

How to: make a bat box

As well as being one of the most threatened types of mammal in Britain, bats are also among the most misunderstood. Far from being nasty dangerous animals, they are attractive small, furry insect eaters which need all the help they can get!

Bats need a range of roosting sites, including summer daytime roosts, winter hibernation ones and breeding sites. You can help them find a suitable roost by putting up a simple bat box. Just follow the guidelines

Tools/Materials

- Saw
- Hammer
- Screwdriver
- Pencil
- Tape Measure

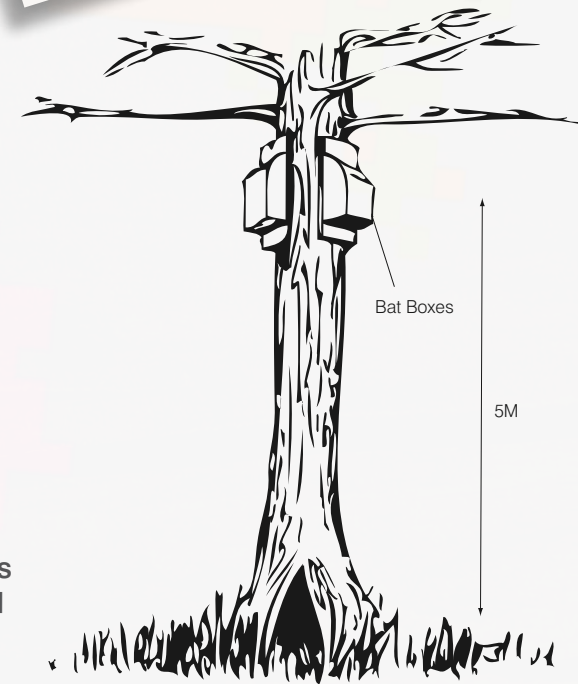
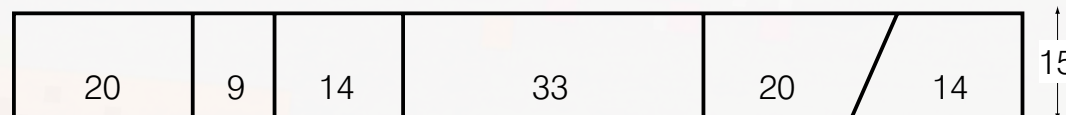
You will need:

- Plank of 6 inch (150 mm) by 1 inch (25 mm) 1.2 m. long timber (Larch recommended)
- 13 x 45 mm Bright zinc screws
- 4 x 40 mm panel pins
- 1 foot of approx. 25 mm x 20 mm wooden baton or a rubber /metal Hinge

Making your bat box

- Only attempt this with adult supervision and take all reasonable health and safety precautions.
- Make the box from rough sawn timber to give the bats something to cling to. Make sure the wood is untreated - many wood preservatives can kill bats!
- Cut timber as shown in diagram 1 - you should have 6 pieces. The back plate can be grooved with saw-cuts to help the bats to crawl up into it. Assemble with the screws as in diagram 2 - pilot drill the holes first to stop the wood splitting. Check the access slit in the bottom is at least 15 mm and less than 20 mm before tightening the screws. Adjust if too wide or too narrow.
- Nail 2 panel pins either side of the base plate to prevent it swiveling.

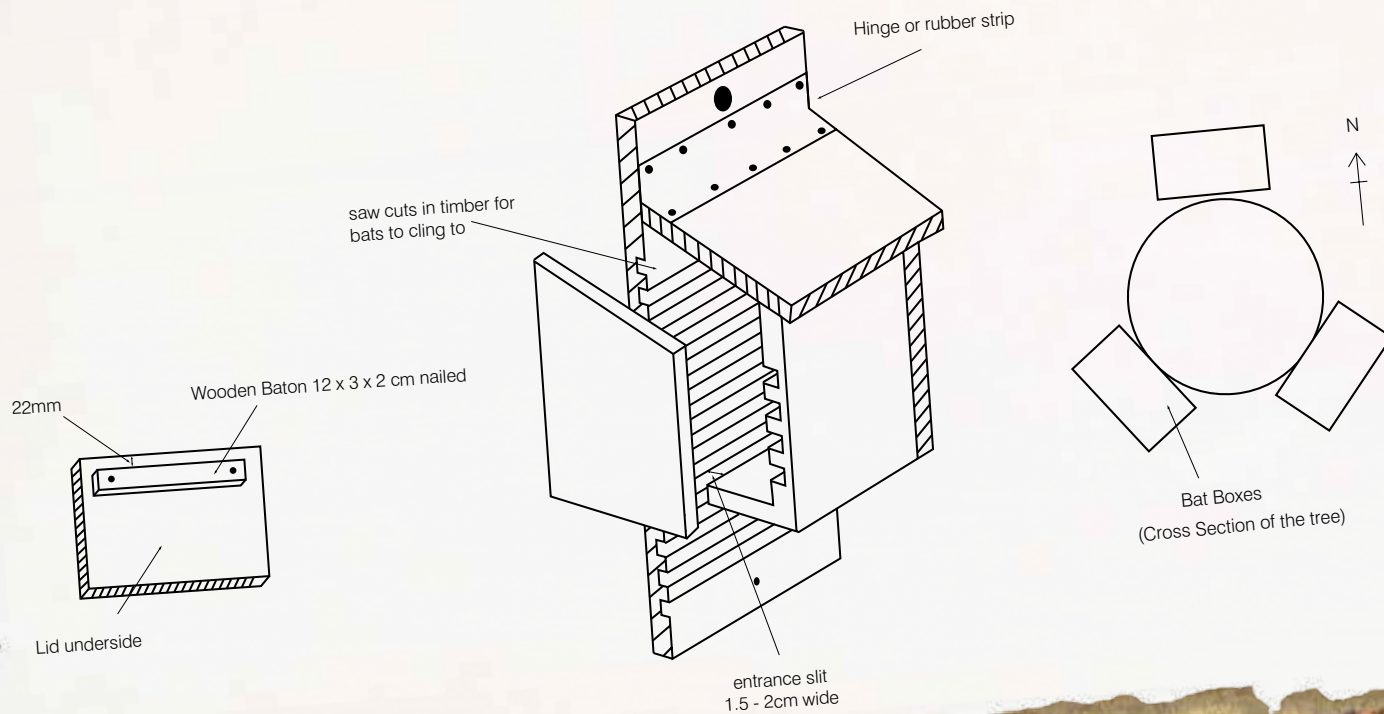
Dimensions & CUTS



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- Make any adjustments needed to produce a rain-proof solid finished box as you proceed.
- Your bat box is now finished and ready for occupation!
- The best place to position a bat box is on a tree. Place them in groups round three sides of a tree - bats like to move from one box to another during the day and from season to season as temperatures change.

- Put the boxes as high as possible above the ground to avoid predators - some species of bat such as noctules prefer roosts at least 5 metres off the ground.
- Clear away surrounding branches to give them a clear flight path.
- Alternatively, Boxes can also be located on buildings. A good position is under the eaves to protect them from bad weather.



No bats?
Bats can take a while to investigate new premises, but if your box is not occupied within three years, try moving it. You can check if the box is being used by looking for crumbly brown or black droppings on the ground.