

the hidden gardens

Making a Birdbox

What you need

Natural nest holes do not come in standard sizes, so you can use these dimensions as a guide. Any plank or sheet of weatherproof timber is suitable, at least 15 mm thick to provide insulation from cold, and do not use treated timber as this may be harmful to the birds.

Cut each section following the plan below.

Dimensions

The bottom of the entrance hole must be at least 125 mm from the floor of the birdbox. If it's less, young birds might fall out or be scooped out by a cat. The inside wall below the entrance hole should be rough to help the young birds to clamber up when it's time for them to leave.

The entrance hole size depends on the bird you hope to attract:

- 25 mm for blue tits
- 28 mm for great tits
- 32 mm for house sparrows

The birdbox with 100mm high open front may attract robins and a 140mm high front panel would be suitable for wrens.

Putting it together

Drill drainage holes in the base of the box, and use galvanised nails or screws. It's always best to leave the box untreated. As it weathers, it will blend into its surroundings.

Softwood boxes can be treated with water-based preservatives which are known to be safe for animals, such as Sadolin. Apply it only to the outside of the box, and not around the entrance hole. Make sure the box dries and airs thoroughly before you put it up.

Do not nail down the lid, since you will need to clean out the box in the autumn. To attach the lid hinge it with a strip of leather or rubber (an old piece of bicycle inner tube will do). Fasten it down with a good catch.

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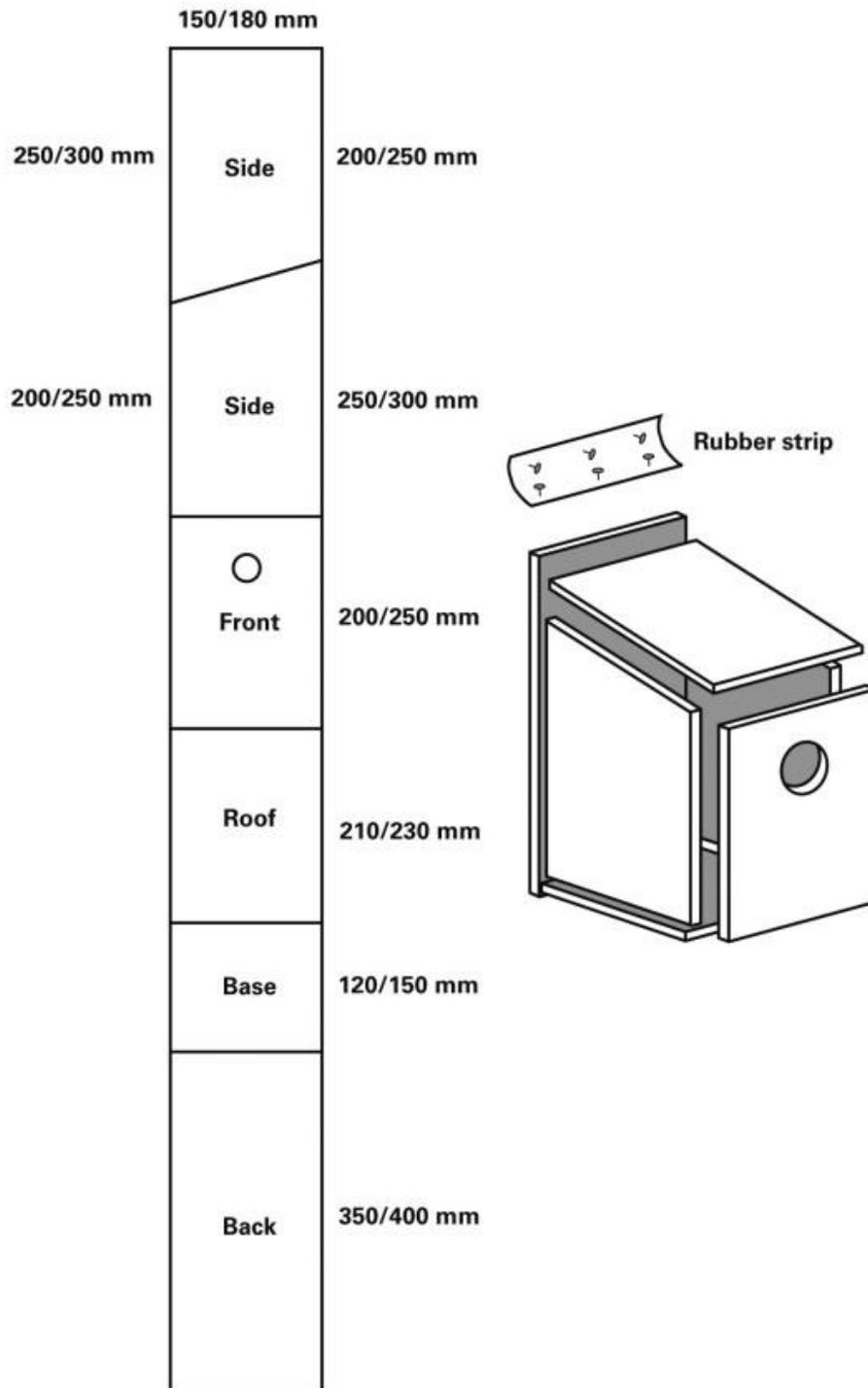


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