



Instructions for the care and keeping of *Messor barbarus* ants in home conditions

You bought ants, how to proceed with them now?

Here are some tips:

1. Upon receipt of the ants transported by courier:

Ants are stressed after the journey - give them a rest for a minimum of 2 days, and leave them in the test tube darkened (covered with a cloth, for example) at a minimum temperature of 22 degrees Celsius. Ideally, the ants should be away from any vibrations, in a secluded place.

2. If you bought a **Queen only** (maybe with eggs already) - you do not feed the Queen until the first workers appear.

If you use a heating mat, be careful not to cook the Queen, it is best **not** to place the test tube directly on the mat. Control the temperature. For this purpose, it is best to buy a thermometer with a hygrometer function (this device will also be useful after settling the ants into a formicarium)

Do not let the ants into the medium-sized formicarium until 13-15 worker bees have appeared. Inhabiting the formicarium with too few ants is the most common mistake in ant farming.

3. The **recommended temperature** for keeping ants, so that the ants are alive and want to lay eggs, is 24-26 degrees.

4. Ant Feeding:

- Seeds are the basic food of Harvester ants, you can buy them in our shop.
- Protein food is essential for faster colony development so that the Queen will lay more brood.

You can buy protein food in our store or at your local pet store. These are mealworms, crickets, and wood eaters. We give protein food killed, we do not organize battles between insects.

- This species of ants have a low need for carbohydrates - sweet foods such as honey will be eaten occasionally.
- The amount of food given depends on the season (temperature) and the size of the colony - over time you will observe how often to feed your ant colony. Don't give more seeds if the previous ones are uneaten. If they do not eat the insects, it may mean that it is time to switch to a different type of insect.
- Remove food remains with tweezers (seed shells, chitinous shells of insects)

5. **Humidity** - these ants do not like too much humidity. It should be monitored with a hygrometer. The recommended humidity so that the seeds do not germinate and the mites do not develop is 50-70 percent.

6. Hibernation of ants - hibernate ants only if you have the conditions for it, i.e. a place with a temperature of 10-15 degrees, for 2-3 months, preferably in the winter months.

By starting hibernation, you lower the temperature by 1-2 degrees every day.

When you end hibernation, you increase the temperature by 1-2 degrees every day.

We know from experience that badly conducted hibernation leads to the death of the colony, so if you don't have the conditions, it's better not to do it.

Well-conducted hibernation prolongs the life of the queen and causes better egg-laying in the spring.

If you have any questions, you can always call us on the number of the Advice Center,
tel. +48 728 215 422, on working days (9am-4pm)

We wish you successful ant breeding 😊

