

Eco-Friendly Birdhouse

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What you will need:

7/8" thick rough sawn cedar wood lumber cut to the sizes specified

38 - 1-1/2" nails

2 - 1-1/2" wood screws

1 - 2" x 7-1/4" long piece of flashing

6 - 1/2" copper flashing nails

1 - 3" metal mending brace (5/8" screws should be included in the package)

Exterior Wood glue

Clear Silicone

1/8" drill bit

1-3/8" or 1-1/2" hole saw

Recommended Tools:

Saw

Hammer

Clamp

Drill

Ruler

Pencil

Instructions:

1. Cut two pieces of 7/8" thick rough sawn cedar as per diagram A. You will need two of these cut. One will be for the front and one will be for the back of the birdhouse. Set aside.
2. Cut two side panels measuring 3-3/4" x 6" and one bottom measuring 3-1/2" x 3-1/2" as per Diagram B. Cut about a 1/4" off each corner of the bottom piece to allow for drainage.
3. Cut two roof panels measuring 7-1/4" x 6-1/2" as per diagram C.
4. Now you will need to cut the edges of the roof that will hold the soil in place. Cut two right facing gable pieces and two left facing gable pieces according to Diagram D. You will also need to cut two end pieces that measure 3" x 7-1/4" (Diagram C).
5. Finally, create a cleat from scrap pieces of lumber by gluing two pieces together so that it measures approximately 1-5/8" thick x 4" long (at least). Use a clamp to hold the pieces together until the glue has dried.
6. Taking one of the panels you cut from Diagram A, measure 5" from the bottom of the panel, make a small "X" with a pencil, center your mark with the peak of the birdhouse. Center your hole saw on this "X" and drill through the panel creating the entrance hole for the birdhouse.

7. Glue together the front and back panels from Diagram A to the side panels from Diagram B so that all the pieces are flush on the bottom end. Once the glue has set up, hammer in two siding nails along each side to reinforce the glue.
8. Take the bottom of the birdhouse that you cut out in Diagram B and put it up inside the bottom of the birdhouse making sure it is flush with the sides of the birdhouse. It will fit tight. Put your hand inside the birdhouse and hold the bottom flush to the table while you drill a pilot hole on each side of the bottom of the birdhouse. Attach two screws (one on each side) of the birdhouse using the pilot holes you created. What you are doing is securing the floor to the sides so that it will be easy to remove the floor for cleaning later.
9. Run a bead of glue along the peaked edge of the top of the birdhouse base and center the roof panels on top. You can use the cleat you created to help center the roof. Secure the roof with two nails along each roof line (for a total of eight nails).
10. Attach a piece of 2" wide x 7-1/4" long metal flashing to the center of the peaked roof using a bead of silicone and six 1/2" copper flashing nails to prevent water from leaking into the birdhouse.
11. Run a bead of wood glue along the edges and attach the gables and the ends to create a "box" to hold the soil. Use at least two nails on each piece of wood to help secure it.
12. To hang the birdhouse, attach a metal mending brace to the back of the top of birdhouse near the peak of the roof. Glue the cleat you made to the bottom of the back of the birdhouse so that the birdhouse will hang flat against a post or tree.

To plant your birdhouse, thoroughly wet the birdhouse all over with water. This will help prevent the wood from absorbing all the water from the soil. Add about an inch of moistened potting soil to the roof and plant as you would normally. You may need to water the birdhouse once a day during high temperatures, depending on the needs of the plants you have chosen.

For a sunny location, the roof of this birdhouse can be planted simply with grass seed or elaborately with a mixture of sedum, hens and chicks, hardy succulents, creeping thymes or mints. Moss would do well in shady locations. Whatever you choose, it will provide a cooler environment for the birds and be pretty to look at as well.