

# Project: Robin or Barn Swallow Nesting Shelf

Level: Medium

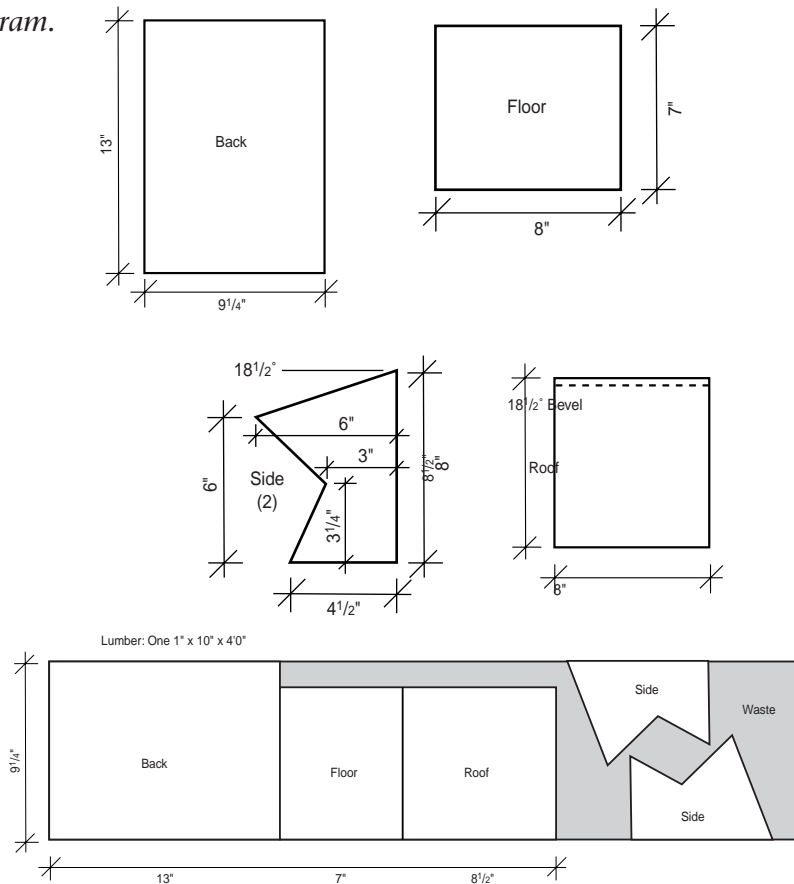
Age: 7 and up

Materials needed: One piece of good quality lumber, 1 inch by 10 inches by 4 feet, 2 to 2½-inch flat-head screws or nails, hammer or screwdriver, hand-held drill, paintbrush, paint or wood stain, polyurethane finish coat (matte, gloss, or semi-gloss), sandpaper, medium abrasiveness

Directions:

1. Using the pattern and dimensions in the following figure, cut out your pieces using a hand saw or power saw (adults should do this).

Cutting diagram.



2. Sand each piece thoroughly. It's best to paint or stain all your pieces before you put them together, since moisture will be less likely to get into joints and rot the wood. So, decide if you want to paint or use a wood stain product on your house, then put on a finish coat of polyurethane. You'll need to let the pieces dry between coats.
3. Line up the edge of one side with the roof. Draw a line along the inside edge. Mark where you want to put your nails or screws and make a dot. That's where you're going to drill your pilot holes.
4. Drill through the roof piece, then line it up again with the side and put a long nail through the hole. Tap it lightly to create a mark. That's where you'll make another pilot hole, so your screw can go through the roof and into the side easily. You'll do this for both sides and then again when attaching the back to the assembly.
5. Nail or screw your nesting shelf together, attaching the two sides to the roof first, then attaching that assembly to the floor, and finally putting the back of the house on. One way to make it easier to line things up is to bring your screws through one piece of wood so they just protrude a little on the other side. Then use the screws to help you line up the holes on the piece of wood you're joining to.

Hang your nesting shelf on a wall or tree trunk and wait for the birds to come. Place your birdhouse near a window where birds can be seen throughout the nesting season. Try to get it at least six feet off the ground. Ten feet is even better.

*Finished nesting shelf.*

