

**BAT HOUSES**

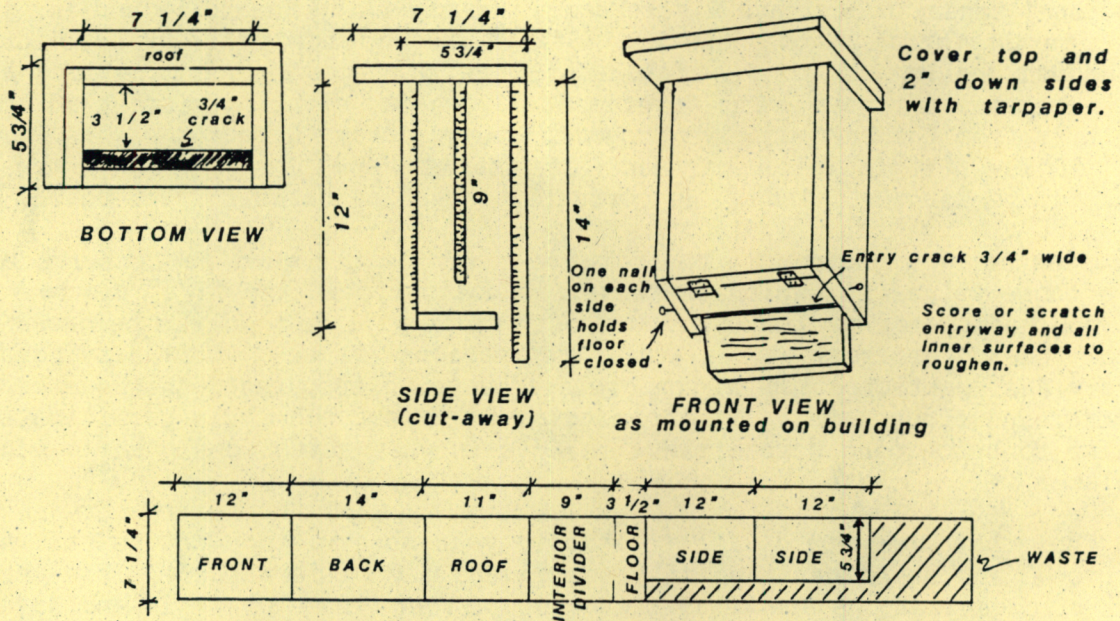
excerpts from Woodworking for Wildlife  
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 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Daytime temperatures in the bat house must be very hot - about 80 to 90 degrees F. One way to achieve this is to cover the bat house on top and extending a couple of inches down the sides with two or more layers of tar paper. The dark colour of the tar paper absorbs heat from the sun and helps protect bats from the rain. The tar paper may be hard to attach and may weather badly. Another alternative would be to paint the bat house black so it would absorb heat from the sunlight.

Bat houses should be securely fastened to a tree trunk or the side of a building roughly 12 to 15 feet above the ground. Preferably they should be on the east side of the house where they will receive the morning sun but will be shaded during the afternoons. Bats also seem to prefer sites that are protected from the wind.

The best habitat for bat houses is relatively near rivers, lakes, bogs, or marshes where insect populations are high. The closer bat houses are to such places the greater the probability of being used. Those located more than a half mile from these habitats have a low probability of being used.

Bat houses should be placed by early April but it may take a year or two for bats to find the house. Once used, it does not need to be cleaned. Chances of occupancy are better if bats already live in nearby buildings.



LUMBER: One  $1" \times 8" \times 8'0"$

Editor's Note: If you are installing a bat house on the side of a house be warned that bat droppings may discolour the area below the bat house and that, on untreated wood, they probably accelerate rot.