



Cubby house

Photography: Vantuan; Dieter Mylius; styling: Anne-Maree Unwin; diagrams: Tech View Studio

Your kids will love this sturdy playhouse

While one of the greatest joys of childhood used to be scrounging a few offcuts of wood and other bits and pieces to build a cubby, these days it is not so easy. Here's a terrific cubby on poles, complete with swing and slide, which will delight the smaller members of your family and give them a place of their own.

Step 1 Drive a number of pegs into the ground to mark position of posts (see diagram). The four cubby posts (A1) form a square, two verandah posts (A2) support opposite verandah corners and one swing post (A3) holds up the other verandah corner. Check that set out is square. Dig 500mm deep holes for the posts. If holes are deeper than 500mm, add 300mm to post dimensions. To avoid bracing separate swing post, set it 1000mm into ground. Temporarily brace all posts vertically.

Step 2 Mark the 1000mm floor height on one post. Use a water level to transfer the mark to the other posts. Number each post, remove, then measure 140mm down from mark. Cut 45mm deep housing at each of these points, put posts back in their respective holes, align the housings and brace them vertically. Add a bag of concrete mix (two for the separate swing post) to each hole to set them in place. Leave overnight.

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Step 3 Bolt one of cubby beams (B) into housings across back of cubby, then add two verandah beams (C) into housings either side of the verandah. Check for level, then bolt enclosing beams (D, E, F) to face of posts so that perimeter is enclosed by beams. Secure end of cross beam (E) to verandah beam with three bridge spikes. Finally add remaining cubby and verandah beams (B, C) equally spaced inside the framework using joist hangers.

Step 4 Before fitting decking, use timber offcuts as nailing blocks where decking butts against posts. Cut decking (G) to fit framing and

around posts. Depending on spacing, one or two may need ripping down to suit width. Nail in place.

Step 5 Nail wall plates (H) to studs (I). On front wall with door and window set centre stud to leave a 640mm space for window frame. Nail together window frame (J, K) and nail into wall frame 400mm from top of frame. Finish wall frame with door head (L) located 300mm from the top of frame. On the slippery dip wall also leave a 575mm opening and install a door head 400mm from top of frame. Install all the frames between posts of cubby section, flush with inside edge. Cut off any projecting post sections.

Step 6 Cut the top chords (M) of the roof trusses with a 22.5° angle at each end. Nail together at the top and lay the assembly over the bottom chord (N), which has a final length of 1510mm. The top chord overhangs are equal. It helps to place a block under the top joint. Mark the acute cutting angles on the bottom chord and cut. Nail together, then add a king post (O) to support the ridge. Reinforce the joints with nail plates, then skew-nail to top of wall frames.

Step 7 Prepare and nail the roof battens (P) to the trusses 70mm from top and bottom.

Step 8 Cut V joint weatherboards (Q) to suit the various wall panels. Save offcuts to fit around window and door openings.

Step 9 Cut roofing (R) to leave a small gap at top. Overlap sheets; position slightly up from roof frame ends so they will be covered by fascias. Add capping (S). Nail fascia boards (U) to ends of roof frame, then cut 22.5° angles on barge boards (T).

Step 10 Cut verandah posts to finish 800mm above deck. Add railing by cutting top, bottom and side channels (V) before fitting lattice (W). Space bottom channel 125mm from deck, using block offcuts. Drill 10mm drainage holes in channel.

Step 11 Make a ladder by screwing rungs (X1) spaced 250mm apart to rails (X2). Screw to decking if desired.

Step 12 Cut swing posts to 2.4m to fit swing beam (Y), house ends into posts and secure with long screws and nail plates. Drill through and fix purpose made anchors for swing ropes and the climbing rope to clear by 400mm.

Step 13 Use decking or similar for trim (Z) around door and window openings.

Step 14 Add slippery dip to side door, holding in place by screwing from underside of cubby. Clear all obstructions around swing and slippery dip and provide a soft landing area. Add a few handles near slippery dip and ladder. Round and sand all sharp edges.

Large handles make it easy for kids to climb onto the verandah.



WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Item	Part	Size	Material	Item	Part	Size	Material
A1	Cubby posts (4)	90 x 90 x 3000mm	Treated pine	M	Top chords (4)	90 x 45 x 960mm	Treated pine
A2	Verandah posts (2)	90 x 90 x 2400mm	Treated pine	N	Bottom chords (2)	90 x 45 x 1510mm	Treated pine
A3	Swing posts (2)	90 x 90 x 3600mm	Treated pine	O	King posts (2)	90 x 45 x 230mm	Treated pine
B	Cubby beams (3)	140 x 45 x 1500mm	Treated pine	P	Battens (4)	70 x 35 x 1460mm	Treated pine
C	Verandah beams (3)	140 x 45 x 2225mm	Treated pine	Q	Weatherboards (total)	140 x 19 x 75m	Treated pine
D	End beam	140 x 45 x 2400mm	Treated pine	R	Roofing (4)	1110 x 890mm	Ripple iron
E	Cross beam	140 x 45 x 1410mm	Treated pine	S	Capping	1500mm	Galvanised steel
F	Short beam	140 x 45 x 990mm	Treated pine	T	Barge (4)	140 x 19 x 1030mm	Treated pine
G1	Floor (long – 17)	90 x 22 x 2400mm	Treated decking	U	Fascia (2)	140 x 19 x 1500mm	Treated pine
G2	Floor (short – 9)	90 x 22 x 990mm	Treated decking	V	Lattice channel (total)	90 x 45mm x 12m	Treated pine
H	Wall plates (8)	70 x 35 x 1320mm	Treated pine	W	Lattice (2 panels)	2400 x 1200mm	Treated pine
I	Wall studs (12)	70 x 35 x 1405mm	Treated pine	X1	Ladder rails (2)	70 x 45 x 1300mm	Treated pine
J	Window sill/head (2)	70 x 35 x 640mm	Treated pine	X2	Ladder rails (4)	70 x 35 x 490mm	Treated pine
K	Window stiles (2)	70 x 35 x 350mm	Treated pine	Y	Swing beam	90 x 90 x 1900mm	Treated pine
L	Door heads (2)	70 x 35 x 575mm	Treated pine	Z	Trim (total)	90 x 19 x 8m	Treated pine

Check all measurements against project as you build. You will also need nine bags concrete mix; 14 x 120mm and 12 x 150mm by 10mm diam galvanised cuphead bolts, washers and nuts; three 150mm bridge spikes, six 45 x 90mm joist hangers, galvanised spiral decking nails, assorted galvanised nail plates, swing and climbing rope with fittings, fibreglass slippery dip and handles. Use only galvanised fixings.

