



Build a bat box - resource sheet

Getting started

Building a bat box is a great way to provide a roosting place for some endangered wildlife.

If you do build a bat box, please do so under adult supervision, as you will need to use a sharp saw.

It is very important to remember that handling a bat without a proper licence is against the law. If you find a sick or injured bat, then contact your local wildlife trust immediately.

Make sure you use untreated, rough-sawn wood (i.e. not planed) to make your bat box. Not only does this give the bats something to cling on to, but also some preservatives used in wood treatment can be harmful to bats.

What you'll need

- A plank of untreated, rough-sawn wood, large enough to make four pieces that are the following dimensions:
 - o 40cm x 15cm (back)
 - o 23cm x 20cm (roof)
 - o 23cm x 15cm (front)
 - o 20cm x 34cm (cut diagonally, from one corner to the other to create the sides)
- Saw
- Hammer and nails

What to do

1. Saw the wood to the correct sizes – use a pencil to draw out the shapes before you start.
2. Take the back piece and saw ridges across the whole piece – creating a ladder-type piece of wood for the bats to cling onto. The ridges should be about 2mm deep and about 5mm apart from each other.
3. Saw one of the corners off each of the side panels – this helps to create an opening at the bottom of box. You should measure about 12.5cm along the longest edge of the triangle shape, and then remove the corner that has the smallest angle.
4. Nail the side panels to the front panel. Push the back panel on to make the wedge shape box. Make sure it's a tight fit, and that there's no gaps. Bats don't like draughts!
5. Finally place the roof on the top of the box and nail in place. The opening at the bottom of the box should only be about 15-20mm, any larger and predators may be able to get in.
6. Create an eyelet so you can hang your bat box on a tree in your garden. It should be at least 4-5metres above the ground and somewhere sheltered from strong winds.
7. For a greater chance of success with your bat box, make more than one to hang on the south facing sides of a tree – the bats want to be somewhere warm to roost, and may sometimes move from box to box.