



Suggestions to make your birdhouse for outdoor use:

- First of all, you can just put that beauty outside and leave it alone!
 - However, these birdhouses are made out of pretty thin wood, so it may not last very long.
 - Admittedly, the 'weathered and aged' look is pretty vintage, so that might be cool !

- A good idea is to seal it as best you can.
 - I prefer using Gesso as the first coat to seal it first.
 - Gesso sinks into the wood, so your paint doesn't.
 - It makes the colors more vibrant in the long run, and helps protect the wood.
 - It dries fast so you can continue with your painting.
 - Feel free to hit it with a hair dryer for a couple of minutes if you are in a hurry to get it painted.
 - I have used a good base coat of white acrylic paint in the past. Although it doesn't seal like Gesso, it will help keep your colors from sinking in the wood.
 - You can use an outdoor acrylic paint as well.

- Next, it is a good idea to put a couple of small holes in the bottom on your birdhouse.
 - This helps water drain in case of blowing rain/snow that might get in it.
 - You don't want your nest/eggs/baby birds soggy.

- Another suggestion is to make a trap door with hinges on the bottom of your birdhouse so you can clean out the old nest after the brood is gone (and that will give 'drain cuts' too).
 - Some birds will clean it out themselves, but why not lend a hand?
 - And, just so you know, some birds will actually reuse another bird's nest if there is room and they can add stuff on top of it.
 - A good time to clean out a birdhouse is late summer or early fall.

- Do not add 'decorations' on the outside of an outdoor birdhouse.
 - You don't want birds pecking on anything that could be toxic.
 - It is best if you just use acrylic paint.
 - If you must spruce it up, use anything natural ... twigs, leaves, moss, etc.
 - Be sure you use nontoxic glue like Outdoor Mod Podge.



- Finally, you need to seal it with something that is nontoxic and doesn't yellow with age.
 - Some suggestions are :
 - Aleene's Sealer, gloss finish...it's a spray, which I prefer.
 - Don't spray it in the hole!
 - Krylon UV Resistant clear spray is also very good.
 - You should respray it every year after cleaning the birdhouse out.
 - There are several sealers out there from which to choose.
 - Just make sure it is nontoxic, UV Resistant, and will not yellow with age.

- Hang the birdhouse up high, and where it gets lots of sun in the winter.
 - ◇ Here is an aside:
 - I like to brush my dogs with **plastic** toothed brush and leave their fur IN THE BRUSH.
 - Leave the brush outside (we leave it on our deck near the bird feeders and secure it so it won't flop around).
 - The birds will come and pick, pick, pick that fur out of the brush for insulation for their nest!
 - They LOVE it...cat fur works too!!

 - ◇ *Do **not** use the fur if the animals have any topical flea or tick spray/dust on their fur.*