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Cupola Birdhouse

This whimsical birdhouse is mounted on our deck. It's such a treat watching the birds carry twigs into their house to build the nest! Even if you're not a bird watcher, you'll enjoy seeing this birdhouse in your garden or on your patio.



Materials and Supplies

- 1 piece of 1/2"-thick exterior plywood, measuring 12" x 24"
- 1 piece of 3/8"-thick exterior plywood, measuring 12" x 36"
- 3 linear feet of 1 x 8 pine
- 15 linear feet of 1 x 4 pine
- 1 linear foot of 1 x 2 pine
- 1 decorative curtain rod finial
- 3 linear feet of 2"-wide canvas fabric strips
- Staple gun and staples
- Paneling adhesive

Hardware

- 20, 4d 1-1/2" finishing nails
- 20, 1-1/4" screws

Cutting List

Code	Description	Qty.	Materials	Dimensions
A	Top/Bottom	2	1/2" plywood	11-1/4" diameter circle
B	Wide Side	10	1 x 4 pine	11" long
C	Narrow Side	1	1 x 2 pine	11" long
D	Base Side	4	1 x 4 pine	14-1/2" long
E	Base	2	1 x 8 pine	16" long
F	Roof Panel	4	1 x 4 pine	12" x 12" x 7" triangle

Making the House

1. Cut two top/bottoms (A) from $\frac{1}{2}$ -thick plywood, each a circle 11- $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter.
2. Cut 10 wide sides (B) from 1 x 4 pine, each measuring 11 inches.
3. Cut a 1- $\frac{1}{2}$ "-inch-diameter hole in one wide side (B), 4 inches from one end, and centered on the width, as shown in *Figure 1*. (**Note:** Different birds require different size openings. Refer to a book on building birdhouses to help you determine what size hold to drill. The hole size used here is a good match for flycatchers, wrens, nut hatches, and tree swallows.)

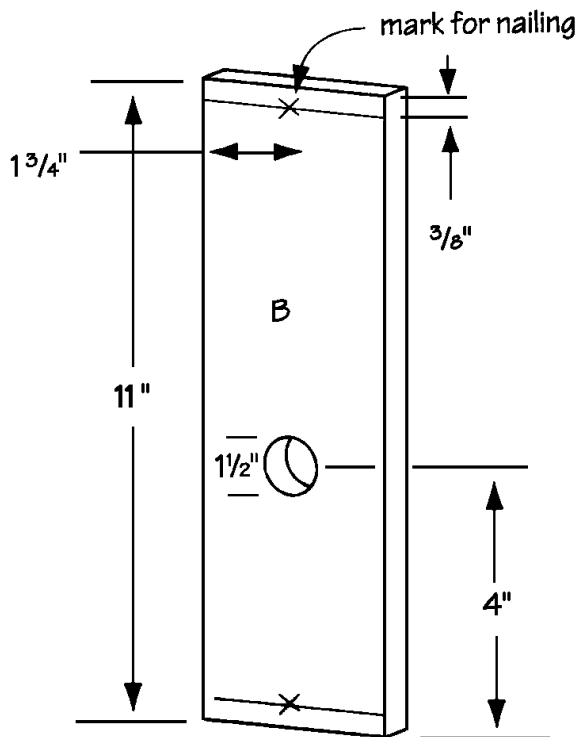


Figure 1

4. Measure carefully and mark the center of the 1 x 4 width of each of the wide sides (B), $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch from each end, as shown in *Figure 1*.
5. Place one top/bottom (A) on a level surface. Attach one wide side (B) to the top/bottom (A). Apply glue to the meeting surfaces, and nail through the mark on the wide side (B) into the edge of the top/bottom (A) using a 1- $\frac{1}{2}$ "-long nail, as shown in *Figure 2*.
6. Place a second wide side (B) next to the first one, so that the inner edges meet. Apply glue to the meeting surfaces, and nail through the wide side (B) into the edge of the top/bottom (A). Continue this procedure to attach the remaining eight wide sides (B) to the top/bottom (A).
7. Cut one narrow side (C) from 1 x 2 pine, measuring 11 inches. Mark the exact center of the width, $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch from each end.
8. Attach the narrow side (C) to the top/bottom (A) in the space remaining between the first and last wide sides (B). Apply glue to the meeting surfaces, and nail through the mark in the narrow side (C) into the top/bottom (A).
9. Place the remaining top/bottom (A) on a level surface. Turn the house assembly upside-down, and fit the narrow and wide sides (B and C) over the remaining top/bottom (A). Apply glue to the meeting surfaces, and nail through the marks to attach each of the sides (B and C) to the top/bottom (A).

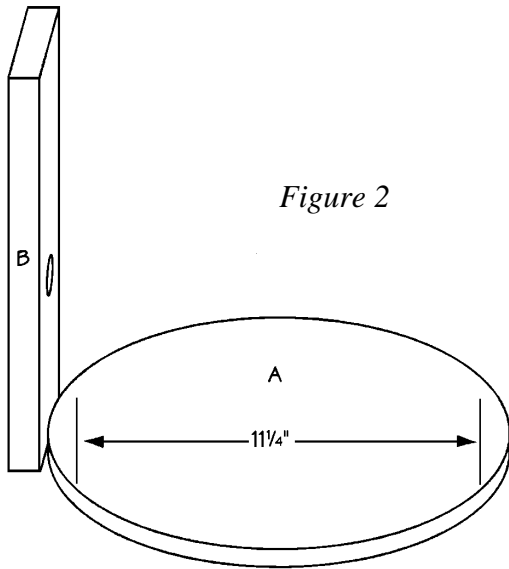


Figure 2

Making the Base

1. Cut four base sides (D) from 1 x 4 pine, each measuring 14-1/2 inches.
2. Place two bases (D) on a level surface, parallel to each other and 14-1/2 inches apart. Fit the remaining two base sides (D) between the first two base sides (D), as shown in *Figure 3*. Apply glue to the meeting surfaces, and nail through the overlapping base sides (D) into the ends of the inner base sides (D), using two 1-1/2"-long nails on each of the joints.
3. Cut two bases (E) from 1 x 8 pine, each measuring 16 inches.
4. Fit the two bases (E) over the base sides (D), as shown in *Figure 3*. Apply glue to the meeting surfaces, and nail through the edges of the two bases (E) into the base sides (D). Use four or five 1-1/2-inch-long nails on each side.

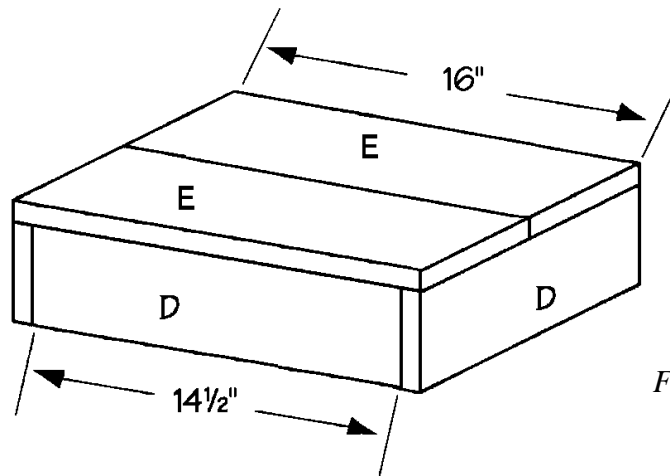


Figure 3

5. Place the house assembly on a level surface, with the drilled hole closer to the top.
6. Turn the base assembly upside down and center it over the house assembly, as shown in *Figure 4*. Apply glue to the meeting surfaces, and screw through the both bases (E) into the top/bottom (A), using five or six 1-1/4-inch screws.

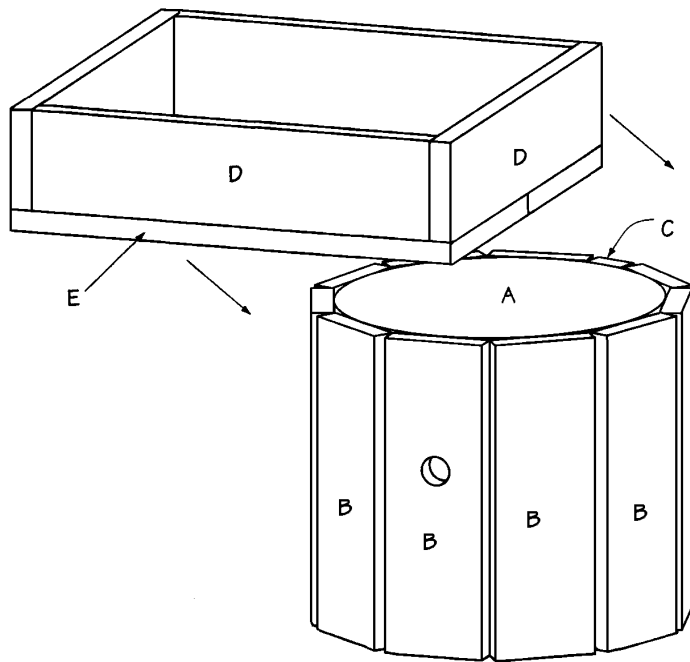


Figure 4

Making the Roof

1. Cut eight triangular roof panels (F) from 3/8"-thick plywood, each measuring 12 x 12 x 7 inches. These will be joined together to form an eight-sided cone for the roof.
2. To hold the pieces together temporarily, we used small strips of canvas fabric and a staple gun.
3. Begin by placing two roof panels (F) on a flat surface, with their 12-inch-sides exactly matching, as shown in *Figure 5*. Cut two 2-inch-long strips of canvas fabric. Place one strip about 2 inches from the top, and one strip about 1 inch from the bottom of the panels. Use a staple gun to staple the fabric to each of the two roof panels (F).
4. Repeat step 3 to attach the remaining six roof panels (F) to the first two.
5. Now comes the awkward part. You may wish to enlist the assistance of a handy helper for this step. Have someone hold the assembly so that you can connect the first roof panel to the eighth roof panel. Again use two fabric strips to connect the panels.
6. Place the connected roof right side up on a level surface. Adjust the panels so that the assembly is even on all sides. Then apply paneling adhesive into each of the joints to form a smooth surface. Let the assembly dry overnight.

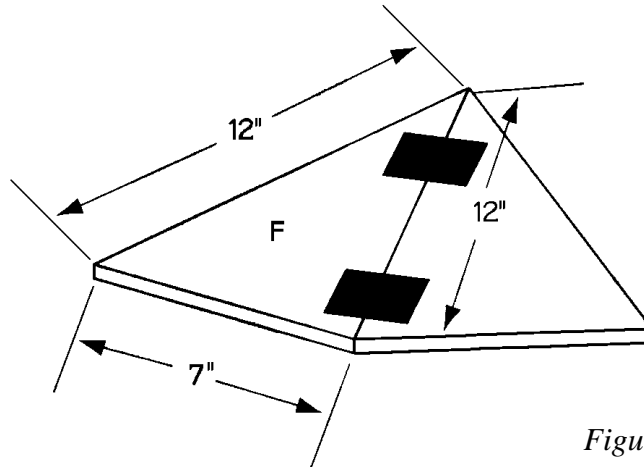


Figure 5

Finishing

1. As a finishing touch, we added a curtain rod finial to the top of the roof.
2. If you plan to have visitors to your new birdhouse, it would be a good idea to attach the roof to the house assembly with a hinge so that you can clean it out. If you don't plan to have visitors and will simply use it as an ornamental project, you can simply nail through the roof into the house assembly to hold it in place.
3. Fill any cracks, crevices, or screw holes with wood filler, and thoroughly sand all surfaces of the completed birdhouse.
4. Seal and paint or stain your birdhouse the colors of your choice.

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