres higher than the first set.



Once all your holes are made, you are ready to put your feeder together. Push the wooden barbecue skewer in through one perch hole and out through the one on the other side. Now use your scissors to cut it down to size. Stick the off cut through the hanging holes. Fill your bottle with bird food. Then loop the string around the hanging skewer and your bird feeder is complete.

2 hours later...



We took this photo of our resident goldfinches from the kitchen window. If you hang your feeder close to a window, the birds don't take much notice of you and you can get great photos with a phone.

Part of a Nature Series by the Ryan Institute during #LockDownIreland



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