

FULLER'S FERAL FEEDER

A new solution for feeding and housing feral cats.



We graciously give you these plans and permission to construct these feeders using our drawings and ideas. We welcome any and all comments, questions, and/or ideas in improving this feeding station concept. Please address your comments via e-mail to Brucenmuf@msn.com

If you would like to contribute financially to the feral cat population cause, please send your money to:

Merrimac River Feline Rescue Society
Attn. Feral Committee
P.O. Box 1176
Newburyport, MA 01950
(978) 462-0760
www.mrfrs.org

Whether you are donating time, money, or materials to building these units, you are contributing to the reduction and well being of homeless cats — FOR THIS WE THANK YOU! Muf and Bruce Fuller

FULLER'S FERAL FEEDING STATIONS

A Brief Background

It was our animal communication experience that first brought us to the Merrimac River Feline Rescue Society. As we learned more about this dynamic organization, we were introduced into and became more familiar with the plight of the feral cats. Trap, neuter and release (TNR) and "No Kill" are phrases that are not new to this organization. We quickly volunteered to help feed the many feral cats that inhabit the areas in and around Newburyport. The restaurants and fishing boats were a strong draw that soon developed into large uncontrolled colonies of ferals.

It bothered us to find the feeding stations to be smelly and soiled, mostly from skunks and slugs. The units were placed directly on the ground which made them hard to clean and service also. We were not completely discouraged. There had to be a better way to feed our homeless, outdoor friends. Enter the Divas of design and the Angels of construction (my wife and I are unskilled in these areas) and together we came up with the idea, design, and the know-how to fabricate the new feeding stations.

Current Situation

What started out as a plan to construct three of these units for our own MRFRS organization has mushroomed into a national interest thanks to a video of the stations that was shown at a "No Kill" conference. We were pressured into drawing up a set of plans for others to use. Mailing became expensive and time consuming, so we, with the help of others, adapted the plans to be downloadable from the MRFRS website.

The Basic Plan

The whole idea of our plan is simplistic and economical. We have tried to choose materials that are readily available at most lumber yards. The need for tools has been kept to a bare minimum. Three units was our choice due to the economy of time spent, besides one unit is not enough no matter how small your group is. We have found that two people can build these stations easily in a day. Painting time is determined by the number of coats. We encourage those more skilled than ourselves to modify or adapt changes as they see fit. Any and all feedback is encouraged and gratefully accepted. E-mail us at brucenmuf@msn.com.

Specifics of the Design

1. We have used regular asphalt shingles for 3 reasons — longevity, appearance, and mostly because they add weight to the unit. The extra weight adds stability in windy areas, as well as discouraging outsiders from moving or stealing the feeder.
2. We have tried linoleum and other floor coverings on the main shelf but have found that they do not hold up well in the elements. Three or four coats of polyurethane based paint seems to be the best answer, and very easy to keep clean.
3. Paint — Any good exterior paint will suffice. We like polyurethane base, which is harder for brush cleanup and needs paint thinner, but again, we are looking for durability — these babies are out year round. We've found it much easier to paint all the wood before you cut the pieces. The number of coats depends on your time and energy, but should be at least two.

In selecting the color for the finished unit, keep in mind the color of the surroundings where you intend to place your unit. If it's in a woodsy setting, consider green or brown. We chose gray for our first units simply because they were placed at a Coast Guard station.

TOOLS

Cordless Hand Drill - Two would make the job go easier, one using a 1/8" drill bit, and the other with a Phillips head screw bit.

Circular Saw or Table Saw - Having both would make things faster and easier.

Tape Measure - 10' or more.

Straight Edge - Or a straight board, for laying out lines.

T-Square

Pencils - They wear down quickly on wood.

Utility Knife - Used for cutting carpet and roof shingles.

Kitchen Knife with Blade - 2-4" long for cutting insulation.

Staple Gun - With 1/2" staples.

Felt Marker - For marking carpets.

Paint - 2 gallons polyurethane exterior paint.

Brushes - Rollers and pans as necessary.

LUMBER

Quantity	Item
6	- 1" x 3" x 10'
3	- 2" x 4" x 10'
3	- 2" x 4" x 8'
3	- 5/8" x 4' x 8' sheets of plywood (actually is 1/2" thick)
1	- bundle of roof shingles
1	- outdoor carpet or runner (9' x 6' or 25' x 2') wraps around base for weather protection
1	- 9' x 36" hardwood floor protector, see-thru without knobs protruding
4	- sheets (24" x 96") of solid 1 1/2" insulation
1	- 4' x 10' piece aluminum bubble wrap insulation

HARDWARE

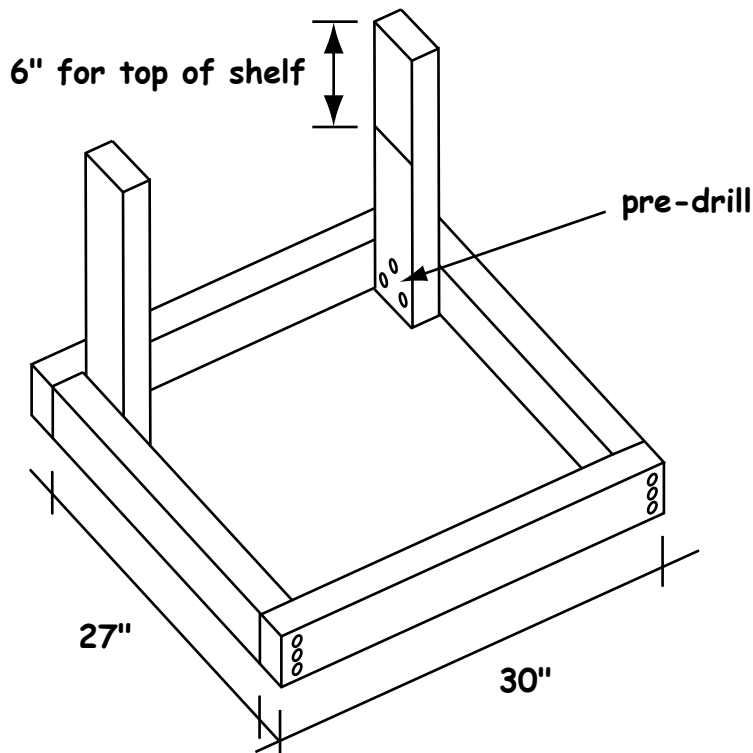
3	- 3" double hinges
3	- 2 1/2" hook-and-eyes
box	- 2 1/2" drywall screws
2	- sheets coarse sandpaper
1	- tube all-weather caulking
box	- 1 5/8" drywall screws
1 Lb	- 1/4" drywall screws
1 Lb	- 3" drywall screws
48	- 1/2" washers
1	- roll of duct tape

UNIT CONSTRUCTION

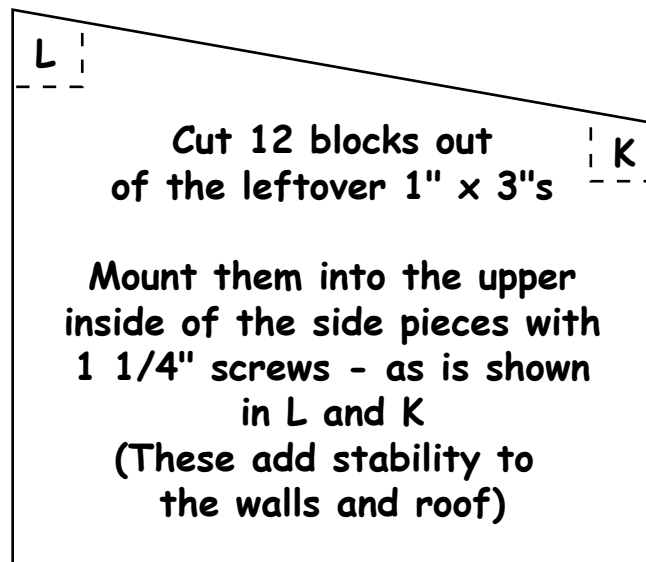
Pre-painting wood in the lengths that you bought it is a lot easier!

1. CUT WOOD

- A. Lay out and cut the three pieces of plywood as shown on □ □
□ pages A & B.
 - B. Cut each 2" x 4" x 10' into 2 - 27" pieces and 2 - 30" □
□ pieces, the rest is waste.
 - C. Cut each 2" x 4" x 8' into 4 equal 24" pieces.
 - D. Cut 2 of the 1" x 3" x 10' into 3 - 31" pieces and one 24" piece.
 - E. Cut one 1" x 3" x 10' into 4 - 24" pieces.
 - F. Cut remaining three 1" x 3" x 10' into 4 - 28" pieces. □
□ Left-over waste from 1" x 3" can be used to make 12 blocks.
2. Pre-drill the 30" pieces of 2" x 4" 3/4" in from the ends, 3 holes.
3. Assemble the base unit from the two 27" pieces as shown using □
twelve 2 1/2" screws. Hint: Assemble the base on flat surface □
against a wall to help keep the pieces square.
4. Pre-drill and screw the four 24" legs into the 27" sides of the □
base using the 2 1/2" wood screws — three per leg, for stability.



5. Turn the unit right-side-up and standing on its legs. Measure up 6" from the bottom and draw a line on the inside of all four legs. This is the top of the lower shelf. Attach 2 - 24" 1" x 3" pieces to the legs with 1 1/4" screws.
6. Turn the unit so that one of the 30" pieces is facing you. This will be the front.
7. Screw the lower shelf (24" x 24") onto the lower shelf brackets with 1 1/4" screws.
8. Place the floor (30" x 36" plywood) on the base — screw down with 1 5/8" screws, making sure the back is flush with the base and the 6" overhang is on the front. If the base unit is a little out of square, use this plywood floor to square up the base before screwing together. All edges should be as flush as possible.
9. Attach blocks to the side pieces as shown (L & K) with 1 1/4" screws.



10. Attach side, lining them up with the bottoms of the 2" x 4"s. Make sure that the blocks (L & K) are facing inward.
11. Now tip the unit onto its front side and attach the back piece (18" x 36"). NOTE: It's more important that the top of this piece lines up with the side pieces than it is the bottom being flush with the 2" x 4". Use 1 5/8" screws along the base and screws every 4". Screw into blocks (K) for stability.
12. Attach roof, screwing into blocks (L & K). If you are careful, you can use 1/4" screws and screw them directly into the sides.
13. Tip on back and caulk inside seams.

14. Place front facial (1" x 3" x 31") at the roof line of the unit and attach screwing into the (L) blocks with 1 5/8" screws.
15. On the front door (3" x 31") attach hinge but don't mount to unit yet.
16. Cut the hardwood floor protector into 4 1/2" x 22" strips. Decide at this point which way the door swings.
17. Lay strips on the inside (hinge side) of the door, overlapping by 1/2", alternating one on the top then one on the bottom. This allows some to swing in easier and others to swing out. Strips should be flush with the top of the door. Staple strips to door. Strips should drag on the floor; trim them if necessary.
18. Attach door to facial.
19. Attach screw hook to end of door and the eye to the outside of unit.
20. Cut shingles with utility knife to 31 1/2" alternating shingles so that the slots on the shingles do not line up with each other — six or seven shingles will cover the roof. Start at the back and staple on a shingle. Lay second shingle on top of this, make sure slots mismatch and staple down. Now layer and staple the rest of the shingles to the top. The last two layers will have to be trimmed to fit the size of the roof.
21. Now is a good time for another coat of paint.

WINTERIZING THE BOTTOM

1. Cut the 1 1/2" solid insulation into 12 pieces each 27" x 20 1/2".
2. Cut the aluminum bubblewrap into 2 - 10' strips — one 31" wide, the other 17" wide. Cut the 31" wide piece into 4 pieces of 31" X 31". Take one of these pieces and cut it in half. Now cut the 17" x 10' strip into 4 - 31" pieces. You will end up with:
 - □ 3 Pieces - 31" x 31"
 - □ 6 Pieces - 17" x 31"
3. Turn the feeder upside-down on its roof. Staple a piece of 31" x 31" to the underside of the floor or base; trim corners as necessary.
4. On the shorter side (20 1/2") of the solid foam piece, measure up 6" and cut a square opening 8" wide and 12" high. This is the door.

5. Decide which side you want your door on. We believe that it is safer to put your access door of the sleeping area on either the side or back of the unit. In the unlikely event that a large dog finds his way to the food, a cat in the lower unit won't have to escape through the dog's legs.

Predominant wind and weather direction, if known at the time of construction, should be a determining factor as to where you place the door.

6. Cut the carpet into a 10' x 21" strip. Stretch this around the legs and the solid insulation. Tighten and secure to the base of the legs with 2 1/2" screws with washers.
7. Cut out the part of the carpet where the lower opening is.
8. Return unit to its upright position. Take 4 of the 28" - 1" x 3"s and secure the upper part of the carpet to the legs.
9. Staple 4 1/2" plastic strips over the opening.
10. You might want to give the upper portion another coat of paint. An extra coat of paint now will save you from having to build a whole new station because it rotted in the weather.
11. Your unit is now finished, time to place an ad in the paper to look for some tenants!

ADDITIONAL TIPS AND HINTS

1. These units are not raccoon-proof. If you don't want to continually feed one, I suggest you trap it, and quietly relocate it to a safe and acceptable location.
2. If you have multiple feeders at the same location, let me suggest putting in a clip board with a comment sheet attached. That way information can be passed on from feeder to feeder. We have gone so far as to have pictures on the back of the clip board showing which cats habitually eat there and their names. Sheets are collected weekly and a general log is kept.
3. We have not found a successful way from keeping the water bowls from freezing — use a heavy plastic bowl that will not crack when ice forms.
4. Units are rotated on an annual basis for painting and general repair.
5. Most lumber yards will make one cut on each piece of plywood at no charge. This makes it easier to transport the lumber. We have indicated where to make this cut on diagrams A & B.

DIAGRAM "A"

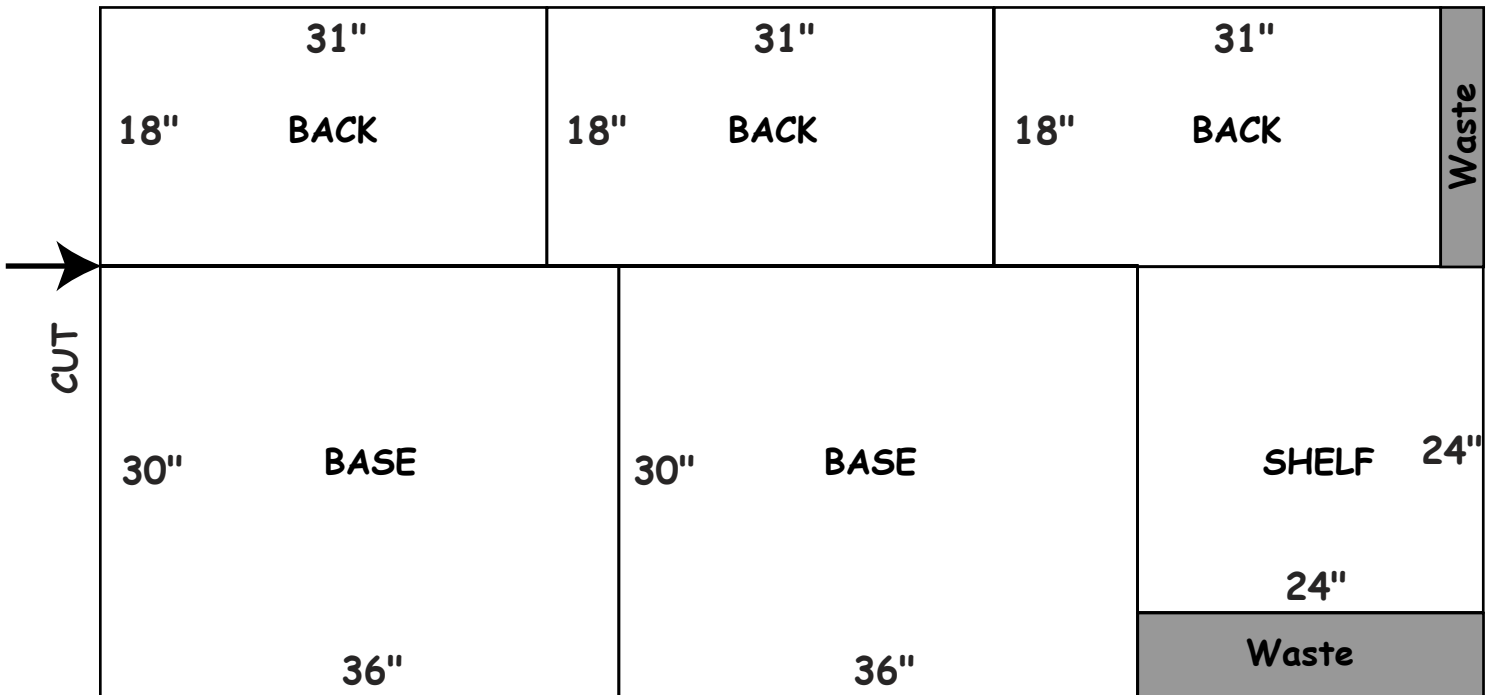
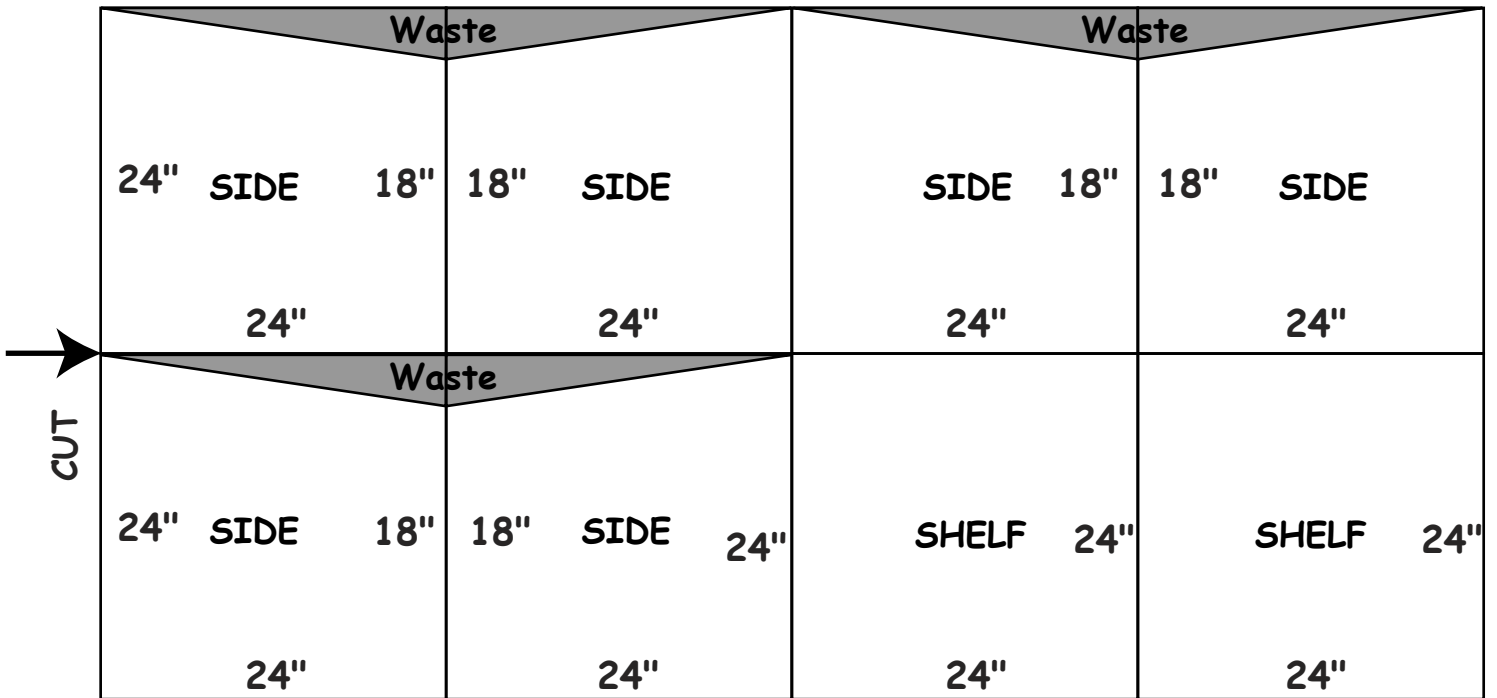
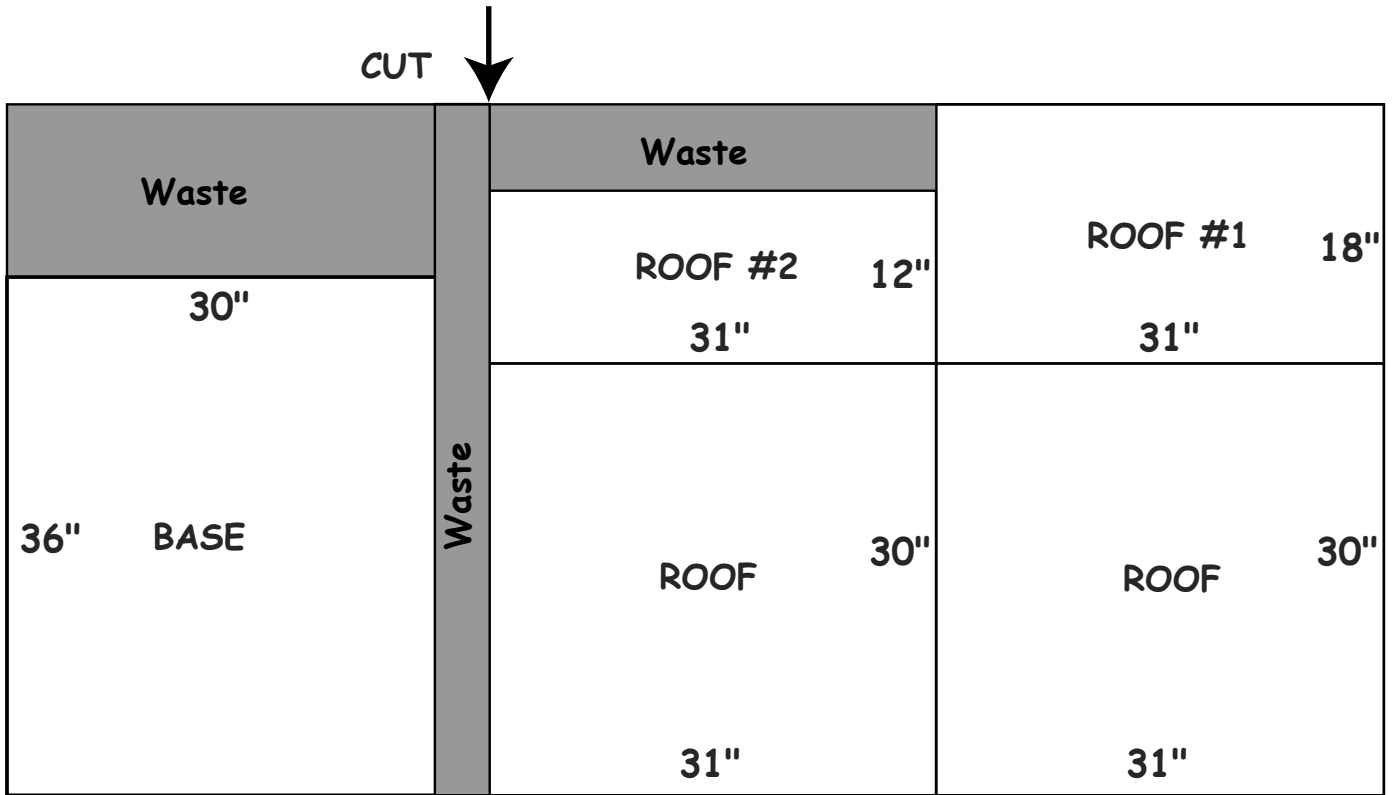


DIAGRAM "B"



BLOCKS
 Made out of 1" x 3"s
 Need a total of 12
 blocks this size

COMPLETED FEEDER

(Not to Scale)

