

So, here's this about the hinge kit.

For years, I was pretty much against hinging the lid on a top bar hive. For a number of reasons. One was that if you do a lot of hive-side teaching or mentoring, having the lid attached to the hive meant it was often in the way of being able to show beekeepers what was going on in the hive. Another reason was that it makes the hive quite top heavy when it is open. I mean, how heartbreaking would it be to have the wind catch the lid and either pull the entire hive over, or slam the lid shut on YOU in mid-inspection!? Angry bees and broken comb and upset beekeepers all over! And yet another reason was that, well, it just looks sort of kloogy.

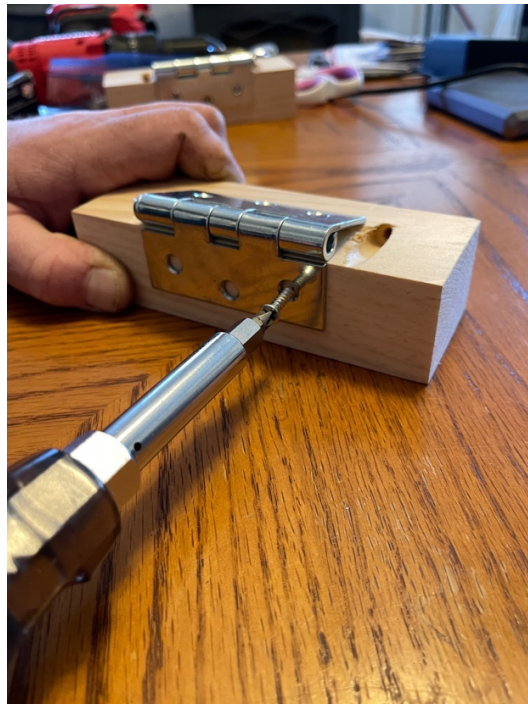
But it's handy to be able to do it, and I've done a little kibbitzing recently about the challenges of beekeeping by people who aren't able to lift the lid off, and my hive kit builder, Nick (great guy, that Nick) wanted to help out with making it possible to hinge the lid on the Gold Star top bar hive, because maybe that would make some things a little easier for folks. Or maybe it would just be a thing that some people preferred!

So we're bringing you this little after-market item for Gold Star top bar hives -- a hinge kit.

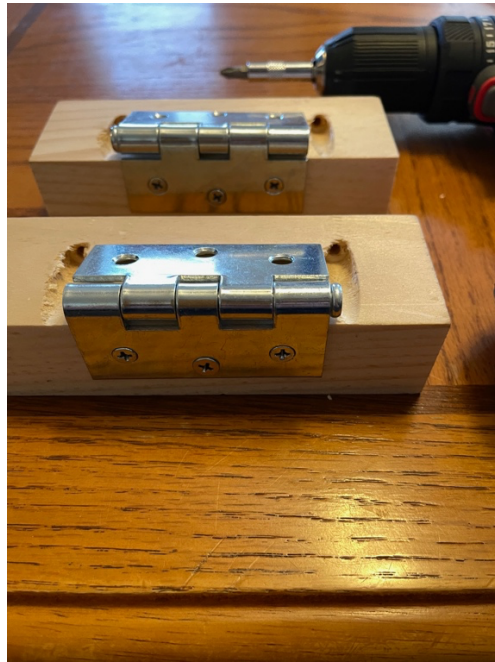


Here's how you install it on your Gold Star top bar hive.

First you have to figure out what needs to face which way. The wooden block in this pic is facing the way you will drive the screws into the block and then into the hive. The hinge is then placed - with the hinge pin facing in – on top of the block and centered between the holes. Now you can screw one hinge plate onto each block.



Now you're ready to attach the hinge kit to the hive. Bring the blocks, and the rest of the screws, and the piece of chain, and your screwdriver with you!



Now we want to decide on the placement of the blocks on the hive. We put our hinge kits on the "front" of the hive, the side where the bees exit, opposite the observation window. You don't want them so close to the end that you can't unscrew the wingnuts and remove the legs, so move the blocks in toward the center of the hive about 6", like shown here:



There are four screws on each block – 2 on the bottom, and 2 on the top. Flip the hinge up, test fit the angle and placement, then attach the wooden block to the hive, bottom screws first. It will be helpful to flip the hinges down and lift the lid out of the way to get to the 2 on the top.



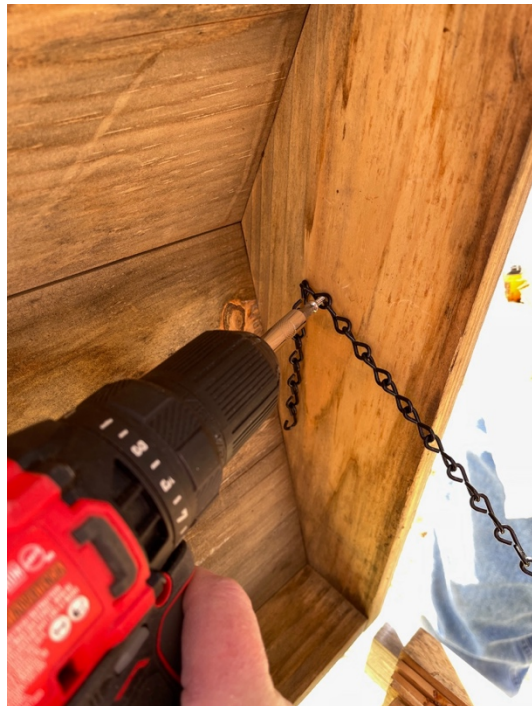
Repeat the process for the second block:



Now flip the hinges up and attach them to the roof:



You want to add the chain stop next – to keep the lid from flopping over backwards. You can experiment with placement – the middle of the hive end panel and the middle of the roof, well up into the peak, above where the hive will come to when closed, seems like the best choices.



When closing the lid, be sure to pull the slack of the chain toward the inside of the hive, to keep it from getting caught between the lid and the hive body.



And there you go. Happy Hinge-ing!
And thank you for making us a part of your beekeeping journey!