

Mini Jungle Gym

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Introduction

These plans have been compiled from material supplied with permission from Keith Van Zile. They are intended as a guide to creating cages suitable for Iguanas, chameleons and a range of other animals. As with any captive animal it is the responsibility of the owner to create the best possible habitat and conditions for the animals within their care.

Considerable time and expense has gone into creating these plans.

For best results it is recommended that you read through the plans in their entirety before starting to construct the cages.

If you become frustrated or have difficulties, walk away for about 30 min and do something else. Many times when you come back to a difficulty, you will be rewarded with a solution, or at least a better frame of mind.

Have fun with these plans and enjoy your time building something you will be proud of.

Materials & Measurements List

Tools

Here are the tools you'll need:

(1) pvc cutting tool. For hand tools, I like the Ridge Tool Company unit (about \$14), but some people like the tool that looks more like a pruning shear for pvc. They both work well.

I'd avoid attempting to cut all the pvc with a hack saw -- you'll wear yourself out! A jig saw works fine for cutting the pvc, too.

(1) Orbital Jig Saw (about \$39 at Kmart) (1) measuring tape (1) pair clipping pliers (1) sanding block (1) drill (1) straight-edge (1) pair strong scissors

Measurements (coordinated with the plans):

Each of the lettered pieces below corresponds with a piece in the plan. Do not worry about this too much at this stage. The plans will have each of these with the correct measurement in the appropriate place. These are used when designing the original plans.

[A] 13 lengths of PVC pipe

[B] 41 1/2"

[C] 22 1/2"

[D] 13 3/4"

[E] 1 1/2"

[F] 12

[G] 26"

[H] 24 3/4"

[I] 16 1/4"

[J] 5"
[K] 35 1/2"
[L] 25 3/4"
[M] 3"
[N] 10 1/4"
[O] 23 1/2"
[P] 4 1/2"
[Q] 24 1/2"
[R] 43" x 25"
[S] 9"
[T] 10" x 25"
[U] 33" x 68"
[V] 6 1/2" x 43"
[W] 6 1/2" x 24"
[X] 6 1/2"
[Y] 15" x 25"
[Z] 32" x 44"
[AA] 15 1/4 x 43 3/4"
[BB] 26" x 44"

Materials: (approx. total cost: \$225)

3/4" PVC Poles 10 ft (25) 40 PE \$30 Class 200 \$ 23

Home Depot and Lowes sell them in 10' lengths.

You'll need 12, including one for the basking shelf, but I'd suggest getting 13, so you have a little extra for more shelves and any mistakes.

They're only \$1.25 each at Lowes. If you have a choice between thicker or thinner poles, I suggest using the thinner ones, labeled 'Class 200' unless you use a power saw to cut them. The thinner ones still provide plenty of cage strength since the panel-based design provides lots of structural support.

Tip:

Masking tape is a handy way to hold the bundle of poles together to transport them at the store.

3/4" PVC Pipe Connectors:

These are all the T connectors and Elbows and Angles that you'll find in the plumbing department at Home Depot.

Here's what you'll need:

Number	Part
33	T connectors (these are all for 3/4" pvc) (~\$10)
24	45 degree angle connectors 3/4" (~\$8)
10	4-way T connectors 3/4" (known as: "4 way cross") (~\$16)
8	90 degree angle connectors 3/4" (corners) (4 are for basking shelf, 4 are for the double door). (~\$4)
8	T connectors - marked: 1" x 1" x 3/4" (these are for around the door. A jig saw will be required to cut them in half. You can see how in the plans and pictures.) This includes the 4 required for the lower door-within-a-door. \$7

Paneling

For the back panels, I use shiny white 1/8" paneling. This 'White Tile Board', is sold in 4x8 sheets, (1/8" thick) for about \$10 per sheet at most Home Depots.

Tip:

Home Depot will cut the panels to size FOR you, if you ask.
It comes in different designs, too, if you prefer something other than plain white.

You'll need one sheet to get the large back panel, the ceiling and the lower side panels from, and a second sheet to get the narrow corner pieces - unless you opt to make those from clear lucite or cable-tie in plastic mesh.

The dimensions to have Home Depot cut from one sheet of the white paneling are:

- (1) 43" x 25" -- for the ceiling.
- (1) 68" x 33" -- for the back panel.
- (2) 25" x 15" -- for the lower front side panels - under the windows.

I usually sketch it out on a piece of paper first - just to make it easy for them.

Alternatives

From a second sheet - or from clear Lucite - cut these narrow corner panels:

- (4) 43" x 6 1/2" -- for the upper corners.
- (4) 24" x 6 1/2" -- for the lower corners.

If you have them cut these narrow corner pieces from a second sheet of tile board, you'll have plenty left over to make an oversized floor, measuring: 48" x 30".

Alternative Floor

As for the floor... Essentially, the best floor idea is to replace several of the T connectors around the cage base with 4 way cross connectors, so that 8" pvc "legs" can be installed with 3/4" caps on the ends - or even better: 90 degree angles that connect the legs together with floor "skid" poles.

Then a false floor of the 1" green mesh can be made and suspended in place. This would make a poop-through, very secure floor.

By using velcro loops to hold it in place about 8" above the actual floor, it could be easily removed for cleaning or to give access to a water tub.

The narrow openings on the right and left side of the door are 3" wide. You could use clear lucite - or even plastic mesh lashed to the 6' bamboo poles with twine (my favorite choice) or just cable-tied it in place.

Cable Ties

You'll need a minimum of 100 white 7.5" cable ties to complete the cage and basking shelf. They're in the electrical department at Home Depot. While you're there, you might also pick up 2 dome lights, 2 timers and a surge protector, along with a grounded extension cord long enough to reach from the cage to your outlet. Get 3 timers if you want your UVb fixture on automatic also.

Front Doors & Windows

For the clear front door window and two side windows, I buy two Lucite or other acrylic panels in sheets of 32" x 44" for about \$13 each. Cut in half, one sheet yields the two side windows and the other sheet can cover the front door.

For the lower door-within-a door, plastic mesh works fine - although one easy alternate option is to get one sheet of Lucite 72" x 36" (for about \$36) and make the whole door clear, instead of making the lower door-within-a-door.

If you opt to use a 32" x 44" sheet for the door, just cut a 6" piece off the long way, and drill holes for cable ties in the corners and every 12" or so, 1/2" in from the edge. That 6" piece left over can then be used to make one of the front corner panels.

An orbital jig saw is the easiest method I've found to cut the Lucite, although you can also score both sides deeply and snap a clean line - if you're lucky.

A sharp drill bit used slowly and very carefully makes clean holes. I recommend drilling through the Lucite into a piece of scrap wood underneath to avoid cracking the Lucite. I've found that the least expensive acrylic (Lucite) panels work fine as windows.

Mesh and Bamboo for Climbing Sections

One roll of green plastic "MultiNet" will give you plenty of mesh for the basking shelf and any additional shelves or panels that you wish to use it for. You could even line the whole cage with mesh - since it comes in a 25' x 40" roll for about \$8. It's a 1" square green mesh in the Landscaping department at Home Depot called MultiNet.

If your lizard is small, I'd suggest using the dark green 1/2" plastic mesh from Lowes. Either one cuts easily with strong scissors or cutting pliers (clippers).

If you can't find a roll of bamboo 'Natural Reed Fencing', you can use any suitable alternative, such as 4x6 foot Matchstick Blinds, which is just enough to cover the shelves, or even some brown or green indoor/outdoor carpeting. The bamboo cuts relatively easily with strong scissors or tin snips. Home Depot can transfer a roll to your local store from a store that stocks it, for example, from almost any Home Depot in Florida. It comes in a 6' x 15' roll for \$19.95.

That gives you more than enough bamboo for shelves and lots of cage trim. Home Depot sells it as item # 325-538. They tell me that they will transfer it from any West Palm store to any other HD at no charge as an In-store transfer. The HD in West Palm is: 561-683-7221. It's store #6320. Lowes sells it as item #147448 for \$29.95.

I use 11" black cable ties (Qty: 25) to hold the bamboo on the basking shelf. I cover the pvc frame with 3/4" pipe insulation (those long black foam tubes - you'll need just (1) 6' length - marked 'For 3/4" copper pipe'). It gives the pvc shelf frame some thickness under the bamboo. If you plan to make the hanging corner shelves, you'll need additional materials: chain, pvc, insulation, cable ties and connectors.

Tip:

When you clip the tail off of the cable ties once they're in place, pull on the tail end hard while clipping it, so that you don't leave a sharp edge. The remaining tail snaps back into the cable tie square - giving it a "smooth shave" and no sharp edge sticking out.

The ceiling takes 2 chrome rings (under \$5 each) which are actually stove trim rings: 8" trim rings from GE. Part number: PM31X105. At Home Depot. Recessed lighting rings also work fine.

You'll also need a small roll of un-coated wire cloth, if you want a barrier between the lights and your cage. 1/4" wire cloth works well, although smaller gauges are even easier to work with. You'll need one 10" x 25" swath - or two 10" x 10" pieces of the wire cloth for your ceiling light mounts. The 2 chrome rings (under \$5 each) are actually stove trim rings: 8" trim rings from GE. Part number: PM31X105. At Home Depot. Recessed lighting trim rings also work well, if you'd prefer those.

Chains

You'll also need chains. Home Depot and Lowes will cut the Black Decorative chain to length for you. Get 5 feet for the basking shelf. Get 23 feet if you also want to make the stack of five hanging shelves. It runs about \$.60/ft. (~\$15)

For the front door, get two narrow 3" bolts. For convenience, you may want to attach small cords to them with twine and tie them to the cage, so that they don't get lost. If you opt to make a lower door-within-a-door, get one 4 1/2" bolt instead of one of the 3" bolts. The nuts aren't really necessary - the bolts are sufficient to pin the door closed.

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Building the Mini Jungle Gym

The dimensions of this enclosure are:
3.5 feet wide, 2.5 feet deep and 5.75 feet tall.



The Frame

For this enclosure, you'll need to buy 13 x 10' lengths of 3/4" pvc:

You will need to make 4 panels.

For each panel you need the following:

Cut the pvc pipe into two lengths of 41 1/2" [B]
and two lengths of **22 1/2"** [C]
and three lengths of 13 3/4" [D].



The connectors are two Ts on top
two Ts on the bottom and two 4-way crosses in
the middle.



The trick to putting them together is to twist
them in.

PVC can be pushed into a connector up to 3/4",
but I would suggest going in only 1/2" for now.

You can always tighten and straighten
everything up later - once all the panels are
together.

The trick to that is to use your weight to lean on
them, because there's no way to muscle these
joints tight.

Glue isn't necessary, since a friction fit is plenty
strong - and who knows, you just might want
to take this cage apart someday!

After you have made four panels, and made
them match each other... your cage can start to
take shape by connecting the panels to each
other with corners.



Corners are just two forty-five degree angle connectors joined by a 1 1/2" length of pvc with two more pvc plugs in the ends.

You'll need to make 12 sets of corners.

Go ahead and connect all the panels now.

Here's the shape you're looking for:



The two back panels are joined with 1 1/2" [F] sections of pvc, leaving no space between the panel connectors.

Cut two more 41 1/2" [B], two more 22 1/2" [C] poles.

Connect them as shown to turn the front corners.

They form the opening where the door will be attached.

Now you have the basic cage shape together:

Next we'll tackle the door...



Building the Mini Jungle Gym Front Door

The Front Door is a truly great feature of these cages.

The working hinges are a real convenience, since you need to get in and out of your lizard's enclosure several times each day, and lower second door is a very handy addition.

Okay, let's get started. We've got the frame all together right?

So, let's add the top and bottom of the door, to complete the cage frame shape.



Cut two 26" [G] poles from the 3/4" pvc.

Put the T connectors on the ends of each pole.

Go ahead and put them in to complete the frame shape.



Now it's time to get down to the door construction itself.

Here's what it looks like completed... for reference.



Let's build from the bottom up. To make the lower section of the door:

Cut two **24 3/4"** [H] poles and two **16 1/4"** [I] poles.

Assemble with three T connectors and one corner.

Cut two [E] pvc sections and put them in as shown: top and bottom.



The short sections sticking out of the two T connectors are going to be hinges.

To make them work well, you need to 'slot' them.



A jig saw works well to cut the slots. Be careful!



Set the whole assembly in the door frame and put a T connector on the top right side, connecting it to the cage frame.

See how nice those hinges work now?

(Just ignore that the cage in these pictures is the Big Jungle Gym... It's the exact same door on both cages).



For the left side, cut a 22 1/2" [C] pole and top it with a T connector.

Next, cut a 5" [J] pole and put it into the door on the left side top.



You can congratulate yourself now, because if you made it this far...

the rest will be pretty easy.

The top of the door is just like the bottom - except bigger and upside down.



Cut two 24 3/4" [H] poles and two 35 1/2" [K] poles.

Assemble with three T connectors and one corner connector.

Insert the two 1 1/2" [E] sections of pvc into the two right-side T's, and slot them.

Add this top section to the cage door.

(Again this is the Big Jungle Gym but the doors are the same)



Cut another [B] pole for the left hand side of the cage door frame.

Push and pull the pvc until the door fits nicely. Not bad!

Just one more tricky little thing to do...

Those wide gaps above and below the door have to be filled.

Cut two 25 3/4" [L] pvc poles and put the Oversized T connectors on the ends. (These are the 1" x 1" x 3/4" T connectors).

Now here's the tricky part:

Use a jig saw to cut each T connector in half and trim their edges so they fit in the gap.



Cable tie the top one in place, so it doesn't fall out when you open the door!

If you don't have any long cable-ties, just 'daisy-chain' two together.

Notice the 3" [M] bolt and nut now added to keep the door securely shut.

Another bolt is positioned a similar distance from the bottom.



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An Awesome Door

If you really want to go the extra mile and make an awesome door here's how...

Use the same techniques you just used and make a small hinged door to fit within the lower opening of the large door.

Start by taking that original right side 16 1/4" [I] pole out and topping it with another T connector with a slotted plug.

Then shorten the pole (cut it to size: 10 1/4" [N]) so that another T and slotted plug will fit on the bottom.



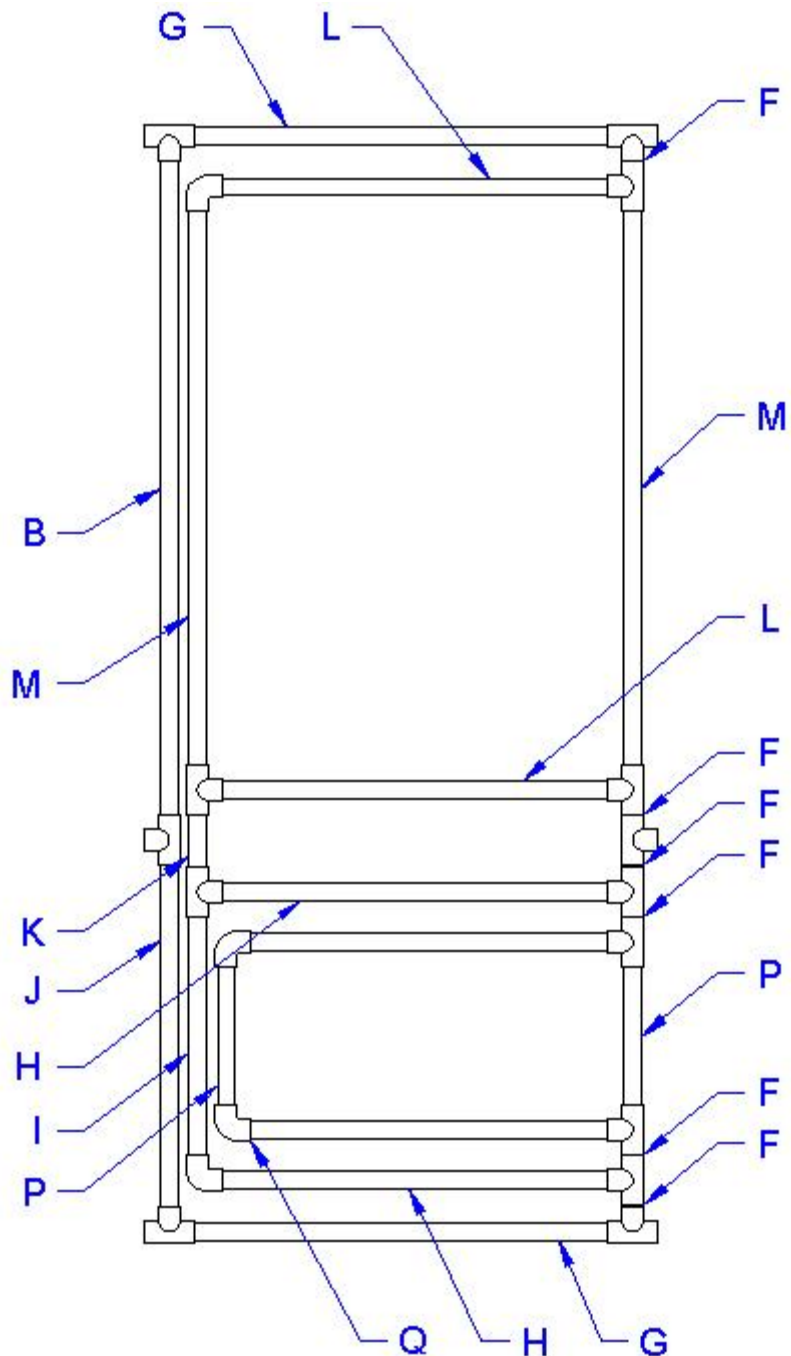
Add two 23 1/2" [O] poles horizontally and another 10 1/4" [N] pole, connect with two 90 degree corner connectors, and adjust everything for a nice snug fit.

Use velcro loops to hold the lower door shut, or just drill for a longer bolt - 4 1/2" [P].

Cut four more 1" x 1" x 3/4" Ts in half and make two more gap-filling poles, using two 24 1/2" [Q] poles.

Cable tie in a mesh rectangle -- and you've got a safe and easy way to get food in and out of the cage, no matter what mood your iguana is in!

Now that's a great door!



Now we've done the [Frame](#), and the [Door](#), so next let's do the [Door](#), and then the [back panels](#).

Once we've finish the [windows](#) and the [Basking Hammock](#), we're done!

Building the Mini Jungle Gym Ceiling

The ceiling isn't so hard to make - and it looks and works great!



Tip:
Cut from the shiny side and then sand the edge smooth.

At Home Depot, in the paneling department, are 4 x 8 sheets of melamine about 1/8" thick. Some of this 'Tile Board' is plain white, and some of the panels have designs on them.

Choose the style that you like best.

Have Home Depot cut a rectangle that measures 43" x 25" [R].

Cut off the four corners to match the frame shape.



Now it's time to lay out the chrome trim rings...

I like to use two chrome rings spaced [S] in from three of the edges.

Make sure that you leave room for a UVb light fixture toward the front.

Take the two trim rings and lay them out on the shiny side.

Use a marker to trace the inside circle of each trim ring. While your ring is still in place, mark North South East and West just outside the ring -- which will be where you drill holes for the cable ties that hold the rings in place.



Drill a starter hole just outside the circle trace and use a jig saw to cut a circle 1/2" outside of the traced circle -- that's about halfway between the circle trace and the hole marks.

The circle cut doesn't have to be a perfect circle -- because it's going to be hidden by the trim rings.



Use a drill bit that is just slightly larger than your cable-ties to drill four holes, positioning the holes just outside of the edge of the trim ring: N S E & West.



Okay, now flip the ceiling over and cut a strip of uncoated wire cloth a little oversized [T].

Or you can cover the holes individually, like I did here:



Tip:

Hang the panel and hole half way over the edge of the table to hold the ring in place while you tie it in.

To get the chrome ring in place: slide the ring underneath, lining it up so that you can see one of the four holes.

Poke the cable tie down through the screen and back up through the hole, and tighten.

The objective is to leave the cable tie 'squares' on top -- to help keep the dome lights in place.

In fact, when you clip the ends of the cable ties, leave a little extra sticking up as shown.



Okay, now flip the ceiling back over and drill a few holes 1/2" in from the outside edge to allow you to cable tie the ceiling to the cage.

I'd suggest putting the ceiling on top of the cage and marking for the holes first.

I like to place the holes in the corners and several next to the T connectors.

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Now we've done the [Frame](#), the [Door](#), and the [ceiling](#), but we still have to do the [back panels](#), the [windows](#), and the hanging shelf!

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Building the Mini Jungle Gym back panels

The back panels are pretty easy - especially if you have Home Depot pre-cut the pieces for you!

The full size of this back panel is 33" x 68" [U].

Drill from the shiny side to make holes approximately every 6" to 12", (which are for cable ties to attach the panel to the cage frame.)

Drill a few more right down the center to hold the panel securely against the cage frame. Just mark and drill pairs of holes -- from the inside of the cage.



The corners are a little trickier, but not too much:

As you can see, the holes are drilled so that they line up with each other.

The narrow corner upper panels are 6 1/2" x 43" [V].

The narrow corner lower panels are 6 1/2" x 24" [W].

You'll need four of each for the whole cage.

That covers the rear corners and the two front corners.

A nice alternate option is to cut those front corner pieces from clear Lucite.

The best way I've found to join the corners is to notch them.



I use a template:

The dimensions of this template are:

6 1/2" [X] wide, with notches.

To make the notches: mark 3/4" down from the top edges, cut 1 1/2" in from the side edges, and cut back to the top edge with a 1/2" slope.



Another alternate option for the front is two mesh inserts...

I use 1" green plastic mesh (8 1/2" wide) and lash it to bamboo poles (68" tall) using jute twine and a locking stitch - and then cable tie the bamboo poles to the cage frame.



But this a lot of extra work, when all you really need to do is to cut more white melamine paneling or clear Lucite.

Or simply cable-tie green mesh into place around the door.

I like to think that these mesh panels improve the interaction - and quality of life - of the cage inhabitant.



The only other melamine pieces you need now are for the lower sides under the windows.

Cut two panels [Y] and drill holes that line up with the holes in the lower corner panels.

Remember to drill from the shiny side. Now you can see why I add the bamboo trim.

The outside of this melamine paneling is just plain brown.

Another option would be to paint the outside of the panels... maybe even the same color as the room they'll be in?



Or use some of that bamboo screen material to trim the exterior.

Now that's a nice look!

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Now we've done the [Frame](#), [the door](#), [the ceiling](#), and the [back panels](#). Once we do [the windows](#) and the [Basking Hammock](#), we're done!

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Adding Windows to the Mini Jungle Gym

If you start with two sheets of 32" x 44" [Z] Lucite (or a similar acrylic), you can simply lay the sheets directly on the side panels, lining up the sheet with the center of each pvc pole, and use a marker and a straight-edge to draw cut lines.



You'll be able to get two side windows out of the one sheet.

The other sheet will yield the window portion of the front door...

And you'll have a 6" piece left over that would be perfect for one of the front corners!

To cut the Lucite, I prefer to use an orbital jig saw with very sharp blades although people tell me that scoring both sides deeply and snapping gives a nice clean edge.

The dimensions of each side window is 15 1/4" x 43 3/4" [AA] and the front door window is 26" x 44" [BB].

Use a sharp drill bit to make holes about a half an inch in from the edges.

I like to space them out to match the holes in the white side panels, so that I can use just one cable tie -- through both holes and around the pole.



Just hold the side window up to the frame and mark where the holes need to be to match up with the side panel holes. Then drill, against a piece of scrap wood to avoid cracking the Lucite.

Make sure that the cable tie square ends are flat against the Lucite and clip the excess.

The side window panels are attached to the *outside* of the cage frame, just like the white back panels -- lining up all the holes.

The door window panel, however, is attached to the *inside* of the door frame, so that you have the poles accessible to grasp, to open the door, as well as having access to the bolts that keep the doors shut.

Tip:

Take the protective plastic off the Lucite *before* attaching it to the cage frame.

Another tip:

If the cut edges of the Lucite present any dangerously sharp edges, you can use white cloth tape to cover the edges all around, nice and neatly, before you attach the lucite windows to the frame.

Now we've done [the frame](#) and [the front door](#) and [the ceiling](#) and [the back panels](#) and [the windows](#).

Now all we've got left to do is [the basking shelf](#), which will be the lizard's favorite spot!

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Building the Basking Hammock and Shelves

These shelves are my favorite part of the cage to build -- and they add so much style and function -- I just love 'em.

If you read my web page on the history of my cage-building endeavors, you know that I used to build my corner cages completely out of real bamboo.

However, practical considerations have eliminated almost all of the real bamboo from my cages now.

The only bamboo you need for this project is what Home Depot sells as 'Natural Reed Fencing'.

It comes in 6'x 15' rolls for under \$20.

You'll have plenty for the shelves, and enough left over to add some beautiful trim to your new enclosure.

(Home Depot will transfer a roll to your local HD store, if you ask. Florida HD stores carry this year 'round.)

If you're making this cage-building project a family affair, you can get someone started on making these shelves right off the bat.

Let's start with the corner shelves... These shelves fit well in either cage: the Mini Jungle Gym or the Big Jungle Gym.

For the Mini Jungle Gym, a nice option is to use six corner shelves...

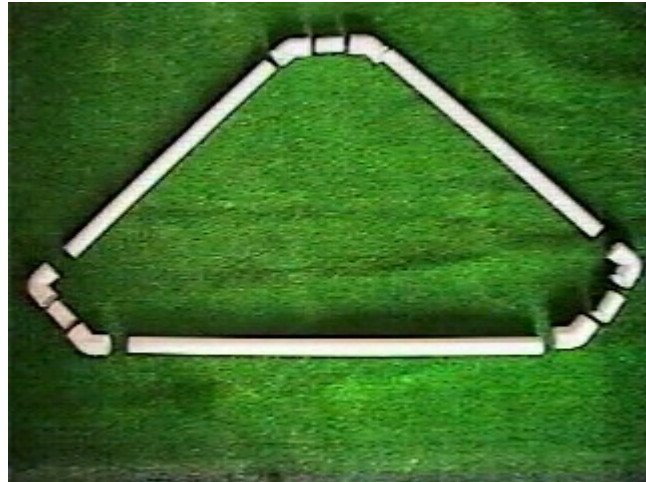


The measurements are:

- (1) 26" pvc pole for the front
- (2) 19" pvc poles for the sides.

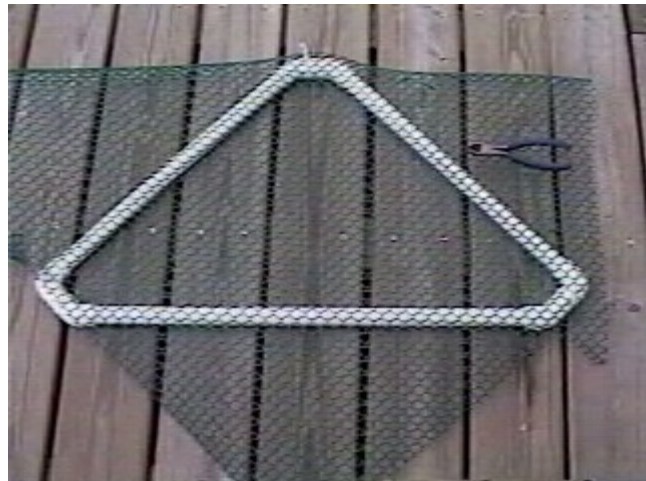
Assemble as shown with two 45 degree angle connectors joined in the rear corner, and one 90 degree connector joined with a 45 degree connector on each side.

Use three 1 3/4" pvc sections to join the connectors.



Next, cut a piece of plastic mesh to fit the frame.

To keep the mesh from rolling, I attach it with a couple of ties, while I cut it down the center of the pvc poles.



Once the mesh is cut to size, attach it to the frame with ties every 4 or 5 inches. Clip the excess tail ends from the ties.



Using 3/4 pipe insulation, cover the frame.

This adds thickness to the shelves, as well as helping keep the bamboo in place (from spinning when climbed on) on the lower shelves - the ones without floors.



The bamboo has been cut into 7" wide strips and then had the outer two bamboo sticks removed so that the remaining wire can be twisted together and folded under.



The 6 1/2" bamboo strips can be cut to size with strong scissors.

Use 11" black cable ties over the bamboo.

Pull the ties tight with pliers so that the tails are underneath the shelf and clip the tails off.



Make four more of these, omitting the floor. For the chains, make 17 sections of 9 links each to

connect each shelf.

The bottom shelf only gets two chain lengths -- up front.

Attach single, open links to the cage frame top with cable-ties, then just lift the stack of shelves into the cage and hang them from the open links.

This allows you to easily install or remove the shelves, just by lifting them off of the open links cable-tied to the cage frame.

Use the same 'open link' technique at the floor level to stretch the shelves across the cage so that they cascade down under the Basking Hammock.

This allows you to un-hook the shelves and let them just hang straight down in the enclosure, giving you room to step into the cage for cleaning or spending a little quality time with your iguana.



To make the Basking Hammock, just use the same techniques with these measurements:

Cut (2) 30" pvc poles
and (2) 15" pvc poles.

Assemble with four 90 degree corner connectors.

Add the mesh floor, pipe insulation and bamboo, all held together with cable ties.

Attach chains with 10 or 11 links to the rear corners.

I like to use several extra links in the front chains to create a slight forward



angle.

Using the 'open top link' method to hang the shelves also allows you to adjust how close the shelves are to the lights.

No matter what cage you build, the shelves will be your iguana's favorite spot!

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Although a floor would be nice...

I've got a few different ways to handle that project...

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Cage Floor Alternatives

One easy floor idea is to use a 4 x 4 square of linoleum (or smaller for the Mini Jungle Gym).

And -- it's easy to sponge clean.

A more ambitious project is to make a small deck platform, about 8" high out of 2x8 boards in the shape of the cage, cover it with a piece of tile board (you'll have one 4x4 piece left over from cutting the ceiling piece from a 4x8 sheet). Then make a cut-out for a tub - like the large black cement mixing tubs at Home Depot that sell for \$13 each or the medium size tub for \$6.

Here's one example:

This picture shows a raised mesh floor on the Big Jungle gym frame.

Those two mesh panels let all the mess fall through - keeping the cage clean inside.

The front panel lifts up... to step inside.

Those sliders make it easier to pull the cage out from the corner... to clean underneath.

With the dome lights on top, this enclosure is now 7 1/2 feet tall!



My best floor idea involves using pvc and plastic mesh. The pvc and a handful of 4-way cross connectors and right angle connectors are employed to create a raised base about 10" high - with pvc poles that acts as skids to slide the cage forward and back.

Two floor panels are then made to fit the shape of the floor and plastic mesh is cable-tied to them to create a floor which is then suspended about 8" above the cage floor, leaving room for a tub under the cage.

By securing one panel to the cage frame with cable ties, and the other panel to that one - it works like a trap door - allowing you to lift the floor panel up and step inside the enclosure - or allow access to the tub.

It also works like a trampoline for the lizard, which is nice for when the lizard wants to go crazy, but the best thing is that it keeps the lizard from 'poop-painting', because everything just drops through to the newspaper on a tarp down below. It also adds more height to the enclosure, which is a good thing.

The most attractive floors that I've been shipping have been dark green astroturf cut a little oversized in the shape of the floor. However, the astroturf gets dirty quickly, and it's possible to pull pieces of it off from the edges - creating an 'impaction' hazard if ingested.

I suggest only using those floors like you would a table cloth for the dining room table: only for when guests are coming over. And maybe tape the edges with cloth tape.

Many people just use newspapers over a tarp in the bottom of the floorless cage. I suggest using a piece of thick carpeting or a pad under the tarp to soften the blow of any free-falling done from the basking hammock.

Above all - have Fun!

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