

# Carolina Chickadee House

Woodworking plans: cut list, drawings, and step-by-step assembly

The Carolina chickadee is the southern counterpart to the black-capped, and it uses the same box: a 1 1/8" entrance on a 5 1/2" square floor with 8" of depth. This design is a classic side-opening box: one side panel swings open on two pivot nails, so you can check the nest and clean it out at the end of the season without taking anything apart.

## Design Specs

| Spec                  | Measurement                                            |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Entrance hole         | 1 1/8" round                                           |
| Floor (inside)        | 5 1/2" x 5 1/2"                                        |
| Depth (inside)        | 8" (floor to underside of roof, measured at the front) |
| Mounting height       | 4 to 15 ft                                             |
| Hole direction        | Any direction                                          |
| Spacing between boxes | 30 ft                                                  |
| Fledgling ladder      | Shallow horizontal kerfs below the hole, inside        |

## Materials

| Item                                              | Qty      | Notes                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1x6 cedar board (actual 3/4" x 5 1/2")            | 1 @ 4 ft | Floor and both side panels                               |
| 1x10 cedar board (actual 3/4" x 9 1/4")           | 1 @ 4 ft | Front, back, and roof (front and back ripped to 7" wide) |
| 1 5/8" exterior deck screws (coated or stainless) | About 20 | Main assembly, plus 1 for the door latch                 |
| 6d galvanized finishing nails (2")                | 2        | Door pivots                                              |
| Exterior wood glue                                | Optional | Do not glue the door side                                |

## Tools

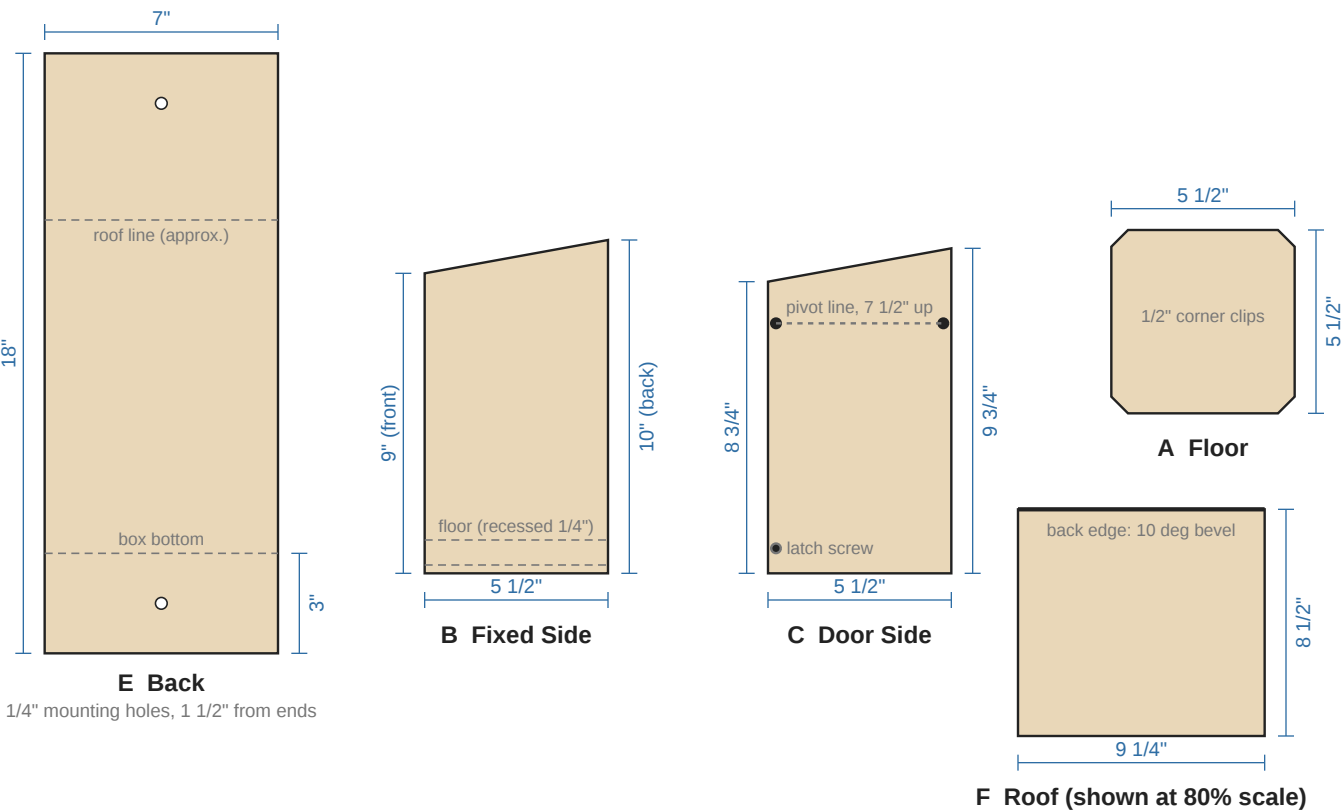
Circular saw or miter saw • Table saw or circular saw with rip guide (for ripping the 1x10) • Drill/driver • 1 1/8" Forstner or spade bit • 3/16" bit for pilot holes • 1/4" bit for mounting holes • Speed square • Tape measure • Pencil • Hammer • Sandpaper

**Before you build:** Use untreated cedar and leave the inside unfinished. Skip the perch. All dimensions assume actual lumber sizes (a 1x6 measures 3/4" x 5 1/2"). Measure your boards before cutting, since mill sizes can vary slightly.

Cut List

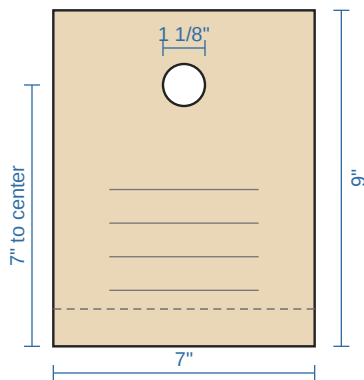
| Part         | Qty | Size                                             | From        | Notes                                    |
|--------------|-----|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------|
| A Floor      | 1   | 5 1/2" x 5 1/2"                                  | 1x6         | Clip each corner 1/2" for drainage       |
| B Fixed side | 1   | 5 1/2" wide; 9" front edge, 10" back edge        | 1x6         | Top cut at about 10 degrees              |
| C Door side  | 1   | 5 1/2" wide; 8 3/4" front edge, 9 3/4" back edge | 1x6         | 1/4" shorter than B for a vent gap       |
| D Front      | 1   | 7" x 9"                                          | 1x10 ripped | Bevel top edge 10 degrees; 1 1/8" hole   |
| E Back       | 1   | 7" x 18"                                         | 1x10 ripped | Extends above and below box for mounting |
| F Roof       | 1   | 9 1/4" x 8 1/2"                                  | 1x10        | Bevel back edge 10 degrees               |

Part Drawings



Drawings are to scale except where noted. Dashed lines show where other parts meet. Cut the 10-degree slope on both side panels first, then use a side panel to set your saw for the bevels on the front and roof.

## Part D: Front Panel and Entrance Hole



**D Front: 1 1/8" Round Hole**

**Hole:** Mark the center 7" up from the bottom edge and 3 1/2" in from either side. Bore with a 1 1/8" bit, backing the board with scrap to prevent tear-out.

**Fledgling ladder:** On the inside face, cut four shallow horizontal saw kerfs (about 1/16" deep) below the hole so fledglings can climb out.

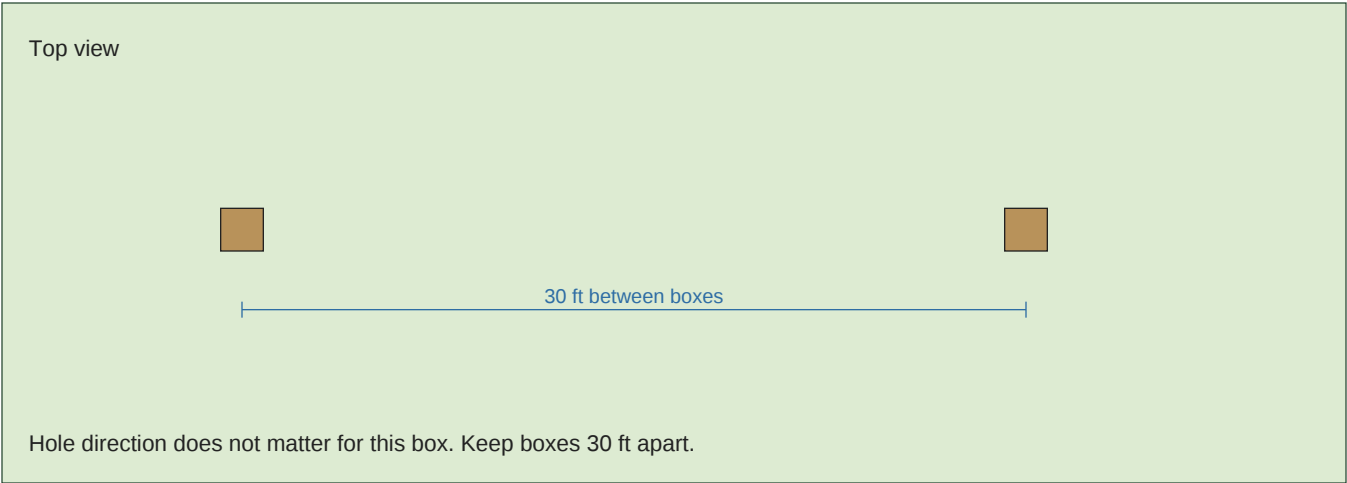
## Assembly

- 1 **Cut all parts** per the cut list. Rip the front and back to 7" wide. Cut the 10-degree slope on the tops of both side panels, bevel the top edge of the front, and bevel the back edge of the roof.
- 2 **Drill the entrance hole** in the front and cut the fledgling-ladder kerfs on the inside face. Clip the four floor corners 1/2".
- 3 **Attach the fixed side (B) to the back (E).** Lay the back flat, set the side's tall edge on it with the side's bottom 3" up from the back's bottom end, and flush with one long edge. Drill 3/16" pilot holes and drive 2 screws through the back into the side.
- 4 **Install the floor (A).** Set it against the fixed side and back, raised 1/4" above the bottom edge of the side. Drive 2 screws through the side and 2 through the back into the floor.
- 5 **Attach the front (D).** Bottom edge flush with the bottom of the fixed side. Drive 2 screws into the fixed side's front edge and 2 into the floor edge. Do not drive any screws on the open side.
- 6 **Attach the roof (F).** Butt the beveled edge against the back so the roof overhangs the front about 2" and each side about 1 1/8". Drive 2 screws down into the fixed side, 2 into the front, and 2 through the back into the roof edge.
- 7 **Hang the door (C).** Slide it into the open side, bottom flush with the box bottom; the 1/4" gap at the top is your ventilation. Sand the edges if it binds. At 7 1/2" up from the bottom, drive one 6d nail through the front and one through the back into the door edges, lined up across from each other. Test the swing.
- 8 **Add the latch.** Near the bottom, drive one screw through the front into the door edge. Back it out when you want to open the box.
- 9 **Drill two 1/4" mounting holes** in the back, centered, 1 1/2" from each end.

Where to Put It

Mount the box 4 to 15 ft high and keep boxes 30 ft apart. The entrance can face any direction.

| Placement       | Guideline                        |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Mounting height | 4 to 15 ft                       |
| Hole direction  | Any direction                    |
| Spacing         | Keep chickadee boxes 30 ft apart |



Mounting Tips

- Mount the box 4 to 15 ft up on a sturdy pole, post, tree, or building. Bolt it through the two holes in the back.
- If you mount the box on a pole, a predator baffle below the box helps keep climbing predators out.
- Mount the box level. The sloped roof sheds rain forward, past the entrance hole.
- Put the box up before nesting season starts, and use the side door to clean out old nest material once the season ends.