Bat House Plans

A wider house for a bigger colony · Design: Single chamber, on a wall · Width: 30 in

Bat house: **30 × 26.5 in**
Roost chamber: **27 × 20.5 in, 0.75 in deep**
Landing area: **4.5 in**
Chambers: **1**



This is one size of a free plan from FigureYard. For your own size, open https://figureyard.com/plans/bat-house-plans/ and enter your measurements; the shopping list, cuts and drawings change with them. Check local building codes before you build.

Shopping list

Item	Qty
1×2 furring strip, pine, 8 ft long	1 board
1×4 board, pine or cedar, 8 ft long	1 board
1/2 in exterior plywood (AC, BC or T1-11), 4 ft × 8 ft sheet	1 sheet
Exterior-grade screws, 1 in (38 needed plus 5 spares)	43 screws
Exterior screws, 3 in, for the wall	4 screws
Paintable latex caulk	1 tube
Dark water-based stain, exterior grade, for the inside	1 pint
Water-based exterior primer	1 pint
Flat water-based exterior paint or stain, in the color for your climate	1 quart

Tools

- Tape measure, pencil and a straightedge
- Circular saw or table saw, and a handsaw for the grooves
- Drill/driver and a pilot bit
- Caulking gun and paintbrushes
- Safety glasses and hearing protection

Cut list

Part	What it is	Lumber	Size	Cut
A	Back (the bottom 4 1/2 in below the front is the landing area)	1/2 in exterior plywood (AC, BC or T1-11)	26 1/2 × 30 in	1
B	Front, upper	1/2 in exterior plywood (AC, BC or T1-11)	16 1/2 × 30 in	1
C	Front, lower	1/2 in exterior plywood (AC, BC or T1-11)	5 × 30 in	1
D	Top spacer	1×2 furring strip, pine	30 in	1
E	Side spacers	1×2 furring strip, pine	20 1/2 in	2
F	Center spacer (keeps a wide front from warping)	1×2 furring strip, pine	3 in	1
G	Roof	1×4 board, pine or cedar	34 in	1

Where to cut each board

Each bar is one board you buy, drawn to scale. Measure from the left end, cut, then measure the next piece from the fresh cut; the saw blade takes about 3/32 in each time. Hatched ends are offcuts.

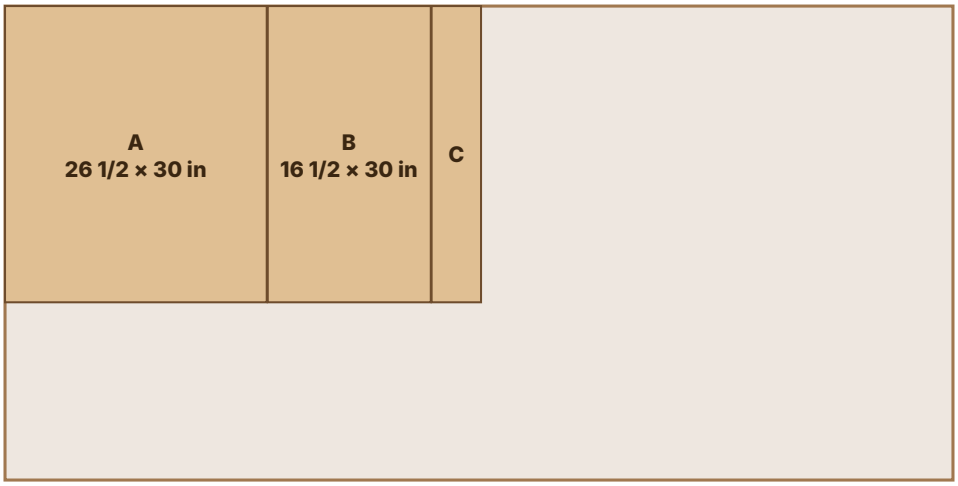
1×2 furring strip, pine



1×4 board, pine or cedar



1/2 in exterior plywood (AC, BC or T1-11), sheet 1 of 1



Step by step

1. Cut the pieces

Cut the back (A), the upper front (B) and the lower front (C) from the plywood, all 30 in wide, following the sheet diagram. Keep the good face of the plywood for the outside.

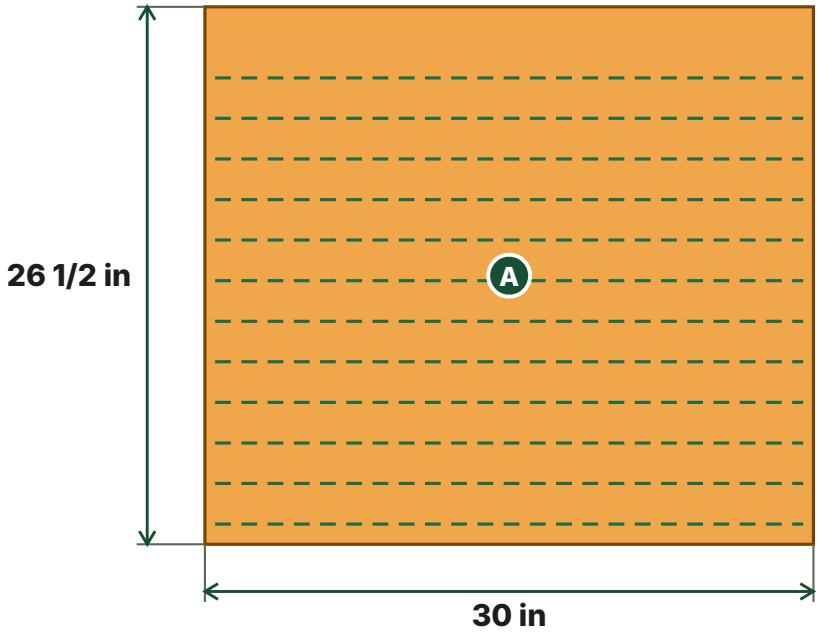
Cut the furring strip into the top spacer (D), 30 in long, and two side spacers (E), 20 1/2 in long, plus a 3 in center spacer (F). Cut the roof (G) from the 1×4, 34 in long.

2. Roughen the inside

Bats cling to the wood, so the inside of the back and the landing area need grip. Saw shallow grooves across the back (A), 1/4 in to 1/2 in apart and 1/32 in to 1/16 in deep, all the way down to the bottom edge. Cut no deeper, or the plywood weakens.

Brush 2 coats of dark water-based stain on the inside faces of the back and the front pieces and let them dry. Do not use paint inside: it fills the grooves.

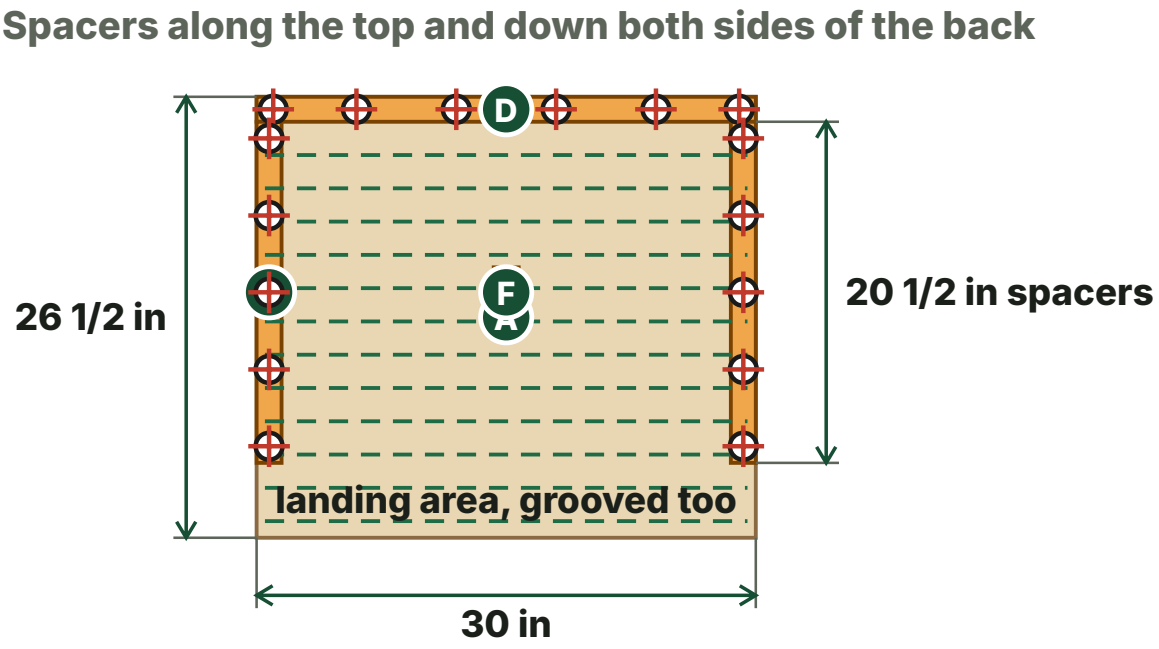
Inside of the back: shallow grooves across it, landing area included



3. Screw the spacers to the back

Run a bead of caulk where each spacer goes, then screw the top spacer (D) along the top of the back and the side spacers (E) down each edge, below it. The spacers leave the bottom open: that is the entrance.

Screw the short center spacer (F) in the middle of the chamber, so the wide front cannot bow in.



Screw: caulk the joint first, drill a pilot hole, then drive the screw

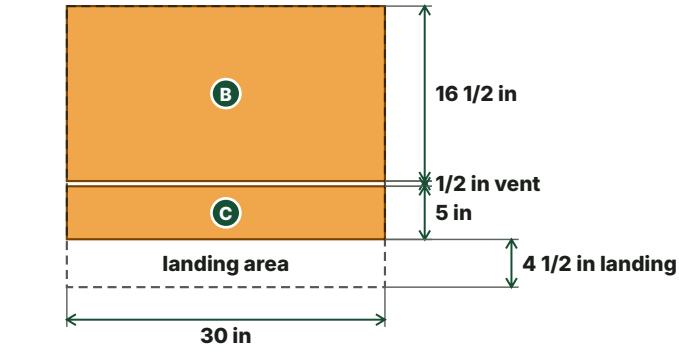
4. Put the front on

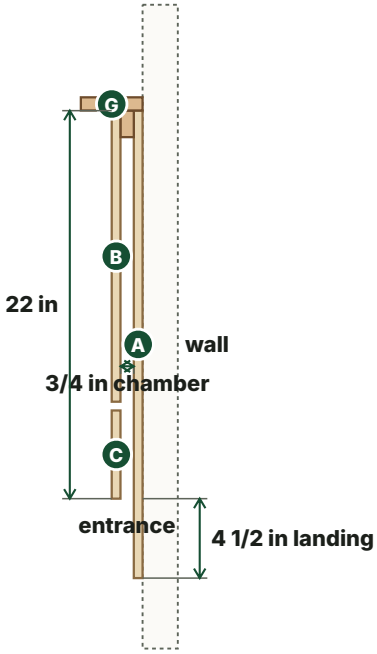
Caulk the spacers, then screw the upper front (B) on, flush with the top. Leave a 1/2 in gap below it and screw on the lower front (C): the gap is the vent that keeps the house from overheating.

Caulk every outside joint so the chamber is dry and free of drafts.

Cut through the middle, from the side: bats enter at the bottom and climb into the cham

Front, seen from outside: the vent gap between the two pieces

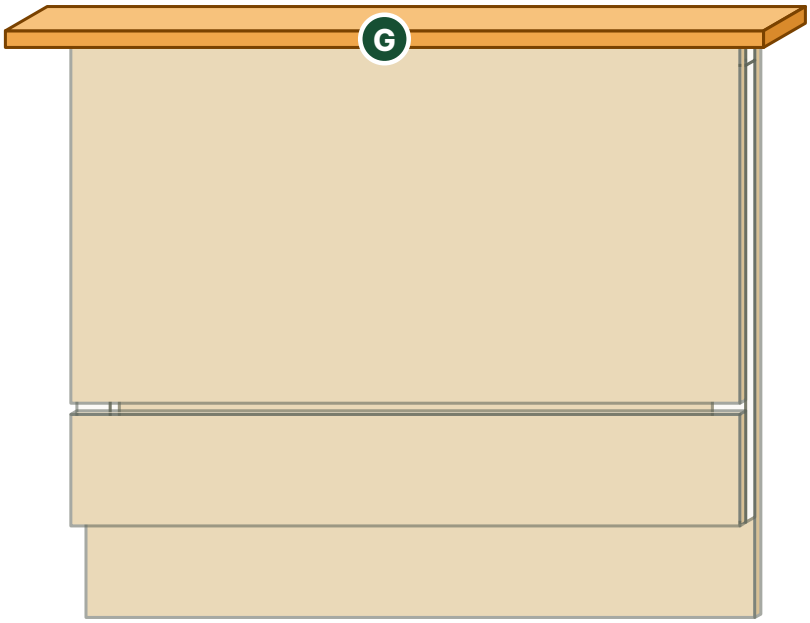




5. Roof and paint

Screw the roof (G) on top, flush with the back, so it overhangs the front and 2 in past each side. Caulk the joint along the top.

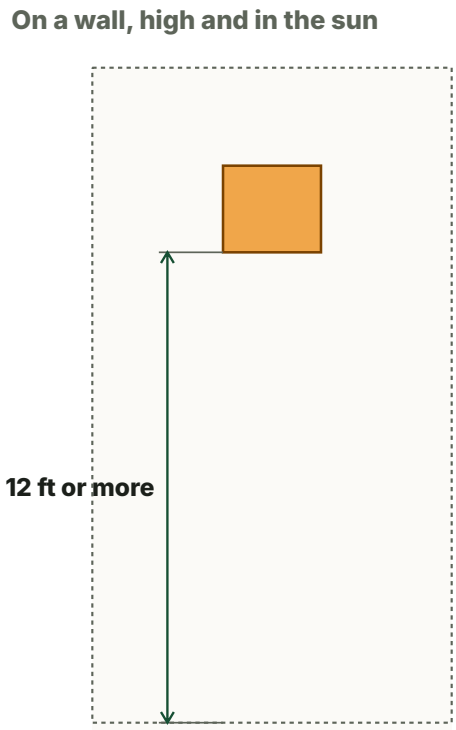
Paint or stain the outside 3 times, primer first, in the color for your climate (see below). Cover the roof with shingles or galvanized metal for a longer life, if you like.



6. Put it up

Mount the house on a wall of the building, south or east sides being usually best, 12 ft or more off the ground and better 15 ft to 20 ft. Drive two 3 in screws through the front, the top spacer and the back near the top, and two through the landing area, into the wall framing.

Keep it clear of branches, lights and anything a predator could climb, and leave the space below the entrance open so the bats can drop out to fly.



Good to know

- Use exterior plywood and untreated wood: pressure-treated wood may be toxic to bats. Screws hold better than nails.
- Check it each winter, when the bats are gone: re-caulk and repaint as needed.
- In very cold places, BCI leaves out the vent and makes the front one piece; elsewhere the vent keeps the bats from overheating.