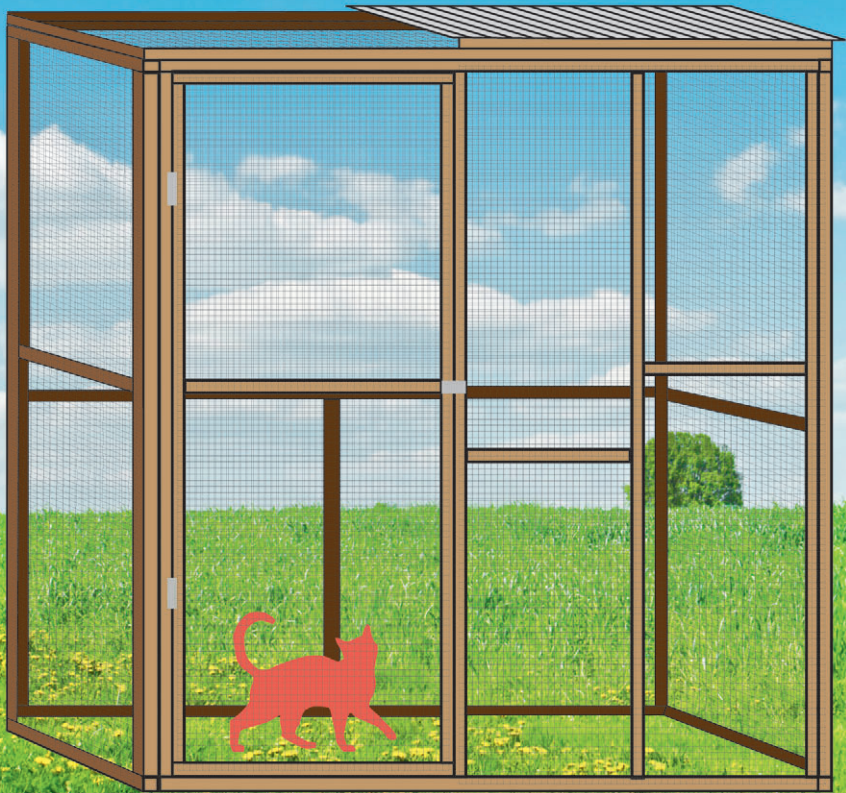
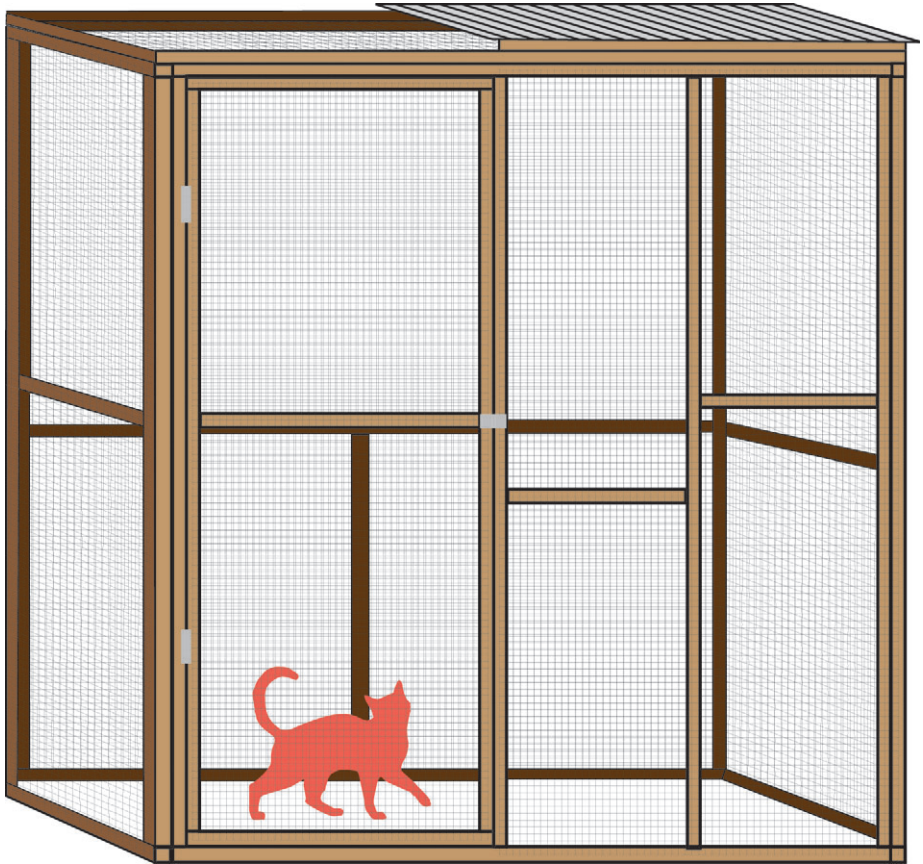


Build Your Own Cat Enclosure

A step-by-step guide





Disclaimer:

Results may vary and don't have to be perfect. While you enjoy creating a safe outdoor space for your feline friend please keep yourself safe by using personal protective equipment such as gloves, safety glasses and hearing protection and following the safety instructions that come with your tools.

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Keeping your cat at home doesn't mean it can't enjoy the benefits of being outdoors. A cat enclosure will give your cat the opportunity to enjoy the sounds and smells of the outdoors, while keeping them safe from harm, protecting local wildlife from predation and avoiding potential conflict with your neighbours caused by roaming cats.

Most cats adjust well to living indoors with access to an outdoor enclosure; however, if your cat is older and used to going outside, remember that transitioning your cat indoors is a gradual process. Providing access to an outdoor enclosure will make the transition easier for these cats and reduce their risk of acquiring an injury or disease. If you would like to know more about how you can transition your cat to living happy at home visit www.tassiecat.com.

This brochure provides instructions on how to build a basic cat enclosure that you can adjust to your requirements. The cat enclosure has been designed by the Ulverstone Men's Shed for people with basic DIY skills and can be moved and disassembled – ideal if you are renting. If you are less comfortable around tools, you can hire the Ulverstone Men's Shed or a local builder to build the cat enclosure for you.



If you would like to know more about how you can transition your cat to living happy at home visit:

www.tassiecat.com



Important considerations before construction

Mesh size: A maximum mesh size of 50 x 50 mm is recommended for cat enclosures to prevent escape. Young kittens should not be left in the enclosure unsupervised as they might try to squeeze through the mesh and get stuck.

Access to shelter: Cats need to have access to both sunny and shady areas, as well as shelter from the rain. It is ideal to have the enclosure connected to your home, allowing the cat access to shelter. However, if you have a free-standing enclosure you will need to add a solid roof and/or provide a weatherproof sleeping area for your cat.

Basic needs: If your enclosure is free-standing and your cat is unable to access their basic needs in the house, you will also need to provide a litter tray, water and food bowls, and some toys in the enclosure.

CAUTION

Do not use CCA treated pine (treated with copper chrome arsenate) to build your enclosure as this may be toxic to cats. Many timber suppliers in Tasmania stock an alternative treated pine that is arsenic free. Look for pine that has been treated using Tan-E or ACQ. You can also use any other timber suitable for external construction.



Instructions for a basic free-standing cat enclosure

(1.8 metres high x 1.8 metres long x 90 cm wide)

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Materials if not using a solid roof

Timber used is 70 x 35 mm*

- A. 1800 mm – 6x
- B. 1730 mm – 11x
- C. 1640 mm – 2x
- D. 900 mm – 6x
- E. 830 mm – 3x
- F. 760 mm – 1x
- G. 585 mm – 2x
- H. 530 mm – 2x
- I. 515 mm – 1x
- J. 50mm galvanised phillips head timber screws (and associated drill and screwdriver bits) to construct the panels – 76x.
- K. 90mm galvanised phillips head timber screws (and associated drill and screwdriver bits) to attach the panels together – 30x.
- L. Staples or staple nails
- M. Mesh roll** square cage mesh 90 cm high x 14 m long
- N. Galvanised door hinges – 2x
- O. Galvanised pad bolt – 1x

* **Timber:** For a small fee, some hardware stores might be able to cut the timber for you to the required lengths .

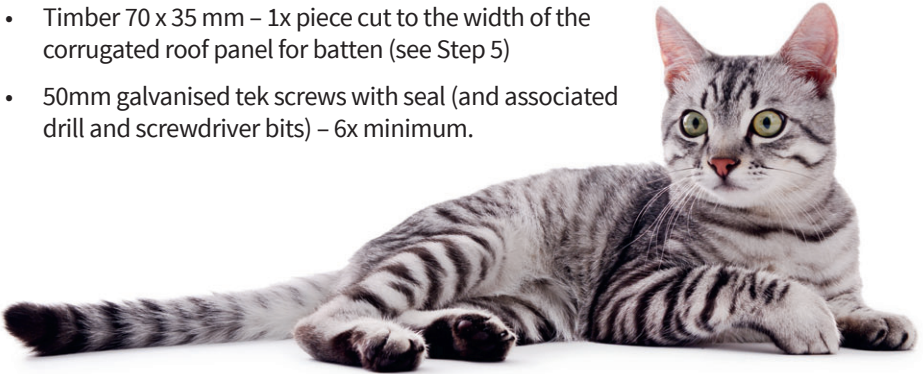
The total meterage required is 45 linear metres or 9 x 5400 mm lengths.

****Mesh:** There is a wide variety of suitable meshes available in hardware stores. This design uses 25 x 25 mm square cage mesh, which can be substituted for mesh of a different size, chicken wire or netting. Specific cat netting is available in Australia, but any strong, UV-stable and rot resistant commercial netting can be used.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Additional materials if using a solid roof

- 1 m corrugated roof panel
- Timber 70 x 35 mm – 1x piece cut to the width of the corrugated roof panel for batten (see Step 5)
- 50mm galvanised tek screws with seal (and associated drill and screwdriver bits) – 6x minimum.



Tools required



Drill & drill/screwdriver bits



Hammer or staple gun



Saw – if timber is not pre-cut



Tape measure



Eye protection



Hearing protection – if using a drop saw

STEP 1

Front Panel

What you need:

1800 mm **(A)** x 2

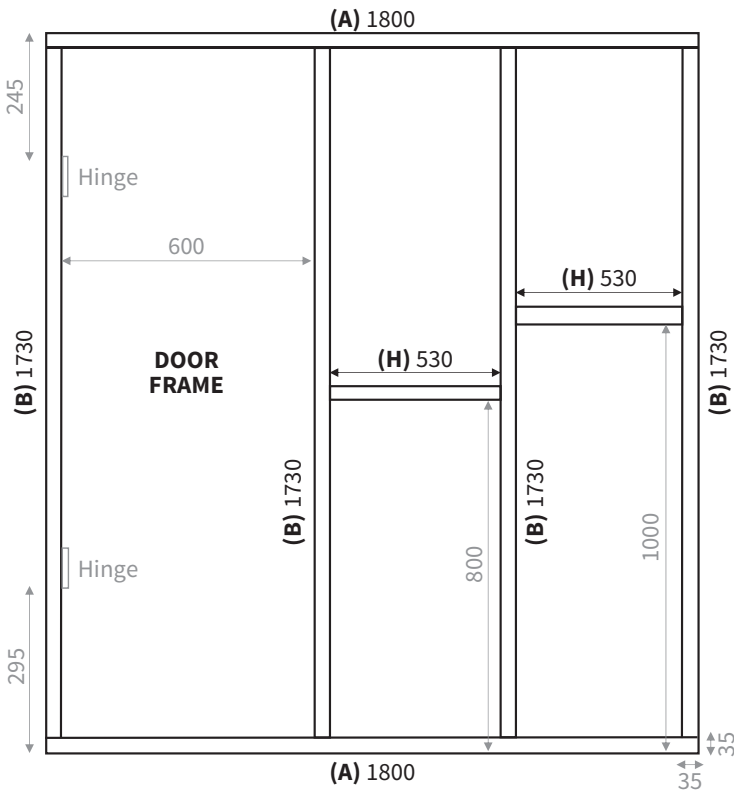
1730 mm **(B)** x 4

530 mm **(H)** x 2

Screws **(J)** x 24

On a flat surface arrange the timber into the front panel design as shown in **Image 1**. Position the timber ensuring the 35 mm side faces upwards. Pre-drill two holes per connection, evenly spaced. Insert a screw **(J)** into each hole.

Image 1. Front Panel – 1800 mm x 1800 mm



STEP 2

Side Panels (build two)

What you need for two side panels:

1730 mm **(B)** x 4

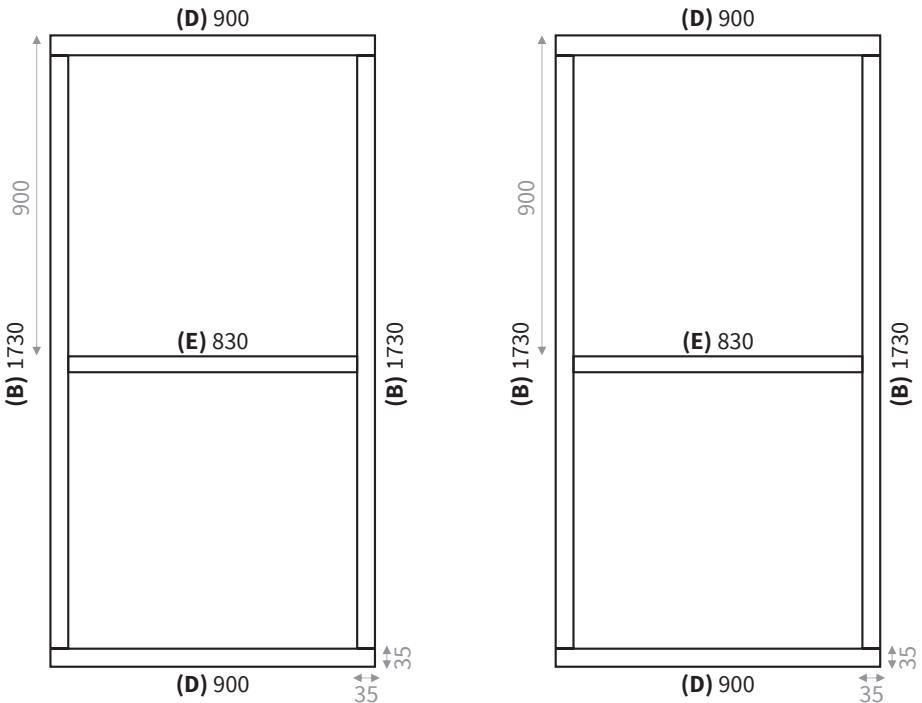
900 mm **(D)** x 4

830 mm **(E)** x 2

Screws **(J)** x 24 total (12 each panel)

On a flat surface arrange the timber into the side panel design as shown in **Image 2**. Position the timber ensuring the 35 mm side faces upwards. Pre-drill two holes per connection, evenly spaced. Insert a screw **(J)** into each hole.

Image 2. Side Panels (2x) – 1800 mm x 900 mm



STEP 3

Back Panel

What you need:

1800 mm **(A)** x 2

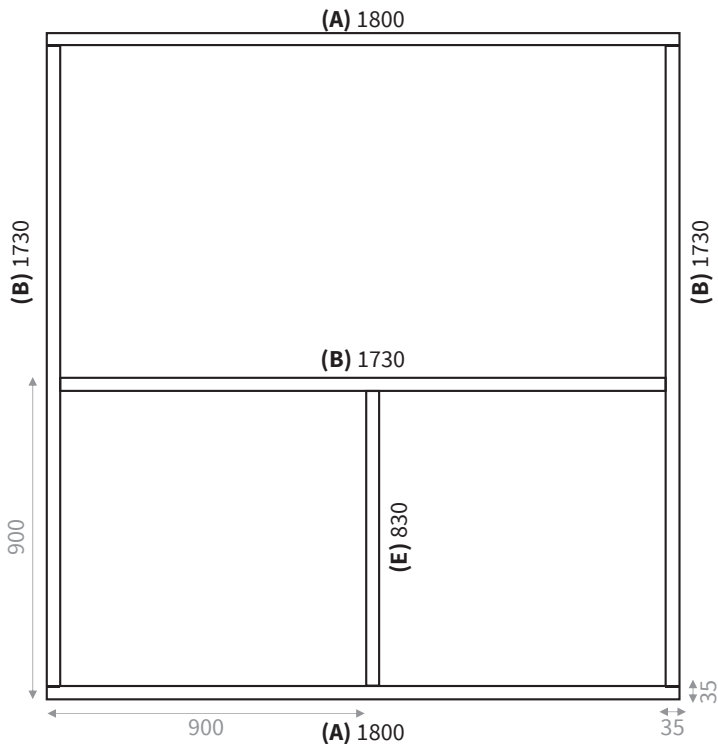
1730 mm **(B)** x 3

830 mm **(E)** x 1

Screws **(J)** x 16

On a flat surface arrange the timber into the back panel design as shown in **Image 3**. Position the timber ensuring the 35 mm side faces upwards. Pre-drill two holes per connection, evenly spaced. Insert a screw **(J)** into each hole.

Image 3. Back Panel – 1800 mm x 1800 mm



STEP 4

Door

What you need:

585 mm **(G)** x 2

1640 mm **(C)** x 2

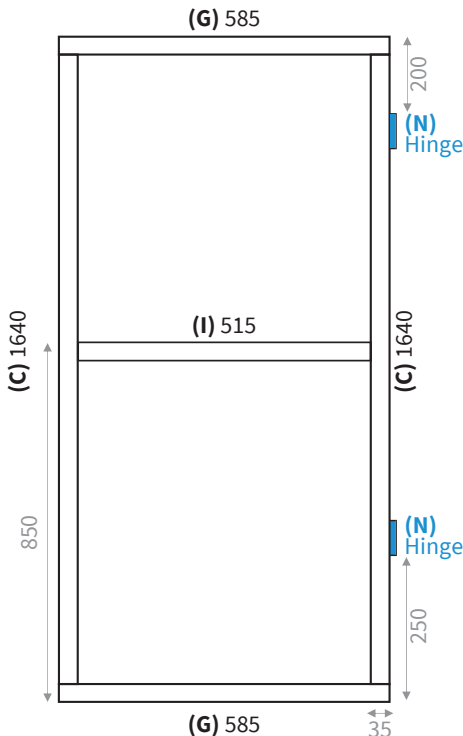
515 mm **(I)** x 1

Screws **(J)** x 12

Galvanised door hinges **(N)** x 2

Galvanised pad bolt **(O)** x 1

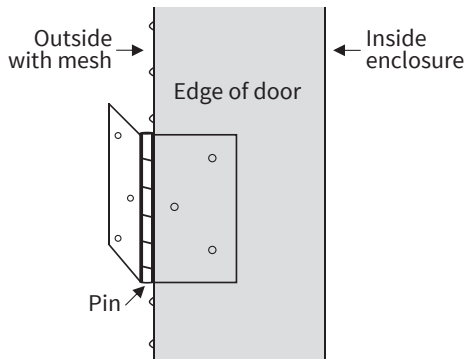
Image 4. Door – 585 mm x 1710 mm



On a flat surface arrange the timber into the door design as shown in **Image 4**. Position the timber ensuring the 35 mm side faces upwards. Pre-drill two holes per connection, evenly spaced. Insert a screw **(J)** into each hole.

Lay the door into the frame to make sure it fits well. Remove the door and position the hinges **(N)** as in **Image 5**. The door must swing outwards, so the pin of the hinge must be positioned on the outside of the enclosure. Place the top of the upper hinge 200 mm from the top of the door and screw into place. Place the bottom of the lower hinge 250 mm from the bottom of the door and screw into place. Now screw the hinge into the frame. It is always easier to attach the top hinge first. Before you have fitted all the screws, try opening and closing the door. If it swings smoothly and easily, attach the remaining screws. Once the door is securely in position, you can attach the pad bolt at a height convenient for you **(O)**.

Image 5. Hinge position



STEP 5

Roof

What you need:

1800 mm **(A)** x 2

900 mm **(D)** x 2

760 mm **(F)** x 1

Screws **(K)** x 12

Optional if using solid roof (in addition to the above):

Timber 70 x 35 mm. One piece cut to the width of the solid roof panel for batten (see instructions)

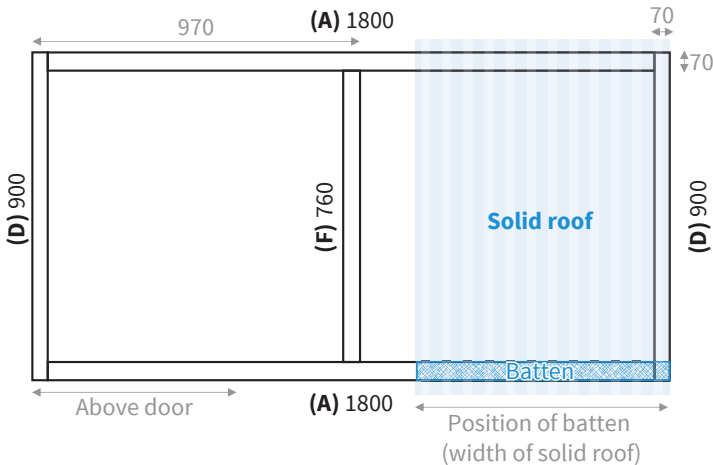
Galvanised metal tek screws with seal – x 6 (minimum, can use more if you like)

1 m corrugated roof panel

On a flat surface arrange the timber into the roof panel design as shown in **Image 6**. Position the timber ensuring the **70 mm** side faces upwards. Pre-drill two holes per connection, evenly spaced. Insert a screw **(K)** into each hole.

If using a solid roof panel the corrugations need to run from the front to the back of the enclosure to make sure water drains away to the back of the enclosure and not to the middle. Measure the width of the solid roof. Cut the 70 x 35 mm piece of timber, for the batten, to the same length. On the ground, add the mesh (mesh to go on outside of enclosure, see Step 6) and position the roof panel mesh side up. Pre-drill and screw **(J)** the batten to the top of the roof panel as shown in **Image 6 & 8**. This will lift one side of the solid roof and will allow water to drain away. You can attach the solid roof using the tek screws along the front, back and side of the roof. Make sure the roof panel has a 50 mm overhang on the front and back.

Image 6. Roof Panel – 1940 mm x 900 mm



STEP 6

Mesh

What you need:

Staples or staple nails (L)

Mesh (M)

Most commercial mesh has a width of 900 mm. This is the same width as the side panels and roof panel.

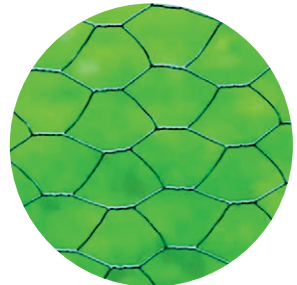
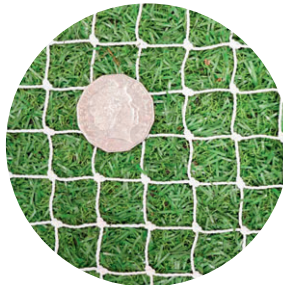
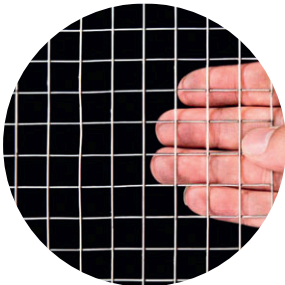
The mesh will be on the outside of the enclosure.

It can be rolled out across the panels, cut to size, and stapled to the the frame. The front (do door separately) and back panels are wider and will require two sections of mesh. The mesh can be rolled out along the bottom half of the panel, carefully cut to size, and stapled to the frame. Repeat this for the top half of the panel.

The mesh will be wider than the door and will have to be carefully cut to size.

⚠ CAUTION: Watch out for any sharp edges if you cut the mesh to size – especially if using chicken wire. The mesh will be on the outside of the enclosure, but you want to make sure your cat can't injure themselves on any sharp edges.

Examples of 25 mm mesh and netting



STEP 7

Assembly

You can now put all the panels together. This will be easiest with two people. Make sure the mesh is on the outside of all the panels. The front and back panels will fit between the side panels as shown in the top view (**Image 7**). Pre-drill and screw (**K**) the panels together 100 mm from the top, 100 mm from the bottom, and just above or below the middle bar.

You can now attach the roof. Align the roof so the solid roof is on the opposite end to the door and the water drains to the back (**Image 8**). Pre-drill and screw (**K**) the roof to the enclosure along the front and back panels, 100 mm from the corners and one near the middle.

EASY REASSEMBLY: If you will need to take the cat enclosure apart multiple times, it would be better to use bolts to put the panels together. Frequent unscrewing will widen the screw holes and reduce the strength of the connections. Bolts will allow you to just unscrew the nut when you need to take the enclosure apart. Additionally, it may be useful to mark each panel top and bottom with the corresponding joining panel top and bottom to make reassembly easier (**Image 9**).

ADDING SHELVES: You can add shelves to the cat enclosure by placing a board across the cross bars of the front and back panel. Alternatively, you can add supporting horizontal beams between the timbers that will allow you to add boards at different heights.

Image 7. Assembled enclosure, top view

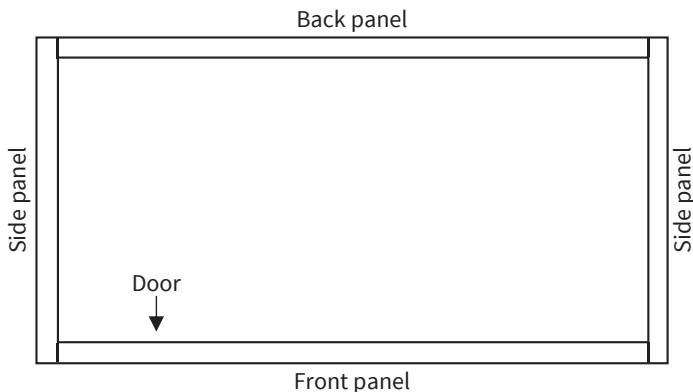


Image 8. Assembled enclosure with roof

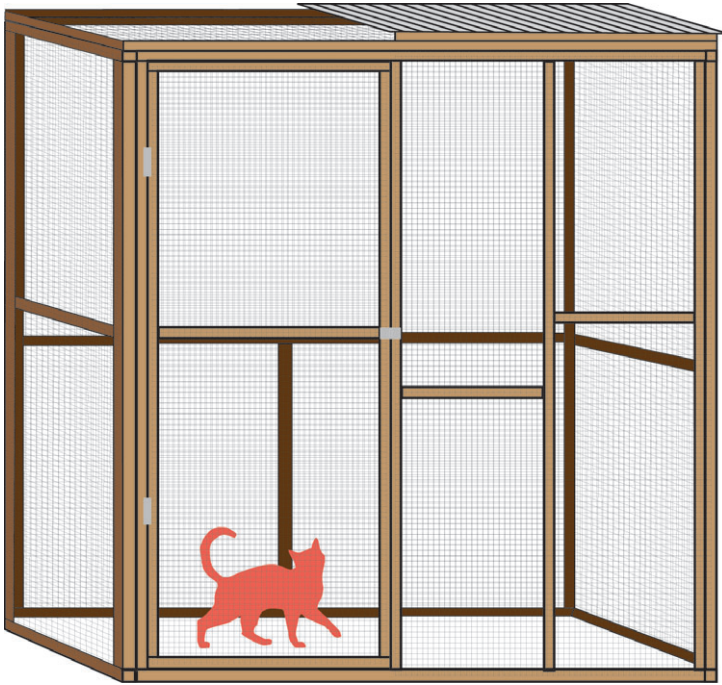
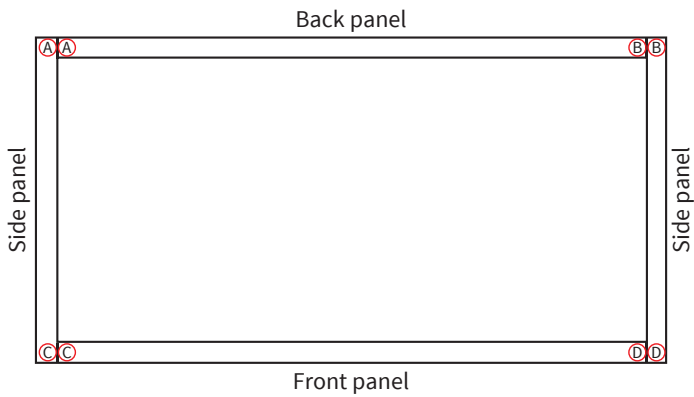


Image 9. Labelling of panel joints for easy reassembly





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Credits:

TassieCat is a state-wide initiative to promote and facilitate responsible cat ownership and management in Tasmania.

The project is supported by Cradle Coast Authority NRM, NRM North and Ten Lives through funding from the Tasmanian Government.

