

Purple Martin House

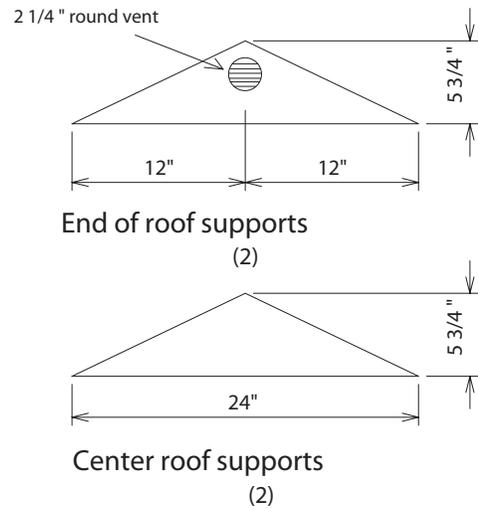
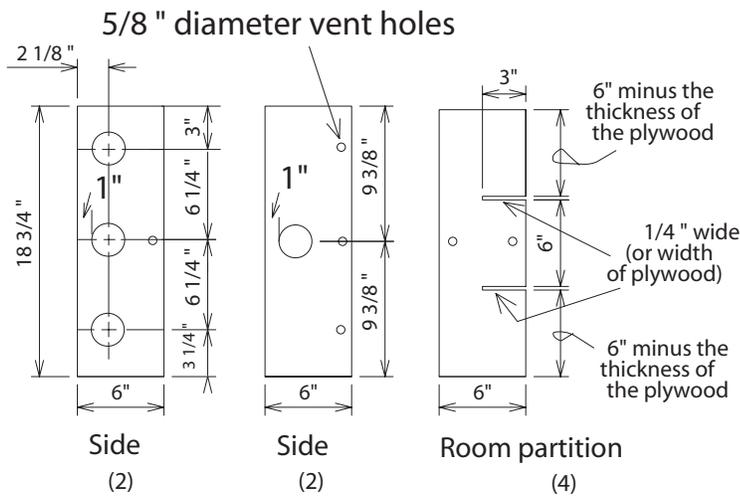
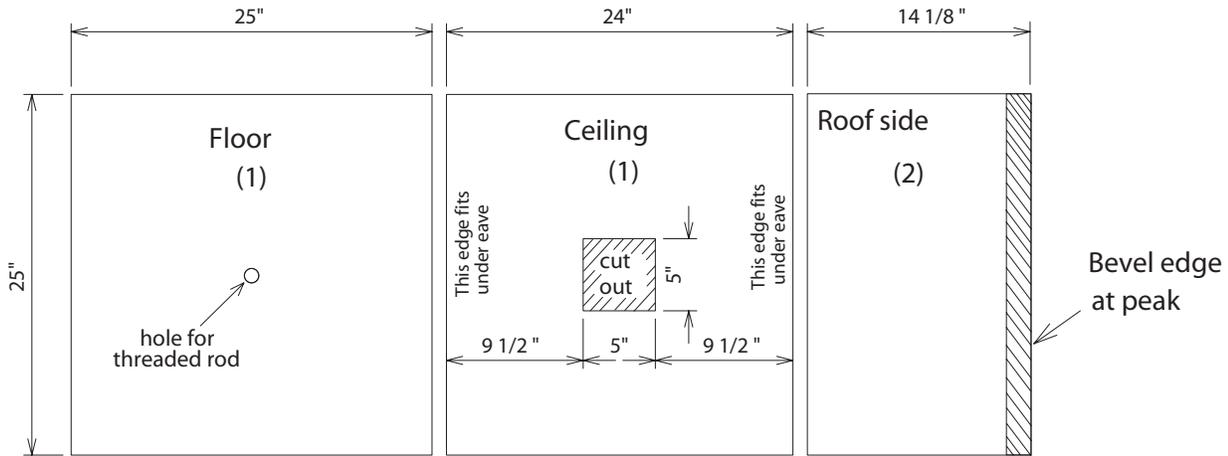
Materials:

- 4' x 8' Plywood, outdoor grade (1/4" to 5/8" preferred)
- 1 5/8" x 1 5/8" x 3" for chimney
- 1" x 2" x 14' for base
- 1" x 1" x 8' for corner blocks
- 2 - 2 1/4" round vents
- 4" x 4" x 14' cedar post
- 1/4" threaded rod
(length depends upon plywood thickness)

- 2 - 1/4" nuts
- 2 - 1/4" washers
- 2 - 1/4" lockwashers

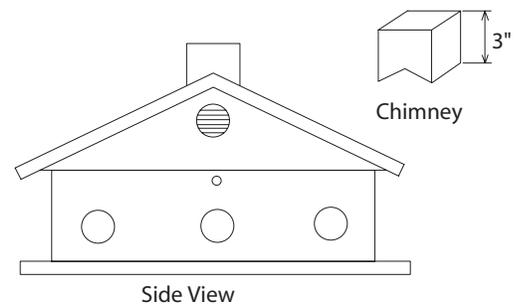
Note:

Place 1/2" dowel railing around balcony to keep the young birds from falling.



Notes:

1. House is held together by running a 1/4" threaded rod from the floor thru the roof.
2. Center compartment is inaccessible.
3. Chimney is placed in the center of the roof ridge.
4. Do not paint the inside of the house.
5. The outside of the house should be painted.



Installing and Caring for Purple Martin Houses

Having a successful purple martin colony in your purple martin house may take some work, but it will provide you with an educational and enjoyable experience!

House Placement

Purple martin houses need to be in open areas, such as backyards, meadows, fields and near ponds and lakes. The houses should be placed a minimum of 30 to 40 feet from large trees or buildings.

When installing your purple martin house, place it on a pole so it is 12 to 20 feet above the ground. You should allow for extra open space if surrounding trees are taller than your placement height.

Purple Martins' Competitors

House sparrows and starlings will compete aggressively with purple martins for nesting sites. Repeated nest removal or trapping of house sparrows and starlings may be necessary to make the houses available to martins.

It is recommended that you install a pole-mounted predator guard cone to prevent climbing predators like cats, snakes and raccoons from raiding the colony.

Cleaning

Purple martin houses should be cleaned out every fall. Around late September, lower the house, clean out the old nests and wash with soap and water. Then, store the house for the winter or plug the cavities to prevent competitors from entering. Have your house ready for occupancy by early to mid-April.

Source: J. L. Wade, "Attracting Purple Martins," The Nature Society, 1987.

Building plans for purple martin houses are available online at www.wisconsinpublicservice.com

