

PETA



Letting Cats Enjoy the Great Outdoors *in Safety*

A CATIO-BUILDING GUIDE

A “catio” can provide cats with all the fresh air, sunshine, and enrichment they desire without the risks run by felines who are allowed to roam.

Rule No. 1: NEVER let your cat roam outdoors.

Rule No. 2: There are no other rules.



Not only are cats exposed to disease, parasites, weather extremes, traffic, dogs, and cruel people who would gladly poison, shoot, burn, or drown them, they also pose a danger to birds and other wildlife. Studies estimate that free-ranging cats kill up to 4 billion birds and 22.3 billion mammals in the U.S. every year.

But cats can get all the fresh air and sunshine they need indoors. Try placing couches, cat trees, shelves, and other cat-friendly furniture near windows (after ensuring that the window screens are secure!). And if you have a yard, porch, or deck, consider building a “catio,” which can provide all the benefits of being outdoors with none of the risks. If you know your way around a hammer, a saw, and a few other basic tools, your feline best friend can be living the high life in just one weekend.



The instructions in this guide are for a catio that's connected to a house via a door, a window, or another opening.

SHOPPING LIST

40 pieces 2"x2"x8' lumber*

1 piece 1"x6"x8' lumber*

300 3½" screws

50 2½" screws

16 1⅝" screws

3 door hinges

1 secure door latch

4 24" wooden stakes

Hardware cloth
(or cat-proof wire mesh)

Staples

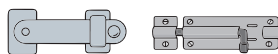
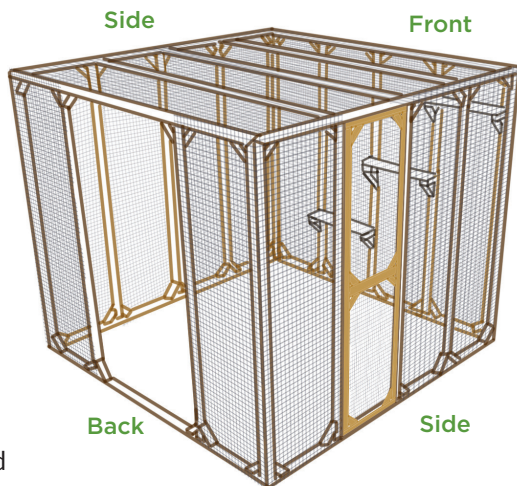
Wood glue

Paint or wood stain

5 sheets 12'x24" corrugated
metal roofing (optional)

9-gauge 1" metal-to-wood
roofing screws (optional)

*We highly recommend using
weather-resistant lumber (pre-treated or cedar).



Sample latches

TOOLS NEEDED

Hammer, screwdriver, miter saw, drill, sander, tape measure, framing square, level, staple gun, safety glasses, safety gloves

CUT LIST (all cut from 2"x2", unless otherwise specified)

Front wall: 2 pieces 93", 4 pieces 81", 16 pieces 6"

Back wall: 2 pieces 93", 4 pieces 81", 12 pieces 6"

Side walls: 2 pieces 96", 5 pieces 81", 16 pieces 6"

Rafters: 3 pieces 93", 6 pieces 6"

Door: 2 pieces 22¼", 2 pieces 78", 1 piece 19¼", 6 pieces 6"

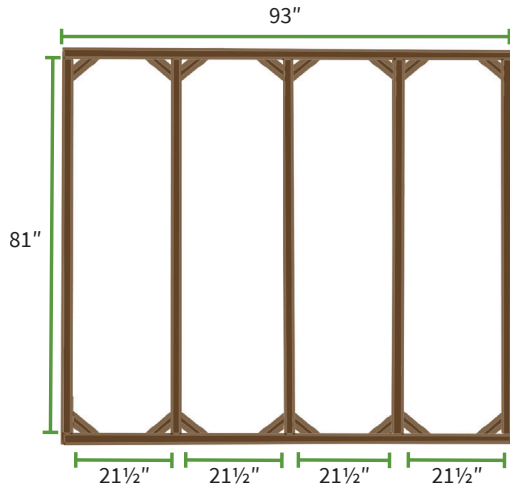
Shelves: 2 pieces 4½", 2 pieces 5½", 2 pieces 6", 1 piece 24½"
of 1"x6" lumber

Stakes: 4 pieces 24"

INSTRUCTIONS

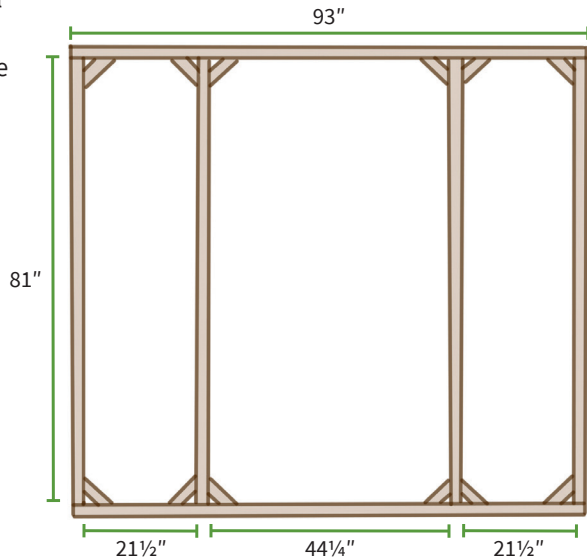
FRONT-WALL FRAME

Cut the components from the 2"x2" lumber. Drill pilot holes and insert 3½" screws into the studs. Space the studs equally, making sure the corners are square. Align the edges. Fit the diagonal pieces to the corners. Make 45-degree cuts to the braces and secure them with 2½" screws.



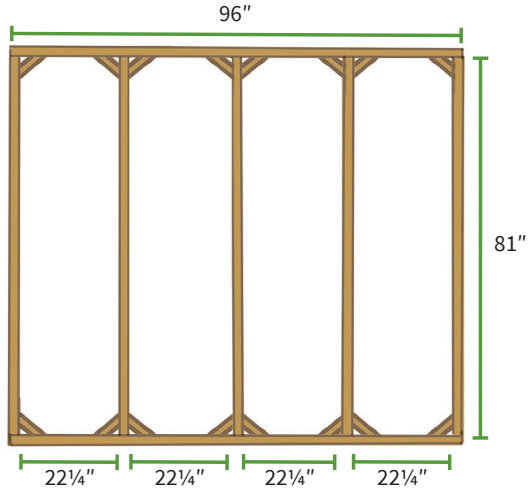
BACK-WALL FRAME

This wall should back up to an opening in the home—a door, a window, or another entry point. To build, follow the instructions for the front-wall frame, but be sure to adjust the stud spacing to suit the size of your opening.



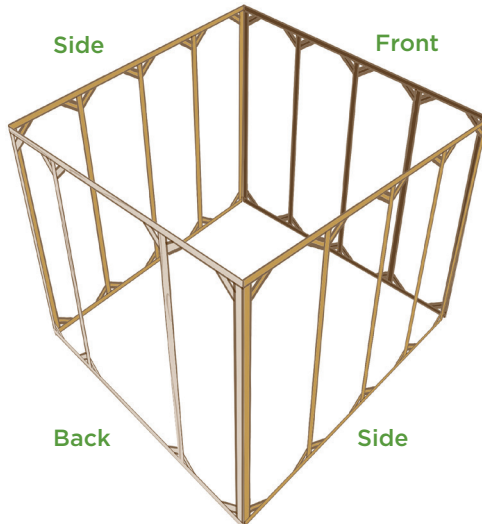
SIDE-WALL FRAMES

Cut the components from the 2"x2" lumber. Drill pilot holes and insert 3½" screws in the studs. Space the studs equally. Fit diagonal pieces to the corners to enhance the rigidity of the frame.



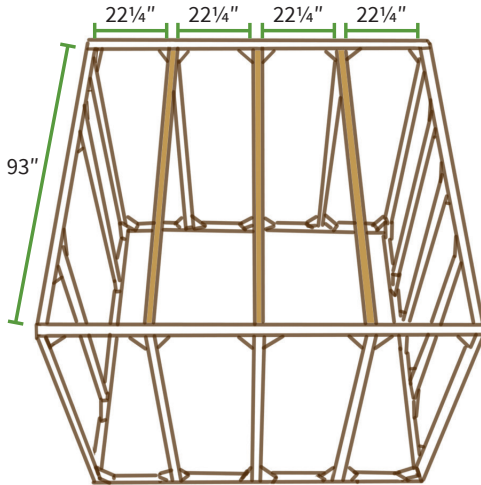
ASSEMBLING THE FRAME

Fit the walls snugly together. Align the edges, drill pilot holes, and insert 2½" screws to lock them in place. Make sure the corners are square.



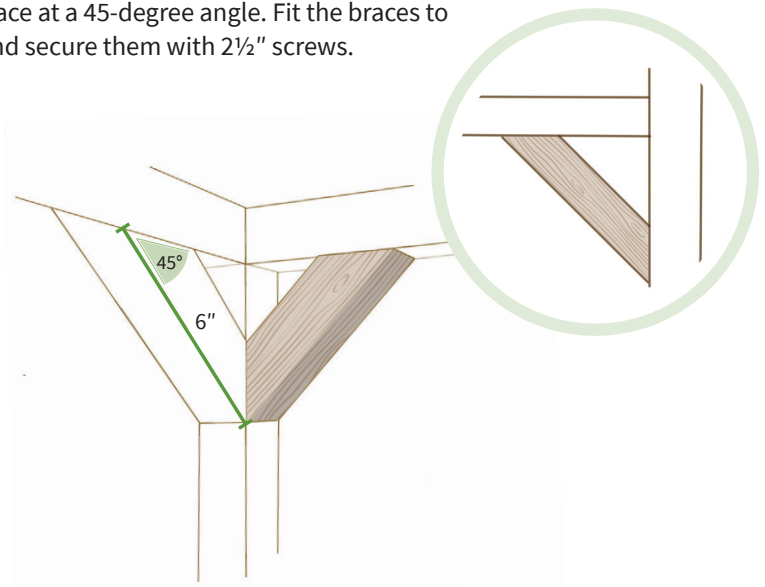
FITTING THE TOP SUPPORTS

Cut the components from the 2"x2" lumber, and fit them to the top. Drill pocket holes at each end of the rafters and secure them with 2½" screws. Make sure the corners are square.



FITTING THE BRACING

Cut the components from the 2"x2" lumber. Cut the ends of each brace at a 45-degree angle. Fit the braces to the top, and secure them with 2½" screws.



BUILDING THE SHELVES

Cut the supports from the 2"x2" lumber, and use 1"x6" lumber for the shelves.

Using the diagram as a guide, make one shelf with two supports

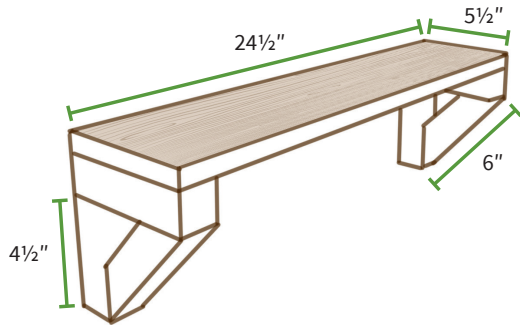
by cutting:

2 2"x2"x4½"

2 2"x2"x5½"

2 2"x2"x6" with a
45-degree cut on
each end

1 1"x6"x24½"



ASSEMBLING THE SUPPORTS

Make an L shape with

the 2"x2"x4½" and the 2"x2"x5½". Join with a 2" screw through the 5½" piece. Use the angle-cut 2"x2"x6" to join the two ends of the L with a 2½" screw. Repeat to make a second support.

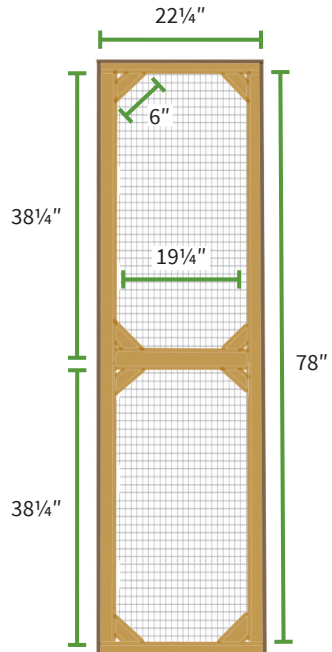
ASSEMBLING THE SHELVES

Place supports on each end of the 1"x6"x24½". Screw down through the top of the 1"x6" into the supports using 1⅝" screws. Repeat to make 2 more shelves. Attach the completed shelves to studs using 2½" screws.

BUILDING THE DOOR

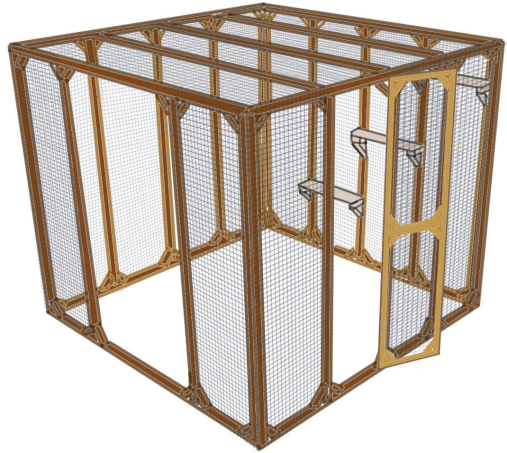
Cut the components from the 2"x2" lumber, including the 6"x6" braces. Drill pilot holes and use 2½" screws to reinforce the frame.

The door can be framed into either of the side walls, depending on what's best for your patio. Fit the door into place and secure it to the frame with the hinges. Make sure it opens and closes properly, then install a latch.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Apply a few coats of paint or wood stain to the frame. Use staples to secure the mesh tightly in place. Align and smooth the edges. Make sure there are no protruding corners, wires, or nails. Screw two wooden stakes into the lower frame of each wall.



Cut 4 24" stakes out of 2"x2" lumber. Cut a 45-degree angle on one end of each stake. At each inside corner of the catio, hammer a stake into the ground. Then screw the stake to the frame using 2½" screws.

ROOFING (OPTIONAL)

Use 9-gauge 1" metal-to-wood roofing screws to attach 5 sheets of 12'x24" corrugated metal roofing to the rafters with 2' of overhang on 2 sides and 1' of overhang on the other two sides. If attaching the catio to a house, adjust the roofing by overlapping it to make it flush with the siding on the house. If you are not using roofing, simply secure wire or mesh to the top.

Not the D.I.Y. type, or short on time? Try these ideas instead:

- ▶ Recruit a friend to help build the catio.
- ▶ Check out other catio resources online (e.g., catispaces.com, habithaven.com, or catsolarium.com).
- ▶ Buy a prefabricated catio for easy assembly.
- ▶ Opt for indoor cat-friendly furniture, like window perches and cat trees.

