

Pollen 101

Your bees love the stuff. Your colony needs it to survive. So how much do you know about pollen?



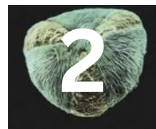
Pollen is a microspore generated by the anther, the male reproductive structure in plants.

Pollination happens when pollen grains are transferred from the anther to the female structure, the stigma.

♂ Anther

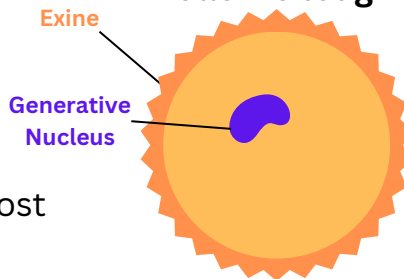


♀ Stigma



Each pollen grain has a tough outer wall called an **exine**. It is made out of one of the most stable substances in the universe, resilient to environmental damage, intense temperatures and even strong acids or bases.

Pollen is tough!



Pollen Grain Cross Section

μ

Pollen is tiny!



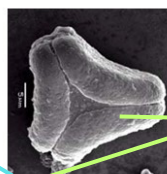
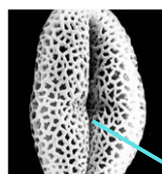
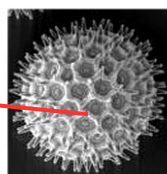
Pollen is measured in micrometres. There are 1,000 micrometres in 1 millimetre. A micrometre uses the symbol **μm**. Most pollen is **10-70 μm**.

Pollen has diverse shapes!

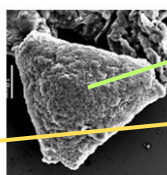
Most pollen grains come in four main shapes:



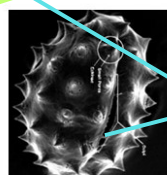
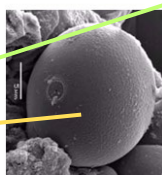
Sphere



Triangle



Disc



Oval