



Make a pine marten feeder box
Includes cutting plans

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Background

This feeder box is designed for feeding pine martens, while aiming to exclude birds and squirrels. It can be baited with peanuts or smelly bait such as sardines in oil or spring water and should be nailed or tied to a tree at no less than 1.5 metres from ground level.

We use pine marten feeders boxes as a monitoring tool. They can be set up as a bait station together with a trail camera or used for collecting hair samples.

Key features of the feeder design

- Heavy lid which can be easily lifted by an adult pine marten but difficult for a bird or squirrel.
- Holes drilled in front (instead of a gap) to allow for the bait to be smelt.
- Good sized platform to allow for a pine marten to comfortably sit on the feeder.

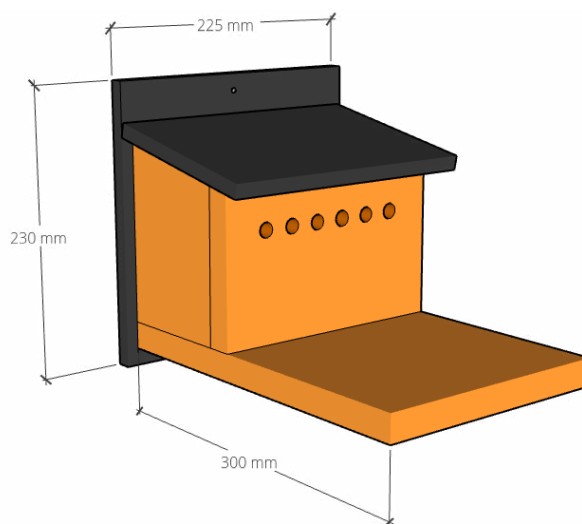
Materials

- Sides and base: Pressure treated softwood (200 x 22mm).
- Top hinge: Reinforced neoprene (3mm thickness).
- Fixtures: Galvanised and treated tacks (3mm diameter x 15mm length) fix the neoprene lid to the feeder; two aluminium nails can be used to fix the feeder to a tree by drilling holes in the back panel, either at the top and bottom, or the sides.
- Either Stokbord® recycled plastic or treated wood can be used for the back and lid, but we recommend the use of 12mm Stokbord® to maximise durability.
- Transparent acrylic can be used for the front panel, in place of wood.

NB

Stokbord(R) is usually sold in 2440 x 1200mm sheets, which is enough to make 30 pine marten feeder boxes. The following table sets out the rest of the materials needed for 30 feeder boxes.

To make a feeder box entirely from wood, approximately 1m of wood is needed per feeder.



Materials required to make approximately 30 pine marten feeder boxes

Material	Quantity
Pressure treated softwood (200 x 22mm)	4.2m lengths (x 5)
3mm neoprene sheet	50mm x 7m (cut into 22cm strips)
Galvanised clout nails (15mm length x 3mm diameter)	500g bag
Stokbord® 12mm thickness	1 sheet 2440 x 1220mm

The material we recommend for the back and lid of the den box is Stokbord®, a hard-wearing material made from 100% recycled agricultural plastics that will prolong the feeder's life in the elements. Stokbord® can be easily cut by hand, does not require specialist equipment and the shavings can be recycled.

Pressure-treated soft wood can be used for the side walls and base of the feeder to provide structural stability against the Stokbord®, as well as a natural surface for pine martens to climb on. A single Stokbord® sheet can be cut into enough 380 x 225mm pieces for 30 feeders (cutting the shortest side into three pieces and the longest side into ten pieces, with a small amount leftover).

Construction

A cutting plan is available at the end of this document.

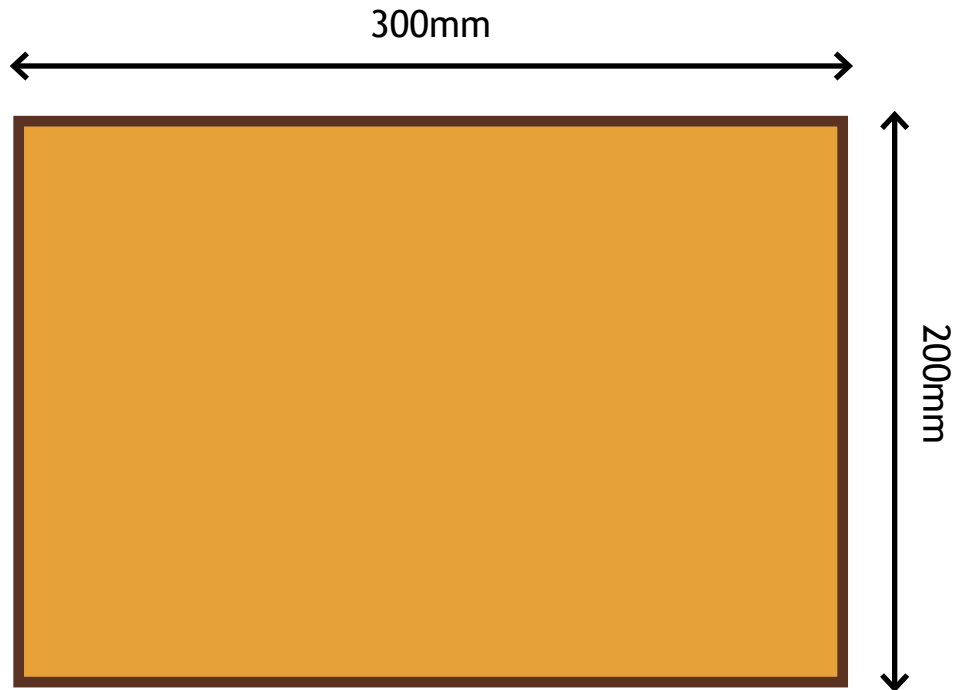
It is recommended that good quality screws are used in the construction of the feeder, which will allow the box to be taken apart more easily if needed. Stainless steel screws should not rust. An alternative to stainless steel screws are plastic headed nails. The plastic cap provides protection from the elements and prevents rust, however more care is required when using them – making pilot holes with a diameter slightly smaller than the nail shank is recommended, to prevent the nail from moving or bending within the wall panels.

Strips of 50mm x 3mm Neoprene strips can be used to fix the lid to the back, using galvanised tacks.

Feeder Box Cutting Plans

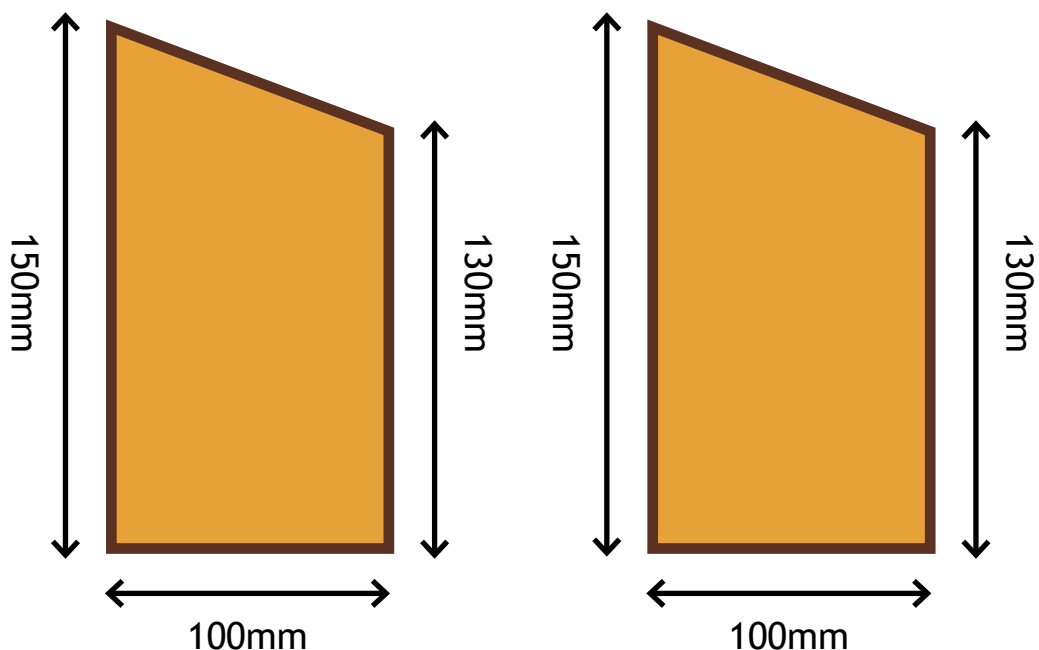
These are suggested cutting plans for a feeder box that is approximately 340 x 225 x 200 mm.

Base – 200 x 22mm pressure treated soft wood



Side Panels – 200 x 22mm pressure treated soft wood)

Cut a length of 280mm, and cut lengthwise into two 280 x 100mm planks, eg, using a table saw. From one end, measure 150mm on one vertical side and 130mm on the other vertical side, and draw a line between the marks. Alternatively measure 150mm and mark an angle of 79 degrees. Cut planks down this line to make the sides for two feeder boxes.

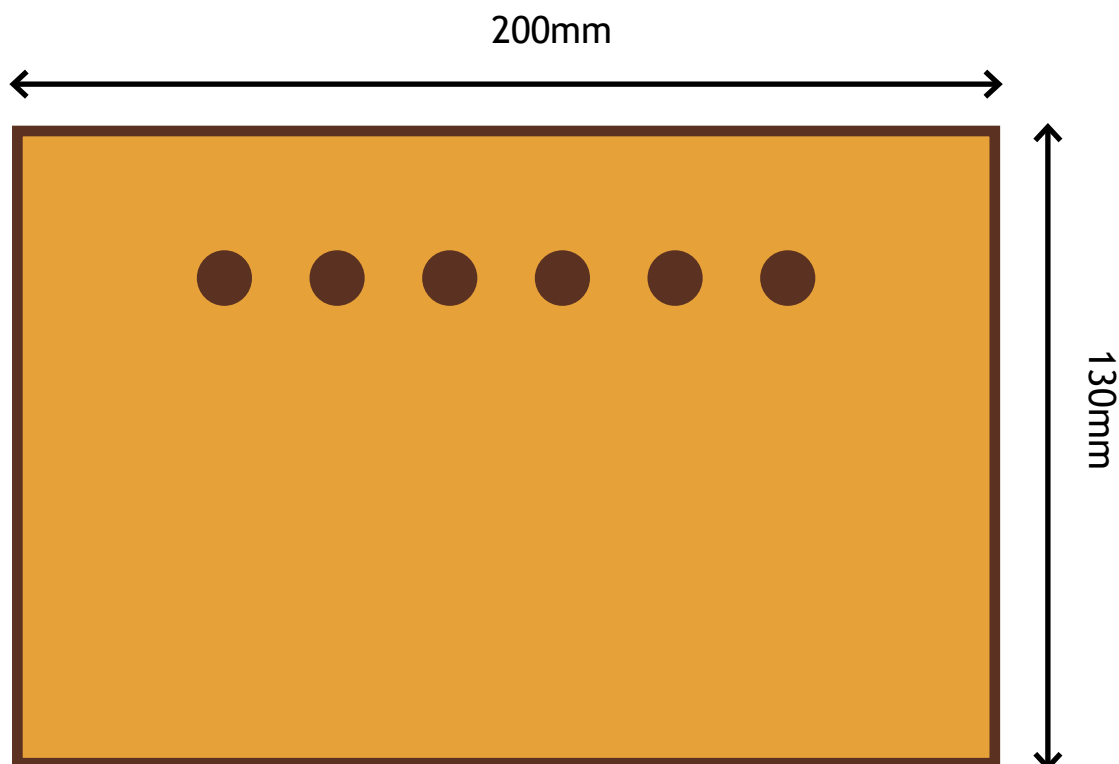


Front Panel – 200 x 22mm pressure treated soft wood

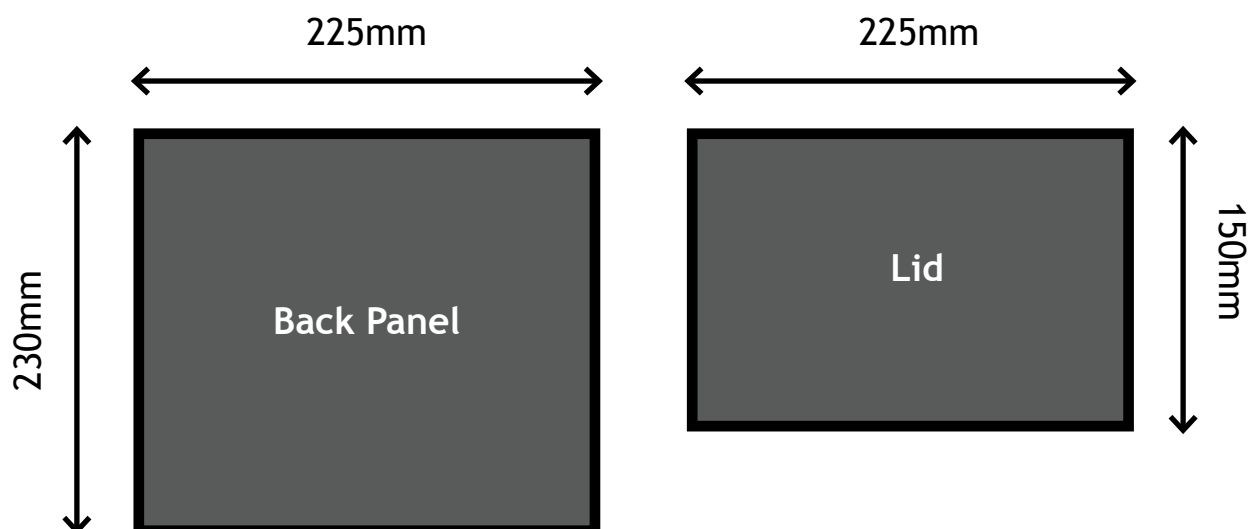
The long side, which will fit under the lid (without a gap), should be bevelled at an angle of 11 degrees. If an appropriate tool is not available to cut a top bevel, the front can be cut at a height of 125mm rather than 130mm to allow for the lid to sit properly.

Several holes of approximately 6mm should be drilled in the front to allow for the smell of bait to escape the feeder box and attract pine martens.

Transparent material can also be used for the front panel instead of wood, to allow for visual cues, with a small gap at the top under the lid rather than drilled holes.



Back Panel and Lid – made from Stokbord®





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