

Build a Nest Box for an American Kestrel family



American kestrels are the smallest falcon in North America, a beautiful and mighty bird. The species has experienced a 40%+ decline in Wisconsin since the 1960's, in part due to loss of nesting habitat. We can fix this! Kestrels readily use man-made nest boxes.

Kestrel nest boxes can sometimes be used by other native species like owls and bluebirds. Frequently, if left unattended, the boxes will be used by invasive species like European starlings and house sparrows. **If the box will not be monitored for invasive species, it should not be installed or it should be removed.**

Plans adapted from American Kestrel Partnership's materials.

Next Box Material List

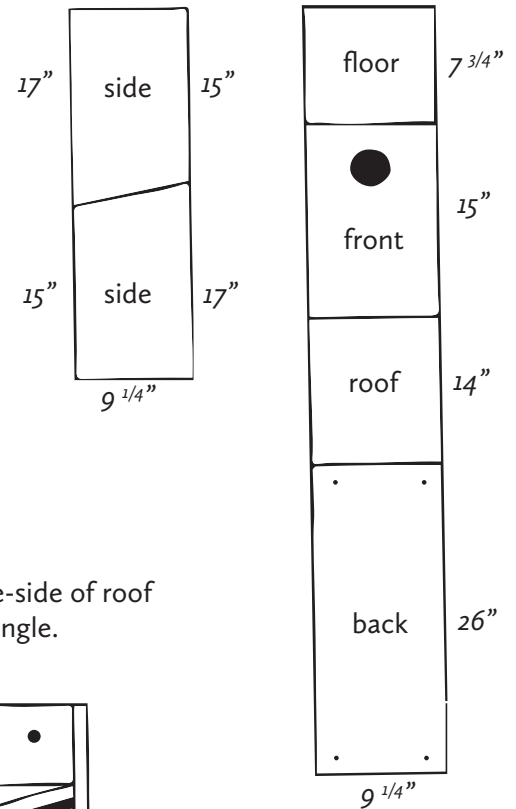
- 1" x 10" x 8' untreated cedar or white pine
- Two 6d or 8d nails
- 20-30 1 1/2" wood screws
- Small gauge wire
- Coarse wood shavings (not sawdust)
- Saw and drill

Instructions

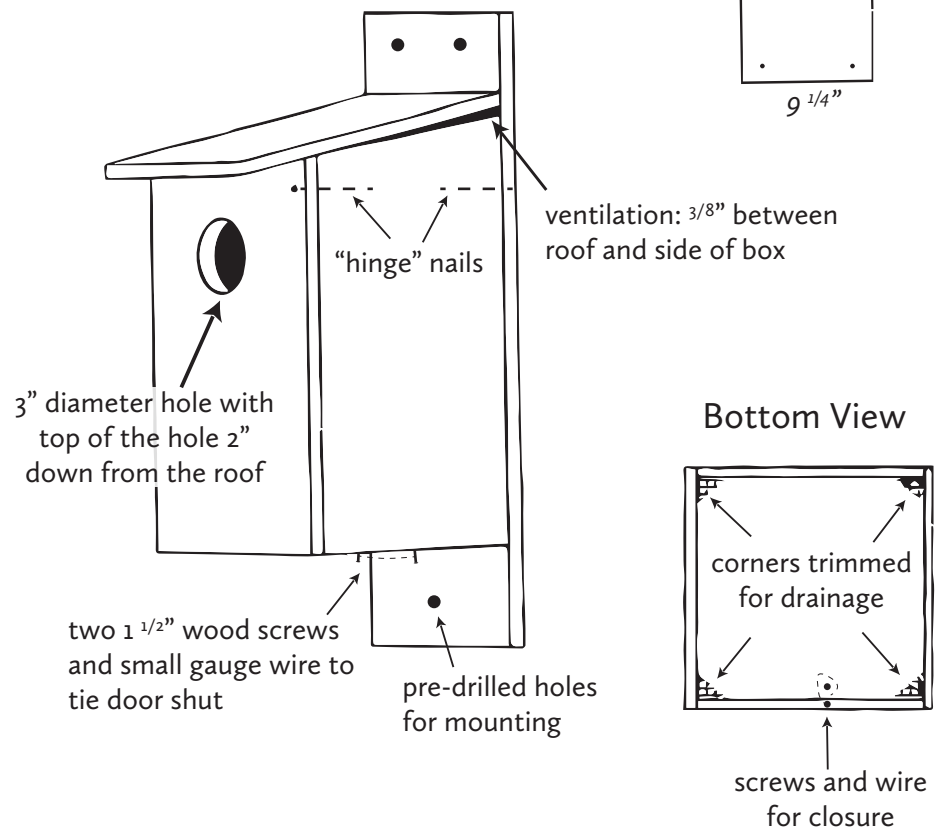
1. Cut lumber using a table saw and entrance hole using a hole saw or jig saw. Pre-drill holes in back to attach to 4x4.
2. Assemble box as shown, with wood screws.
3. Nail two 6d or 8d nails parallel at top of opening side, so it swings open (see "hinge" nails in drawing).
4. Use two 1 1/2" wood screws placed in the bottom of the box and on the opening bottom edge of board. Attach a small gauge wire to both to tie door shut.

**do not use paint or preservatives*

Cutting Guide



*bevel hinge-side of roof to fit at an angle.



Post construction, nest box attachment, and installment



Structure Material List

3 5" x 1/4" bolts	2 4" x 4" x 8' treated posts
6 1/4" washers	42" sheet tin aluminum
6 1/4" nuts	6-10 1 1/2" wood screws
2 8" x 1/2" bolts	Tin snips
4 1/2" washers	Drill
2 1/2" nuts	Shovel or post-hole digger

Instructions

1. Place nest box along the top of 4x4 and mark the bottom of box. Set aside until Step 7.
2. Place tin an inch or so below the mark made in Step 1. Wear gloves due to sharp edges.
3. Tack tin down. Roll 4x4 and squeeze tin down as tight as possible. Do this between two saw horses. More than one person on hand makes this task easier.
4. Drill the top hole into both 4x4s. This should be done with the top post laying on top of bottom post so holes line up.
5. Place bolt in top hole and tighten. Then drill the bottom hole. When complete, be sure to match up the sides of the post so they are placed to match in the field.
6. Cut angle off of bottom post. This is to deter predators.
7. Attach nest box to top of post.
8. In the field, dig post hole 3 feet deep and install post, with the hole facing south or east. Ensuring the post is square and straight. Boxes should be 6' off the ground and at least 1/2 mile apart.
9. Add 2" of wood shavings in the box for bedding. Then wire shut the box, straighten the post, insert the bolt in the bottom hole and tighten.
10. To reduce glare on tin, overspray some black spray paint onto tin.

