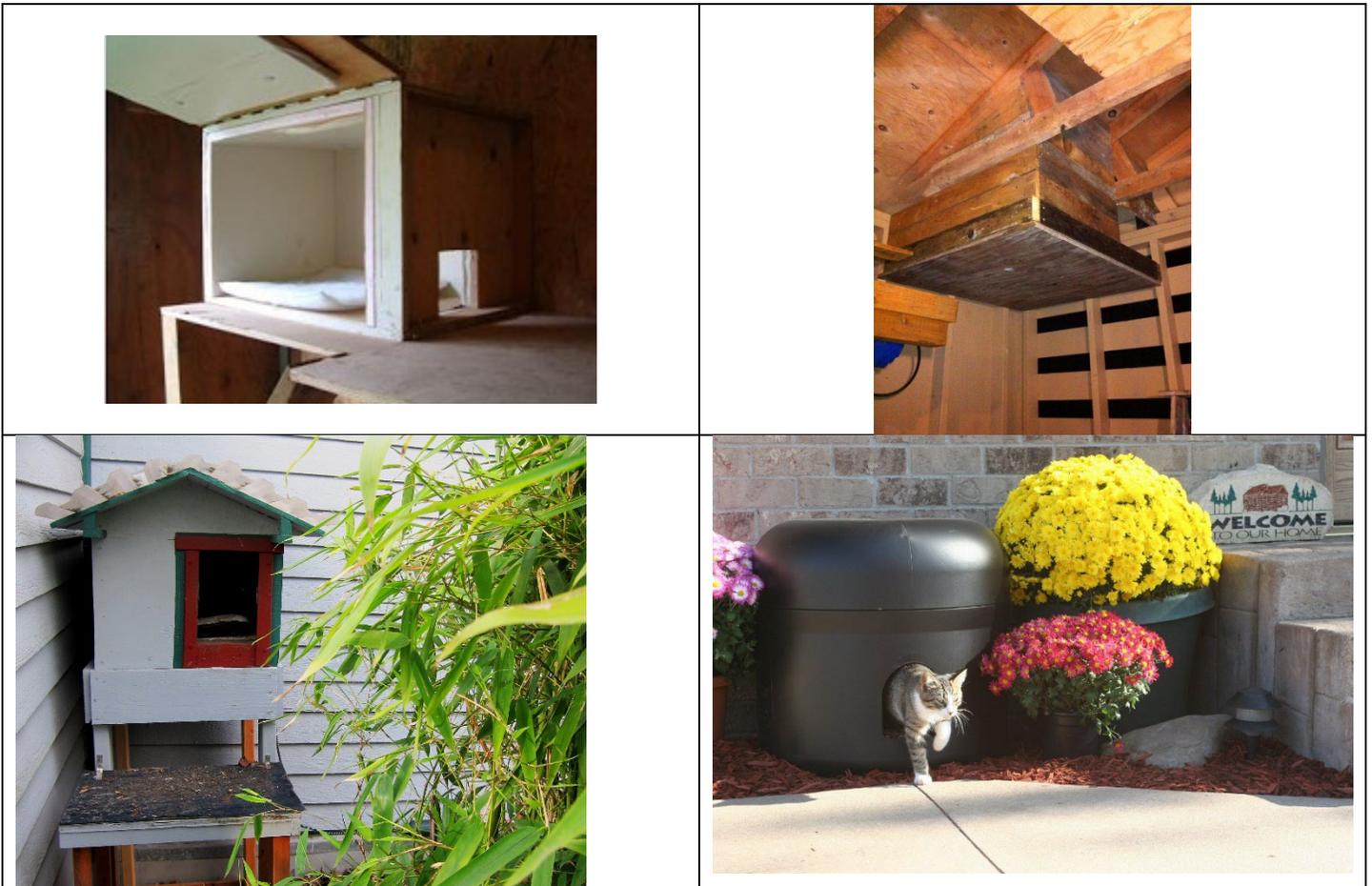


Warm, Raccoon Proof Shelter

1. Insulated Totes in a Barn, Shed or Garage



2. An Insulated Cat Cabin or “Kitty Tube”



3. How To Build A Warm Cat House Using a Cooler

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3Pz5YAwqEA>

4. How to Build a Warm Double-Decker Cat House

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WddNdxs_c&feature=related

5. How to Build an Insulated, Heated Cat House inside a Plastic Tote

<https://youtu.be/0BD80hXf01g>

6. The Best Heated Pet Pad Money Can Buy



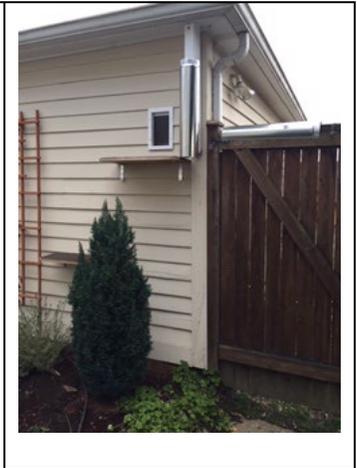
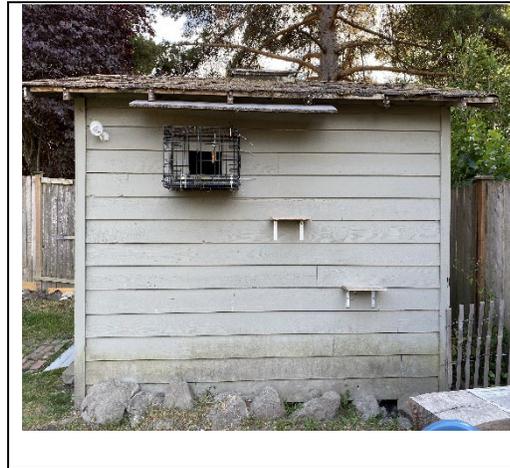
K&H Electro-Soft Heated Pad, Size Medium

<https://www.chewy.com/kh-pet-products-lectro-soft-outdoor/dp/54439>

This heating pad is sealed in sturdy plastic and is virtually indestructible. It can be placed inside or underneath a variety of cat shelters.

Raccoon Proofing A Building

Raccoons can climb almost any rough surface, but unlike cats they can't jump. You can exclude raccoons from your cats' home either by creating (1) a cat door four feet off the ground with shelves on both sides of the door, and cover the wall underneath with smooth sheet metal that raccoons can't climb on, or (2) a higher cat door with a series of steps mounted on the outside wall that cats can use to hop from step to step, and a shelf inside the door. You can add a small cage to the outer shelf—cats don't seem to mind it, but raccoons won't go in it in order to get inside the building. If you observe raccoons climbing up adjacent surfaces, such as the wooden fence in the photo on the right, you can cover them with sheet metal so raccoons can't get a grip.



Raccoon Proofing a Feeding Station

In addition to physically excluding raccoons and other freeloaders from your cats' living quarters, you can also build a **raccoon-proof feeding station** for use outside or inside your cats' living quarters. As mentioned above, cats are great jumpers, but raccoons, opossums, and skunks are not. A smooth sheet metal "apron" around the bottom of a raised, partially enclosed platform will prevent these creatures from climbing up to eat your cats' food.



A suggested size for a feeding station is roughly two square feet, with two covered sides and a top to protect your cats and their food from the elements. You can buy metal flashing in rolls at home improvement stores, and attach it to the bottom of the station and attach either with nails, or screws to the bottom of the station to form the apron. The station can be mounted on a 4x4" treated post approximately 40" off the ground. You can use a Simpson post holder to securely fasten the feeder to the post. You can further stabilize the station by mounting the post into the ground with concrete. Alternatively, you could attach the feeding station to a section of metal pipe attached to a heavy metal base, or bolt it to rafter in in your barn, shed or garage so hangs down to a level that is at least 40" off the floor.



If your cats have difficulty jumping up to the station, you can place a second smaller platform nearby (approximately 2 feet away) so smaller or less nimble cats can use it as an intermediate step from which they jump up to the feeder.

How to Keep Your Cats Safe from Predators

Many predators, including coyotes, bobcats and owls are active at night, so if you can bring your cats into a secure building overnight they will be much safer than if you allow them to stay outside. Beginning during the acclimation process, you can train your cats to come inside around dusk for their main meal of the day by ringing a bell, blowing a whistle, or using a clicker every time you feed them. After they're inside, lock the door so they stay side all night. It's OK to feed your cats a small supplemental meal in the morning, e.g., some wet food, but feeding them generously only in the early evening in a closed barn, shed or garage will help ensure that they are hungry and willing in to come inside again 24 hours later.

Ensuring Good Ventilation in the Hot Summer Months

If you acclimate your cats during the summer it's extremely important to make sure your acclimation enclosure has good ventilation because excessive heat buildup could harm your cats. If your shed or garage has securely screened windows, you can open them a few inches and place a fan in front of one window facing **outward**, so it blows hot air out. If your shed doesn't have windows, you could buy a cage (see Document 5), place it in the shed, and keep the door open so it doesn't get too hot in there.