

The overnight split is my choice if I have the time to make two visits or when I'm unable to find the queen in a very strong hive.

Day one: Assemble a super for each hive being split. I usually use empty comb in these supers but foundation is also acceptable. The super needs to be the same size as the original hive; I use all medium 10 frame equipment and medium 5 frame nucs. It is best to do this on a warm (50° F or more) day in early spring.

1. Setup the prepared super next to the strong hive you want to split. I keep it off the ground with an extra hive cover.
2. Remove five or so frames from the middle of the new super and set them aside.
3. Select two or three frames of brood from the strong colony. Ideally these frames should contain capped brood, larvae, and eggs. A swarm cell is a bonus!
4. Shake or bush **all** the bees from these two or three brood frames back into the strong hive and place the bee-less frames in the center of the new super.
5. Select two frames with nectar and pollen from the strong hive. Shake all the bees off and place them to the outside of the frames of brood in the new super.
6. All the frames of brood will be centered in the new super and the frames of honey and pollen positioned on the outside of the brood frames. Add additional frames as needed to complete the super.
7. In the strong hive, push the remaining frames to the center and place empty frames on the outside edges of the brood nest as needed to complete the super.
8. Place a queen excluder on top of the strong hive.
9. Place the new super with brood on top of the queen excluder.
10. Put the inner cover and telescoping cover back on the hive.
11. Over the next few hours, nurse bees from the strong hive will move back into the new super to tend the brood. The queen is below the excluder.

Day two:

1. Return to the hive with a bottom board, inner cover and telescoping top cover.
2. Place the bottom board where the new hive will be or next to the hive if it is to be moved to a different location. I like to move it to a different location to prevent bees from returning to the original hive.
3. Take the top brood box containing the frames of brood, nurse bees, and foragers and place it on the new bottom board in the new location and cover it with an inner cover and top cover. Feeding is recommended.
4. Reduce the entrance of the new hive to help protect it from predators and robbers.
5. You now have the original colony with its original queen and a queen less split. At this point you can introduce a caged queen, a queen cell or, if there are eggs in the split, you can let the bees raise their own queen. In any case, check the brood nest occasionally until you know you have a laying queen.