

Building Instructions

31" x 25" x 72" Squirrel Release Cage

This cage can be adapted into a smaller indoor cage or a larger release cage with adjustments on wire widths and cross pieces of wood. The only part that is critical is the ½ inch x 1 inch wire on the sides you put the doors if you plan to not frame in the doorway and the door with wood. If you do go with a larger cage then another large door near the bottom would be good in case of an emergency and you need to get in the cage.

OPOSSUMS—*This cage can also be adapted for opossums when turned on its side and doors hinged to open appropriately. A larger feeding door is recommended for better access at the lower end of the cage. Opossums would need a large hiding box.*



MATERIALS

Wire	18' 24" wide 1/2" x 1/2" welded wire mesh (hardware cloth)* 15' 30" wide 1/2" x 1" welded wire * (Only available at Lowes locally)
Wood	8 2" x 2" x 8" exterior boards (called 2x2 but are actually 1 1/2" x 1 1/2")* 1 10' x 31 1/2" board for Shelf*
Screws	1 Box 3" Screws (Can use Dry Wall Screws) - For Connecting Frame 1 Box 1" Screws—For Connecting Wire to Wood Frame
Washers	1 Box Washers Between 1/2" and 3/4" Wide
Clips	Wire Cage J Clips** or Hog Rings for Doors** (These come in large bags and we may have some you can use—Check with us before ordering)
Plastic Cage Door Liner	5 30" Sections (Some vendors call this Edge Protector)
Latch Springs	7

OPTIONAL	1/2" Staples You may prefer to use a staple gun just use a few screws during the wrapping of the wire to hold in place. The staples will need to be hammered in tight. 1 5x7 Tarp*** 4 Rubber Mini-Bungee Cords*** or Clips 1-2 Large Rubber Bungee Cords (Long enough to wrap around and secure cage to tree)
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*Available at Home Depot or Lowes

**Available at www.martinscages.com or www.bassequipment.com

***Harbor Freight sells 5x7 Camo Tarp for \$3



Plastic
Cage Door
Liner



Latch
Spring



Wire Cage Clips &
Closing Pliers



WOOD CUTS

Initial Cuts

- 4 | 2x2's 6 feet long for frame of cage
- 4 | 2x2's 22" long for frame of cage
- 4 | 2x2's 28" long for frame of cage

Cuts After Frame Built and Measured

- 3 | 2x2's 28 1/8" long for below upper large door, above the lower small door. It is better to cut back of cage support cross bar just before installing to get accurate measurement. Add 1/8" to help stretch wire when installed.
- 2 | 2x2's 22 1/8" long for sides to put shelf for nest box
- 1 | 10" x 30 1/2" Shelf
- 2 | 25" 2x2's to install under cage and raise off ground.
- 2 | 1" x 2" for Latch (Optional)

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Wire Cutters
- Hand Saw or Electric Saw
- Electric or Cordless Drill (with drill bit and screwdriver bit)
- Staple Gun (optional) with 1/2 Staples (Hammer also needed with this method)
- Closing Pliers (you can just use some Needle Nose Pliers)

Frame

1. Pre Drill holes & Screw box frame together using initial cuts. Position the smaller on the inside the 6 foot frame. **The finished rectangle frame will be 31"x25"x72"**



Assembled Frame

Wire

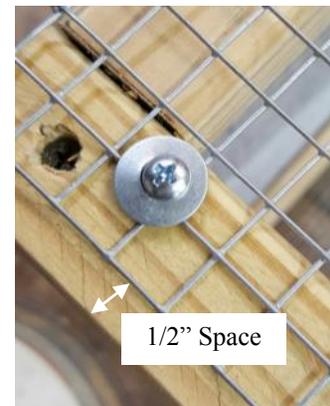
2. Wrap the 1/2"x1/2" around the all sides of the cage that is 25 inches wide and continue until you meet again. There should be 1/2 inch of wood showing on either side of the wire as you roll the wire down.

A second person will make this easier to place some screws with washers in the sides as you go. You can come back and fill in with the staple gun if you like. Do not make any creases in the wire or bend it unless you are going around a corner of the cage. Creases do not come out easily.

3. Cover the front of the cage, which is 31 inches across, with the 30 inch 1/2 x1 inch wire. Roll it down and put some screws with washers in it and then come back and staple/screw in the gaps. Again you should have 1/2 inch of wood showing on either side of the wire.
4. Don't put wire on back of cage until the end so you can work inside the cage easily.



1/2 x 1/2 Wire Wrapping Around Box



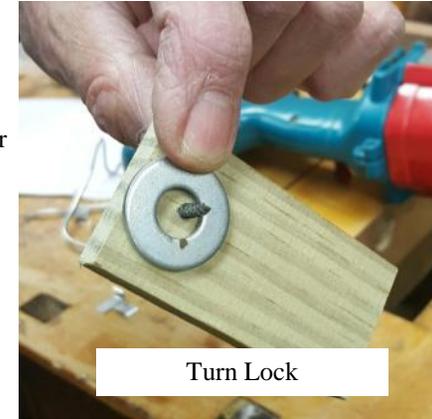
1/2" Space



Fixing Gaps

Doors

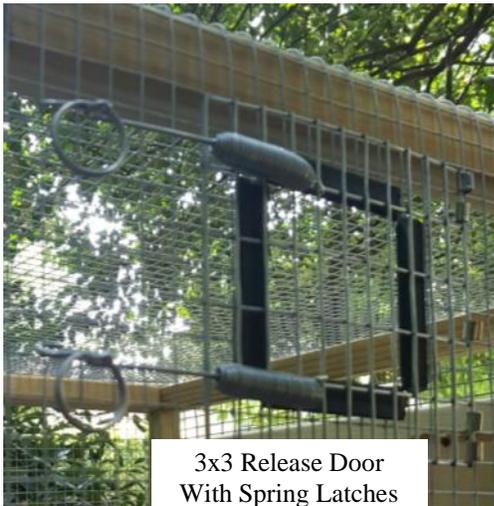
6. Cut the large top door opening 20 ½” long by 15” wide. This opening should be 4 ½ inches from the top and 4 ½ inches from the side
7. Cut the small feeding door opening at the bottom 12” x 8 ½”. Again staying 4 ½ inches from side and 4 ½ inches from bottom.
8. Cut black plastic door protectors to length and place on all sides of door openings
9. Cut two doors out of the leftover ½ x 1 inch wire. Use the wire that was cut for the top door opening to make your bottom door. Make sure you cut the wire so that the wire holes run a different direction than what is on the cage. This allows for the door lie flatter against the cage wire with less gaps. The top door will overlap and should be cut 27”x21”. The bottom door will overlap as well and should be cut 16”x12”. Attach doors. Hinge both doors about two inches from edge of cage.
10. Attach doors with wire clips or hog rings and then attach spring clips to lock the doors in place. Spring clips will be attached towards center left of cage.
11. Added safety can be added to the doors with a turn lock made of wood as shown in the pictures



Turn Lock

3x3 Release Door

12. Cut a 3”x3” release door in the upper corner of the cage. Cover the edges with the black plastic door liners. Cut door that overlaps the hole by and 1 ½”. Attach 2 spring latches to keep it secure and escape free until needed for release.



3x3 Release Door
With Spring Latches



Attaching Door With Clips



Plastic Cage Liner
For Door



Lower Door with
Turn Lock

Wood cross pieces

13. Measure the space for the cross braces (it should be close to 28", but may be a little different due to imperfections in wood). Cut braces 1/8" longer than this. The extra length will tighten up the wire. Wedge the piece in and hammer it down into place. Position the top cross pieces about 25" down...measuring from the bottom of the top board. Also position and screw the cross piece above bottom door about 13 1/2" up from top of bottom cross bar.
14. Measure again and cut and add your cross pieces for the sides that should be close to 22 1/8" wide that will hold the shelf. They will be screwed in place about down 17 1/2" from the bottom of the top board. *NOTE: If you have a tall nest box, drop the shelving supports to a level that accommodates the box height.*
15. Add the shelving board that supports the next box.
16. Add 25" runners to bottom of cage to raise off ground.

Back of Cage

16. Measure and cut cross bar for back of cage to give support. The cut should be close to 28 1/8" give some stretch to the wood frame and wire.
17. Attach the 30 inch 1/2" x 1" wire on back of cage.
18. Look over cage and staple or screw down any gapping places in the wire.

Top of Cage (Optional)

19. Cover top of cage and partial sides and back with a tarp. You can purchase camouflage tarps 5'x7' at Harbor Freight tools. Make sure it is pulled down tight with small bungee cords so that it will not blow or make noise to scare the animals.

Added Security

20. Secure cage to tree with one (or two) large bungee cord(s).



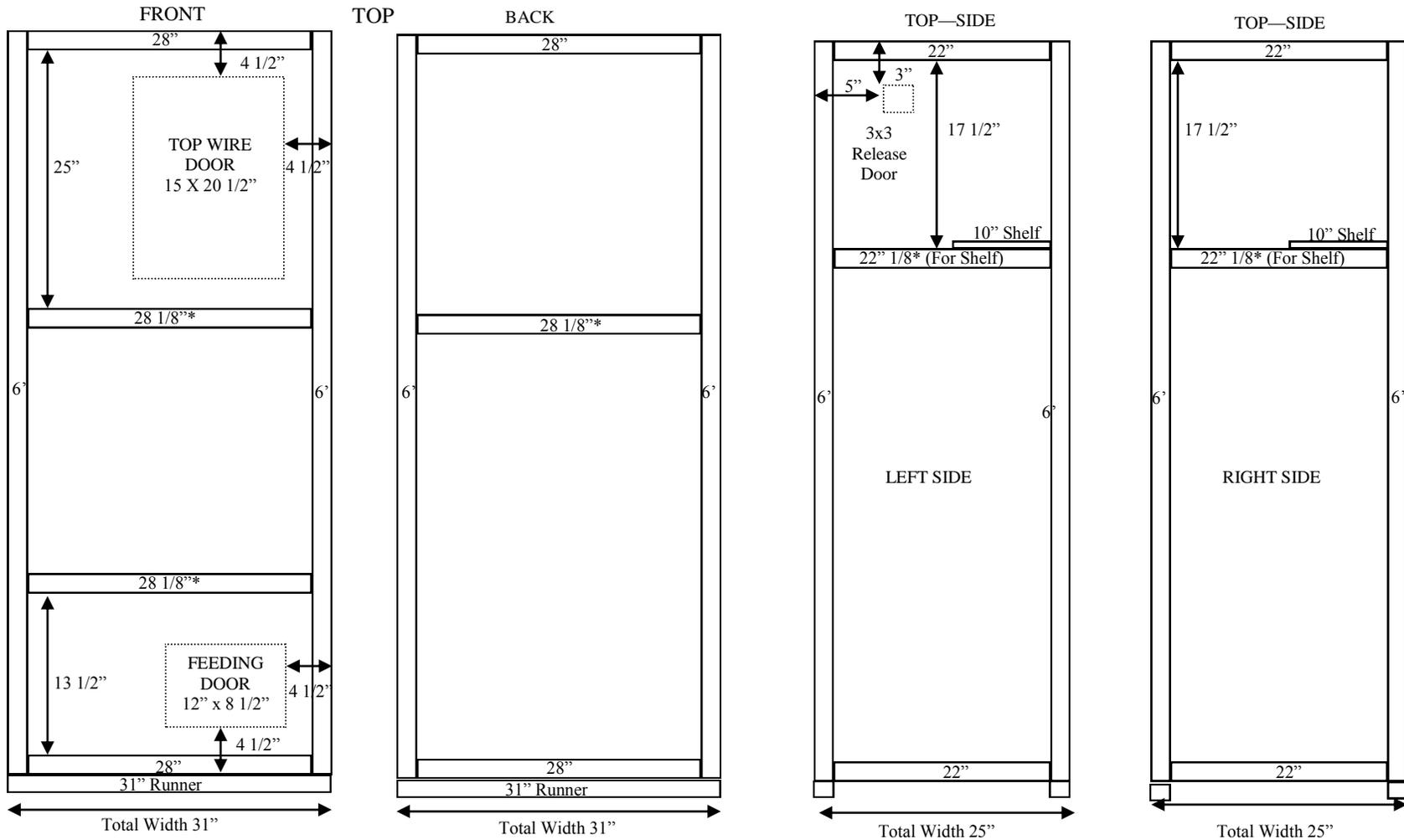
Hammer Braces Into Place



Finished Cage With Branches Secured to Tree Before Adding Tarp



25" 2x2 supports
under the cage



*Supports are installed after wire is attached. Extra 1/8" tightens wire.



OPOSSUM SETUP



Finished Wood Cage



Cage with Limbs and Box



Final Cage with Tarp