

How to hatch flies

I originally made this guide for our Facebook group back in September 2023, and after helping **thousands of people** successfully hatch house flies, green bottles, and blue bottles over the years, I wanted to give it a refresh.

There are several ways to hatch flies. This is simply **the process that has worked best for me after hundreds of cycles later..** You've got this! ❤️

Know Your Fly & Hatch Cycle

Blue Bottles

Blue bottles arrive in **larvae form, AKA spikes**.

Once they pupate, the average hatch time is around **15–20 days from the beginning of the pupal stage**.

 **Do not start counting days when they are still spikes. Day 1 begins when they enter pupae form.**

Always give yourself a window of time and continue making new containers as needed.

House Flies

House flies usually arrive already in **caster/pupae form**.

Average hatch time: **5–6 days**

Green Bottles

Green bottles also usually arrive already in **caster/pupae form**.

Average hatch time: **8-12 days**

Shelf Life Matters!

All spikes and casters have an expiration window.

Keep them in the **back of your crisper drawer with humidity set to low**.

- **Blue Bottle Spikes:** approximately **5 weeks**
- **House Fly Casters:** approximately **1-2 weeks**
- **Green Bottle Casters:** approximately **3 weeks**

After these timeframes, your chances of successfully completing the hatch cycle decrease significantly.

Important Blue Bottle Note:

The 4–5 week fridge longevity applies to **blue bottle spikes**, NOT blue bottles that have already pupated.

Once blue bottles are in pupae form, I have found they do not last nearly as long in the fridge if they are not pulled to hatch. I consistently have better success with newer spike orders than spikes that have been sitting in my fridge for a while



MY HATCHING PROCESS

1 Make sure your pupae are ready.

For blue bottles, make sure they are **dark enough and fully in pupae form** before beginning.

Place them onto a **lightly damp paper towel** inside a container with **very good ventilation**.

2 Add extras!

Not every pupa will successfully complete its cycle.

I always add extra so I have a better chance of getting the number of flies I need.

3 Keep them warm.

Place your hatch container somewhere **warm in your home**. Move the container around your next cycle if you did not have success hatching.

4 Humidity is important.

Flies need humidity to successfully hatch and complete their cycle.

The lightly damp paper towel provides the humidity they need.

I switch out the lightly damp paper towel **daily** until they begin to hatch.



If the pupae dry out, they can expire, fail to hatch or hatch with messed up wings.

5 Watch those pupae!

Once I see the pupae becoming **very dark brown**, I begin misting **one side of the container daily**.

Do not soak the container. You want humidity—not standing water.

6 Give blue bottles TIME.

It is very common for blue bottles to take **longer than 15 days** to hatch.

Remember:

Day 1 = first day in pupae form.

Do not count the days they spent as spikes.



ONCE THEY HATCH

Once your flies begin hatching, move them into something where you can provide **food and water**.

I use:

 Organic honey

 Bee pollen

 A lightly misted wall for drinking

In my experience, **blue bottles can live up to around 16 days after hatching** when they are consistently provided food and water.

House flies and green bottles generally have a shorter lifespan, even when fed. House flies typically 5 days and green bottles around 12. This is only when you keep up with misting and feeding!



WHY FEED YOUR HATCHED FLIES?

A fed fly has more nutritional value for your jumping spider than an unfed fly.

Once your flies hatch, give them access to food and water before feeding them to your jumper. This helps ensure your spider is getting the benefit of what the fly has consumed.

You may also notice that **fed flies move and fly at the speed you would expect from a healthy fly**. Properly fed flies are more active, which can make for a much more natural hunt for your jumper.

We call this process **gut loading**—feeding your feeder insects before they become food for your spider.

So don't think of feeding your flies as an unnecessary extra step. **You are essentially putting nutrition into the feeder before it becomes nutrition for your jumper.** 🦋➡️🕷️❤️

Honey, bee pollen, and appropriate reptile jelly are some of the foods I use with my flies, along with providing a source of water through a lightly misted wall.



MY CURRENT SETUP

Because I hatch **100+ flies a week**, I have found it easiest to move my newly hatched flies into individual deli cups.

I add a **small dot of organic honey or bee pollen to the bottom lid** and provide plenty of ventilation.

You can find setup videos by searching:

#bluebottleflies

7 VENTILATION IS KEY!

Add **lots of ventilation** to both the body and top of each deli cup.

Flies need airflow, especially when being kept for feeding.



NEED TO TRANSFER YOUR FLIES?

You can place newly hatched flies into the refrigerator for a short period to put them into a temporary twilight sleep.



Blue Bottles: about 8 minutes



House Flies: about 3 minutes



Green Bottles: about 7 minutes

Then move quickly once they come out.

Do not leave them in longer than necessary.



WHY LEARNING TO HATCH FLIES MATTERS

Remember, jumpers are still spiders—and spiders naturally prefer a **live, moving fly** over many other feeder options. It is instinct and something we accept for what it is. .

Some jumpers, **both males and females**, will literally wait for a fly rather than accept another feeder.

I don't say that to scare you. I say it to educate you. ❤️

And it is a **myth that only male jumpers begin rejecting other feeders**. In my experience, I see females do this just as often.

Once you get the hang of it, watching your jumper hunt and catch a fly is one of the most rewarding parts of keeping them

Some species or locales of jumping spiders will notably only accept flies once they reach a particular stage of life.

It never gets old watching the hunt of a fly. 🕷️🪰



PLEASE PLAN AHEAD

Flying flies cannot be shipped.

Please give yourself a window of time to practice hatching before you actually need them for feeding.

Don't get discouraged if your first few batches aren't hatching or perfect. Hatching flies is a skill, and it can take a little practice to figure out what works best in your home.

The more you do it, the easier it becomes!



NEED MORE HELP?

I've made several videos over the years showing different parts of my process.

Search **#bluebottleflies** in Facebook's search bar to find them.

There are many ways to successfully hatch flies. **Our process is simply one method that has worked extremely well for us**, and we hope it helps you become confident with your own hatch.



FEEDER SUPPLY REFERENCES



House Fly Casters: eBay or Spider Pharm



Green Bottle Casters: We offer these, but only during cooler months because I have the spikes imported.



Blue Bottle Spikes: Rainbow Mealworms



PLEASE NOTE ABOUT FEEDER SUPPLIES

We are not a feeder supplier. We are a jumping spider breeder 🖤

I do offer house flies and blue bottle spikes as part of my adoptions and with my bundles, but I do not operate as a general feeder supplier.

Green bottles are the only feeder we publicly offer, and those are only available during the colder months because they are imported. I always post when green bottles are available 🪰

The supply references above are included to give you places to start when sourcing feeders for your own setup.



FINAL REMINDER

All spikes and casters have an expiration date.

Keep track of when your feeders arrive, start new batches before you run out, and always give yourself extra time—especially with blue bottles.

You've got this! 🦋🕷️❤️

STEP-BY-STEP IMAGES & FLY SPECIES CHARTS

Want to **see the process instead of just reading about it?** ❤️

For **step-by-step images, visual examples, and charts showing the differences between the fly species**, please view the pinned “How to Hatch Flies” guide post on our public page and our guide pinned to Facebook group, Spood Oddities Dedicated Adopters, in groups Featured.

I've included additional visuals there to help you identify the different stages, understand the differences between **house flies, green bottles, and blue bottles**, and follow the process from feeder to successfully hatched fly.

There are also several videos available on the public page. Search **#bluebottleflies** on Facebook to find them!

There are many ways to hatch flies. Our process is simply what has worked best for us, and we hope these resources help you find a method that works for you! 🦋🕷️❤️