

Coffee-Can Birdhouse

Sit down, relax and have another cup of coffee. You'll need to empty the can first to make this simple birdhouse.



Here's a terrific birdhouse that's as enjoyable as the aroma of the morning's first pot of coffee.

And it has a lot more going for it, too. The house is simple to build, costs pennies to make and is a great way to recycle coffee cans and scrap wood. As a bonus, it's a breeze to clean out after nesting season—just slip out the dowel and empty the can.

You don't have to paint it, but if you're like reader Jean Walters of Fort Worth, Texas who shared this plan, you might want to dress it up.

"These are great projects for children's groups, and they cost about \$2 to make," Jean says.

"Have your friends and neighbors save their coffee cans and precut the wood yourself. Then let the kids paint and assemble them. (If you plan to decorate your birdhouse, Jean suggests sanding and painting the pieces before assembly.) They're easy as store-bought pie to make, and sell faster than a cup of coffee in a doughnut shop.

Here's What You'll Need...

- Two scraps of 3/4-inch-thick pine board, measuring at least 4-1/2 inches square

- Two 1/4-inch-thick plywood or paneling scraps, measuring at least 6 inches x 9 inches each
- 1/4-inch dowel, 8-1/2 inches long
- 1-1/4-inch finishing nails
- One 11-ounce coffee can
- Hooks, wire or a chain for hanging the birdhouse

Recommended Tools...

- Table saw
- Power drill

Start Building...We'll Keep the Coffee Warm!



1. Cut the ends of the birdhouse 4-1/2 inches square from scrap pine boards.
2. Locate the entrance hole in one board by measuring 3-7/16 inches from one corner. (When measuring, place your ruler diagonally from corner to corner and draw a light pencil line.) Be sure to mark the corner from which you're measuring—you'll need to measure from it again in step 4.
3. Drill a 1-inch entrance hole for wrens or the appropriate-size hole for other small birds you'd like to attract.
4. Hold the front and back pieces together in a vise or clamp them together. Locate the perch by measuring 1-1/4 inches from the same corner used in step 2 and mark this spot on the pencil line. Then drill a 1/4-inch hole through the front piece (with the entrance hole) and most of the way through the back.

5. Cut the roof pieces from 1/4-inch plywood or paneling scraps. Cut one piece to measure 5-3/4 inches x 9 inches, and the other 6 inches x 9 inches.
6. Nail the roof pieces to the front and back boards with 1-1/4-inch finishing nails. The large roof piece should overlap the smaller at the peak. (If you're using paneling, the back side should face out.) Leave enough room between the front and back pieces so you can easily insert the coffee can.
7. Clean and dry the coffee can (watch out for sharp edges). Drill two 1/4-inch holes in one side of the can for drainage. Drill two more 1/4-inch holes on the opposite side of the can for ventilation.
8. Place the coffee can between the front and back boards. Cut a 1/4-inch dowel to 8-1/2 inches long and insert it through the perch holes. If the fit is too snug, lightly sand the dowel, which holds the can in place.
9. Attach a chain, hooks or wire for hanging the birdhouse. With any luck, you won't have to wait long for your feathered friends to discover the new home you've provided. Just sit back, have another cup of coffee and enjoy the show.