



Bat Boxes

Where you place your bat box makes a big difference to whether bats actually use it.

Bat Box Installation Guidance

- ✓ Make sure the entrance hole is at the bottom of the box
- ✓ Install the box as high as possible, ideally at least 4 metres above the ground.
- ✓ Place the box where it gets sun for part of the day. South, south-east or south-west facing positions are usually best.
- ✓ Avoid fully shaded locations, especially if you want the box to be suitable for summer roosting or maternity use.
- ✓ Avoid bright artificial lighting (such as street lights, security lights and porch lights)
- ✓ Avoid placing the box where branches, wires or other obstacles block the entrance and ensure a clear flight path to and from the box.
- ✓ Keep the area immediately below the box clear, so bats can land and crawl up into the box if needed.

On buildings

- ✓ Place the boxes high up by the eaves on a building, which can also help shelter the box from the weather.
- ✓ Avoid placing directly above windows, doors and public walkways

On trees

- ✓ Use headless or domed nails not fully hammered home to allow tree growth.
- ✓ Check the fixing regularly to make sure the box remains secure.
- ✓ Boxes on trees may need to be adjusted or rehung over time as the tree grows.

Best Practice

- 💡 Put up 2-3 boxes in different locations, such as on different sides of a building. This gives bats a choice of warmer and cooler roosting spots, so they can move between boxes as the seasons change
- 💡 Install where bats are known to feed and navigate (close to hedges and tree lines where there is a water source) to increase chances of the box being used

Maintenance

Many bat boxes are designed with an open bottom, so droppings can fall out naturally. Because bats are easily disturbed and are fully protected by UK law, once a box has been used by bats, it must not be opened, moved or disturbed unless this is done by someone with the appropriate licence. This applies throughout the year, even when bats are not currently present.

Bats can take time to discover and investigate new roosting sites, so it may be months or even years before a bat box is occupied.