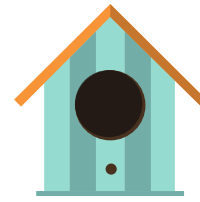


# Pine River Library Program in a Bag: Birdhouse Kit



## A Little Birdhouse Background...

Birdhouses provide a home for nesting birds— for many of these species there can be a shortage of places to nest. Birdhouses can be placed in backyards, schoolyards, parks, orchards, farms, pastures, cemeteries, woodlots, deserts, cities...anywhere you can think up!

The best time of year to put out a new birdhouse is the fall or winter. This gives birds plenty of time to find them before the breeding season begins. If you want to attract a certain species of bird, placement is key. For example, bluebirds like houses in open fields; chickadees, titmice, and nuthatches all like open woods and woodland edges; woodpeckers like forest openings and woodland edges. *For more details*, download our nesting chart. The type of bird you want to attract can also determine whether you place your birdhouse on a pole or in a tree. Nuthatches and woodpeckers prefer houses in trees. Regardless, always place the house with the entrance hole facing slightly downward to keep wind and rain from entering. And make sure it's placed so that it doesn't swing or move too much.

Once nesting season is over—usually by mid-August—it's a good idea to clean out your birdhouse. Take out old nesting material and wash out the house with a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. Rinse well and let the inside dry completely. Some birds have multiple broods per season (like bluebirds or robins) and it's a good idea to clean out nesting material between broods. Just keep an eye on the birds to make sure they have all left the nest before attempting to clean. Once clean, you can put the birdhouse back up for the rest of the year. Birdhouses may also be used by some birds for night roosting, and they can also provide valuable shelter during cold winter nights.

## Resources:

- [www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds/birdhouses](http://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds/birdhouses)
- [www.nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses/](http://www.nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses/)



## **Materials** (*Items with an asterisk are included in the kit*)

Wooden pieces- sides, dowel\*

Sandpaper\*

Nails\*

Eye screws for hanging house\*

Hammer

Wood glue

Paints or wood stain

Need a hammer and/or wood glue? Check them out from the library!

Need paints? Stop by the Library during our painting day on June 18 from 3-6pm!

## **Instructions**

### TIPS

- It's nice to have a friend help you with this project to hold the pieces in place as you nail them down.
- It helps to start the nails in the thinner pieces before putting them into place and then finishing the nailing job.
- It's up to you whether you'd like to paint the birdhouse before or after it's constructed. If you'd like to paint a detailed design, we recommend painting the pieces and letting them thoroughly dry before you put it all together. NOTE: Don't stain or paint the inside of the house as the fumes can be toxic to birds.

1. Sand all wooden pieces until smooth. Wipe off wood dust with a soft cloth.

2. Line up one of the smaller thin pieces along the bottom side of the front thicker piece so that the perch hole is closest to the thin piece. Nail the piece in place with two nails as pictured. Repeat this process with the other thicker piece that makes up the back of the birdhouse.



3. Now you'll nail down the other bottom piece of the birdhouse. Take the other smaller thin piece and make sure it overlaps a bit with the other bottom piece for a "tighter" seal. Nail this piece to the front and back of the birdhouse like you did before.

4. Line one of bigger thin pieces along the top point of the birdhouse. It should overhang the front of the house more than the back to protect the opening- these are the "eaves" of the house. Nail this piece into place with two nails as you did before. Then, line the other bigger thin piece up so it slightly overlaps with the other roof piece for a "tighter" seal as you did with the bottom pieces. Nail this piece down as well.



5. Using the point of a nail or awl, push small "starter" holes, one on each side of the roof close to the front and the back of the birdhouse (see picture for placement)- this is so you can screw in the eye screws more easily. Now screw the screws into these holes. NOTE: This will take firm, even pressure.

6. Place a small amount of wood glue on the dowel and press it into place in the small hole in the front of the birdhouse. Wipe off excess glue on the outside- a q-tip works great for this. Let dry for 24 hours



7. Hang your birdhouse from the screw eyes using sturdy string or wire.