

FLIGHT CAGES

Some alternatives.

So you have a caterpillar kit! Congratulations!

As you know from the detailed instructions you've received, your little caterpillars are eating and pooping machines, and basically want to be left alone in a private place where they feel safe until they have found a secure place and made their chrysalis. Once your caterpillars have formed a chrysalis hanging from the lid, you will need something bigger for them to emerge into (the adults need space). Professionally made flight cages can be a little expensive (ours start at \$24.00) so if you'd prefer an alternative, here are some popular choices, including a craft-based one that is a fun project with kids:

Ikea laundry hampers:

The fabric cylinder ones seem to be the most popular-cost effective alternative to a professional cage: they're bright and collapsible, and relatively easy to see through. The holes in most brands are small enough that the butterflies cannot escape. You do need to make sure they close securely: adult butterflies are escape artists despite their big clumsy wings and will wiggle out of any small space they can.

Handmake a DIY version out of some kind of cardboard box:

It's easy to repurpose something you might have in your home. Here is how to craft a small one:

1. Using a sturdy cardboard box like a shoebox (do not use smooth plastic or glass: butterflies cannot walk on it), cut out panels on 2 or 3 of the front and sides. Leave a margin of at least two inches from the edges of the box for sturdiness.
2. Cut a piece of tulle cloth or netting the same as each side of the box that you have cut out. Leave yourself lots of extra for overlap.
3. Attach the netting firmly into position on the inside of the box with duct tape or hot glue. Tape or glue that little lid, with the chrysalis attached to it, inside of this container. Do not get glue or tape on the chrysalis!

Aquariums/Critter Keepers:

This is our least favorite choice because they can be dangerous: butterflies cannot walk on smooth surfaces like glass or plastic, and if they emerge in a container that has smooth walls, they can fall, and they will not be able to get back up and recover, which means they may perish. It's therefore critical that the walls are something rough for them to climb on: mesh or fabric is best, or cardboard or wood or something. You can use an aquarium or critter keeper in a pinch but make sure you line it with something for them to walk on, such as mesh or even paper towel.

Ordering on Amazon.

Amazon has some cheap alternatives, though we can't speak to the quality of the cage itself. Amazon is hard on small businesses like hours, but this is an accessible option if you are on a budget.

As always, enjoy your time with the bugs! We are also very enthusiastic about sharing our expertise if you need help. If you find that you have encountered an issue not covered by your full instructions, make sure to get in touch with us immediately:

Butterfly Wings N' Wishes

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