

Bat Boxes

Types of Bat Boxes Available

Bat boxes should be made of thermally stable material and draught proof to provide a suitable microclimate for bats.

External Wooden Boxes

These are usually cubic or wedge-shaped and have a slit at the bottom with a grooved 'ladder' for entry. The wood should be left untreated on the inside but can be treated on the outside to protect against deterioration.



External Woodcrete Boxes

Woodcrete boxes, a mixture of concrete and wood, are more durable than wooden bat boxes. They can be cylindrical with an entrance hole on the side (designed to be hung on a tree) or brick-shaped with an entrance hole on the bottom (designed to be fixed to trees or walls).

Integrated Boxes

These are built into the walls of buildings and many designs are available.

Where to Put Bat Boxes

General Guidance

- Where possible bat boxes should be sited in groups of 2/3 facing different directions providing different microclimates.
- They should be placed where bats are known to feed, preferably close to a linear feature as bats use hedgerows and tree lines for navigation.
- It is recommended that on average the bat box should receive 6-10 hours of direct sunlight a day. Summer maternity roosts in the northern hemisphere should face south or west.
- The size of the bat box should be appropriate for the species.
- Access to the entrance of a bat box should be unobstructed.
- Bat boxes should be sited away from artificial light sources.

On Trees

Place the box as high as it is safe to do so (around 5m high), mindful of tree growth, vandalism and cats.

Use headless nails not fully hammered in or straps to fix the boxes to trees. Iron nails are suitable for trees with no commercial value.



On Buildings

Boxes should be placed high up in the eaves and the aspect should be in sun for part of the day.

Monitoring

Monitoring bat boxes is useful to know whether they are being used. **If the box needs to be opened a licensed bat surveyor must be present**, however external checks can be made without a license, such as checking for urine staining and droppings.