



chickadee house

CHICKADEES ARE AMONG THE MOST ENTERTAINING of backyard birds. Acrobatic and highly agile, the seemingly defy gravity as they hop and scamper along branches, deck railings and feeders. Because they're year-round residents, they appreciate a birdhouse in summer months, and a well-stocked feeder in winter. A suet feeder like the one in the next section is almost guaranteed to draw them from miles around in cold weather. Chickadees grow accustomed to humans quickly, and if you have enough patience they'll even eat seeds out of your hand.

I've seen wedge-shaped chickadee houses before, and adapted that idea into this design similar to an inverted Peterson bluebird box. The steeply sloping roof adds a striking touch to any backyard landscaping. With the rough faces oriented inward on each side, $\frac{3}{4}$ " cedar is a good choice for this project as nestlings can easily climb the rough surface.

Cut the components to size, and drill a $1\frac{1}{8}$ " entry hole 3" from the top in one of the sides. The two sides are identical and the hole can go in either one, but take your potential mounting site into consideration before drilling — you'll want the entry hole to face your home

so you can watch the antics of the tenants. Bevel the top edge of the roof and the bottom edge of the lower front/door at 57.5° .

Using the lower front/door as a spacer, center and position the sides on the house back. Run a bead of glue along the rear edges of the sides, and drive a nail through each end as in Fig. 1. Set the door aside and flip the house over, then add a few more nails from the back side. Note in Fig. 2 that I've used pencil to outline where the sides make contact on the other side, which helps to center the nails.

Now attach the small top with glue and nails and lay the house on its back. As we've already done with other houses, hold the lower front/door in place and drill pilot holes through the sides and into the door about 5" from the bottom of the door, then drive a galvanized nail through each side to act as hinges, as shown in Fig. 3. Drill one more hole through the side near the bottom of the door and slip in a galvanized nail to keep the door closed. Just slip out the nail and swing the door down for cleaning.

Attach the roof with glue and nails. In Fig. 4 you can see how the beveled top of the roof fits right into the joint created by the top and sides. Finally, drill $\frac{3}{8}$ " ventilation holes at the top on each side of the house, plus a single mounting hole through the top and bottom of the house back. Because the lower front/door is not solidly attached and because it meets the back of the house at a steep angle, no additional drainage holes are necessary in this design.

Mount your chickadee house from 5' to 15' off the ground on the side of a tree in an area that receives both sunshine and shade.

Don't be surprised if other birds take a liking to your chickadee house. Nuthatches like a similar nesting site, and house wrens will live anywhere. The $1\frac{1}{8}$ " entry hole is perfectly sized for both of these other birds.



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FIGURE 1 Apply glue along the rear edges of the sides and drive a nail through each end to secure them to the back.



FIGURE 2 Use a pencil to outline where the sides make contact on the other side to use as a guide for nailing.

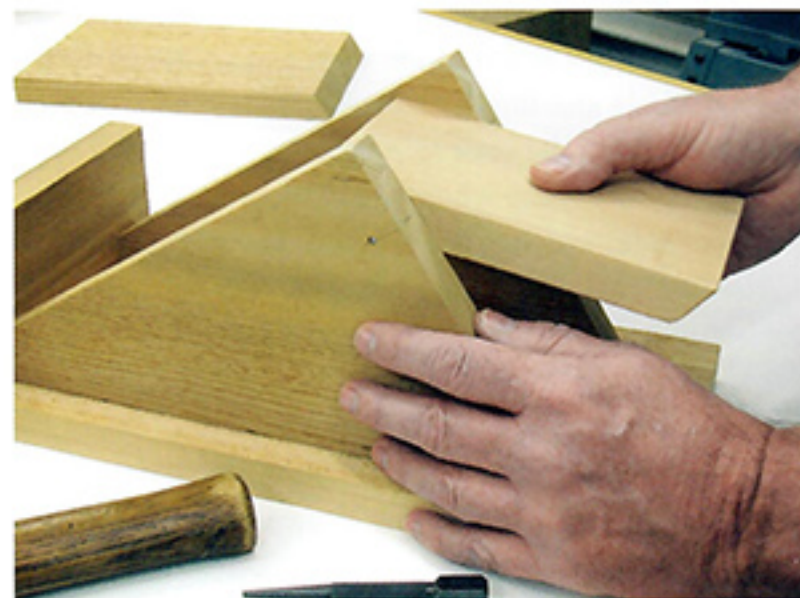


FIGURE 3 Install a galvanized nail through each side to act as hinges.

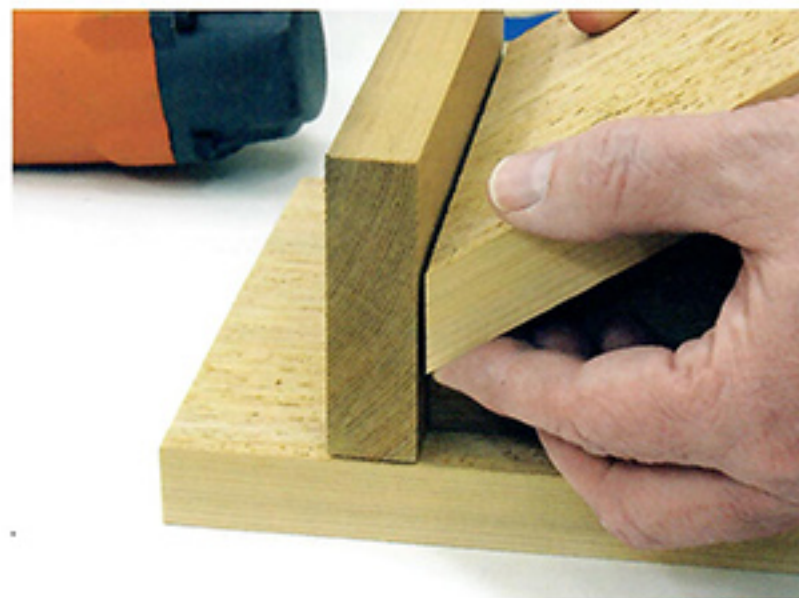
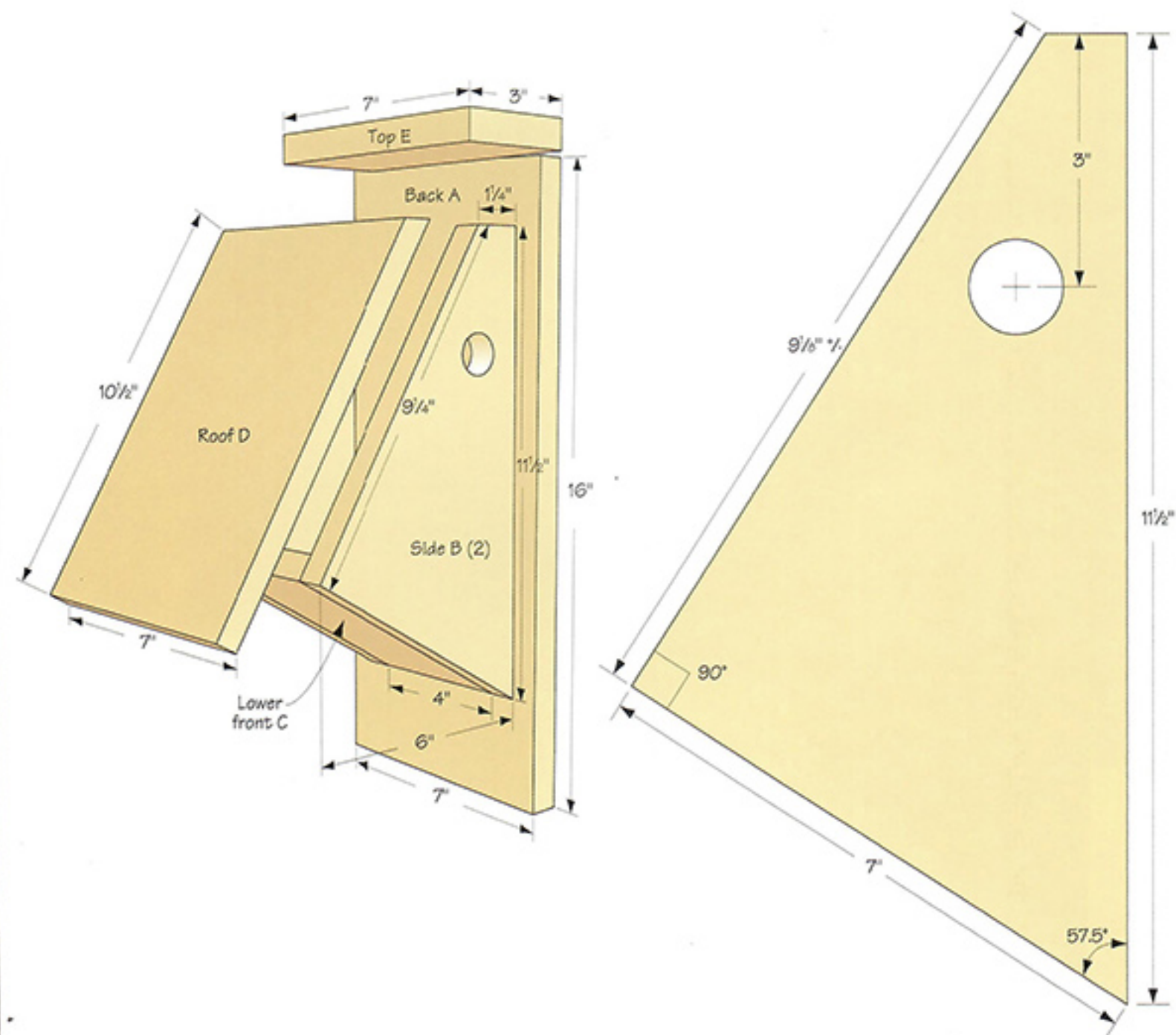


FIGURE 4 The beveled top of the roof fits into the joint created by the top and sides.

CHICKADEE HOUSE • inches (millimeters)

REFERENCE	QUANTITY	PART	STOCK	THICKNESS	(mm)	WIDTH	(mm)	LENGTH	(mm)	COMMENTS
A	1	back	cedar	3/4	19	7	178	16	406	
B	2	sides	cedar	3/4	19	7	178	11 1/2	292	
C	1	lower front/door	cedar	3/4	19	4	102	7	178	
D	1	roof	cedar	3/4	19	7	178	10 1/2	257	
E	1	top	cedar	3/4	19	3	76	7	178	



a note about chickadees

The two most numerous chickadee species in North America are the black-capped chickadee found primarily throughout the northern U.S. and Canada, and the Carolina chickadee native to the southeast U.S. Both birds have a distinctive black cap and bib separated by white cheeks, and gray back and wings. Their bodies have an orange cast, but brighter on the black-cap and with more gray on the Carolina. Chickadees eat mainly insects during warm weather, supplementing their diet with seeds and berries in winter. The two species, which are so similar that they occasionally interbreed where their ranges overlap, don't migrate.