



## Ts Your Dog Saying "Roof, R

You've got a roof over your head to protect you from the elements. Protect your four-legged family member, too, with this simple-to-build house. It'll give him shade on sunny days and a welcome shelter on rainy ones. And you can even decorate it to suit his unique personality!

These basic plans are designed for larger dogs, but can easily be adjusted to fit small and medium sized dogs as well, by subtracting a uniform number of inches from all the components.

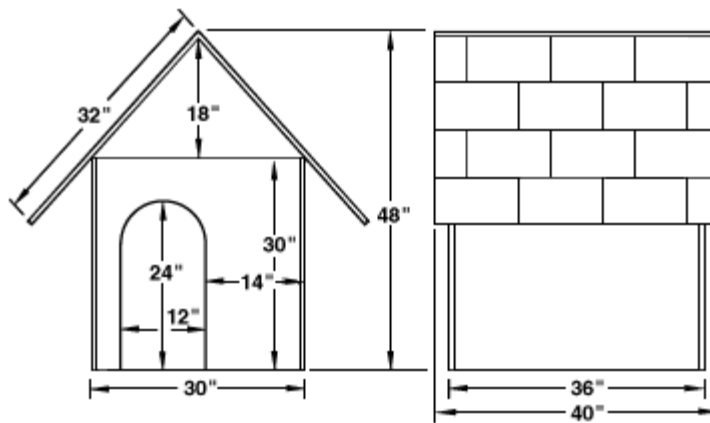
### What You'll Need

Tools for this project:

- Jigsaw
- Hammer
- Carpenter's Square
- Paintbrushes

Materials:

- 3/4" Exterior Plywood Grade B-C
- floor: 28 1/2" x 34 1/2" to fit interior or
- 30" x 38" to fit flush with the exterior one roof piece: 32" x 40"
- second roof piece: 32 3/4" x 40"
- two side pieces: 36" x 30" with 45° bevel at top two end pieces: 30" x 48" plus 18" peak (90°)
- One-By-Two or One-By-Three Lumber:
- 4 pieces cut to 48" long (to trim the corners) Standard Roofing Shingles
- Standard Aluminum Ridge Cover: cut to 40" long
- Waterproof Construction Glue
- Nails: 4d galvanized finishing nails for general building, and 2d galvanized finishing nails for trim
- Nail Setter
- Wood Putty
- Sandpaper
- Exterior Paint
- Pre-Cut Wood Letters that spell your dog's name, if desired



## Getting Started

After rounding up the materials, your first task is cutting the plywood to size. Start by cutting the floor to fit either the interior or exterior dimensions -- which measurement you use is entirely up to your personal taste. Next, cut the sides, making sure to put a 45° bevel at the top so the sides will join smoothly with the roof.

When you get to the front and back of the house, include a 90° angled peak at the top. To do this, draw a vertical line from the top center of each piece (at the 15 inch point), and extend it upward 18 inches. Then draw a 45° angle from the top of that line to the upper right and left corners of the pieces, using the carpenter's square. That's all there is to it. Cut out the front and back. On the front, you'll want to put a door that's at least 12" high by 23" wide to accommodate most large dogs.

Now, it's time to cut out the roof. You'll notice that one piece of plywood is supposed to be just 3/4" wider than the other piece. Why? To allow for a slight overlap where the two pieces join at the top. Otherwise, your pooch will be stuck with a leaky roof.

By the way: you must use 3/4" plywood for the roof -- even if you decide to use waferboard, lighter plywood, or some other less-expensive material on the rest of the house. Because the fact is, lighter materials just can't hold up across a span this size.

When you've finished cutting the roof, turn off your saw and pat yourself on the back (in that order). Because you've just completed the most difficult part of the job. Good work!

## Some Assembly Required

Now comes the fun part: watching the house take shape. First, lay out the floor piece so that the nicer-looking side is face-up. Place the front and back walls in their proper positions in relation to the floor, and glue and nail them into place. Do the same with the sides, gluing and nailing them into place at the floor and at the edges. The nails so far have been 4d galvanized. Using the hammer and the nail setter, sink all the nails.

At each of the four corners, nail the corner trim to cover the exposed ends of the plywood. Use the 2d galvanized nails, and sink them using the nail setter. Putty over the sunken nails. Then, glue and nail the two roof pieces to the rest of the structure

and to each other, so that they overlap properly the top. Use sandpaper to smooth out the exposed edges and prevent your pup from encountering splinters.

And there you have it: one dog house, almost fully built. And all ready to get dressed up for your dog.

### **Doghouse Decorating**

This is the part where you can really get creative. And if you don't think of yourself as the creative type, don't worry. The cold, wet nose of canine inspiration is close by. All you have to do is get in touch with it.

Let's start with the paint color. Which one (or two or three) is right for your dog? If he's a lively pup, maybe bright colors are best. For a more sedate canine, you might want something subdued.

You could also consider the things he likes to do -- like chasing frisbees, or chewing bones -- and possibly apply suitable representations onto his house, sawn from scraps of lumber, then glued and nailed.

Or think about his name, and the visual images it suggests. If it's Tiger, for instance (to cite a favorite member of the Brady Bunch), maybe the house should be tiger-striped or painted in a leafy jungle pattern.

His breed could give you ideas for decorating. A dalmation's signature spots might splash onto his home. Or maybe there's a theme that's appropriate to him. How about an Old Western Saloon, or a Barn, or a Surfboard Shop, or a Hot Dog Stand?

If you want, you can even spell out his name by applying pre-cut wooden letters available from your local home improvement center.

But whatever you do, keep these three things in mind:

- (1) make sure you don't apply things to the house that he would be likely to chew on;
- (2) Don't decorate the roof (it's not done yet); and
- (3) Remember your main goal: to reflect your dog's personal style. Don't worry about doing anything "wrong" -- dogs are color blind, remember? So just have fun. He'll love it no matter what!

### **Top It Off**

You've decorated the house, and it's looking sharp. Just one thing's missing: the rest of the roof.

So grab the roofing shingles (which are available in colors to complement the paint job you've given the house), and lay an upside-down row flush with the bottom edge along one side of the roof. Cover the first row with a right-side-up row, and proceed in staggered rows to the top. Do the same thing on the other side of the roof. Then, top the roof with the aluminum ridge cover. And that's it.

Congratulations! You've built a new doghouse. And it probably cost you far less than anything comparable at your local pet shop.

Best of all, you've done something special for your dog: you've given him a home that's as unique as he is.