

At some point, a queen will leave her hive with about half the bees from the colony and search for a place to build a new hive. As she is preparing to leave, she lays eggs in special cups built to hold queen bee larvae. Worker bees begin feeding royal jelly to those larvae to develop new queens. Eventually, one new queen will emerge from these larvae to reign over the hive. Meanwhile, the old queen and thousands of bees fly away from the hive and move together in a swarm to begin searching for another place to settle.

No one is sure exactly how a group of bees decide to swarm. Maybe the hive gets too crowded as bee larvae are born and grow. Maybe the queen has done a great job laying eggs and there are not enough empty cells for her to fill. Maybe the bees have made so much honey and the queen has laid so many eggs that the bees working to construct more cells can't keep up. Whatever the cause—and maybe there is more than one—at some point, the swarm happens.