

EPISODE #3024 RYLEY'S REVENGE

Building A Tree House

Visit an expert, like Joren Harris at Rainbow Play Systems

- Pre-fabricated play houses are available, with really cool accessories
 - Cool accessories are available individually as well
- George and Leigh recommend getting a book on building tree houses

Choosing A Tree (see fig. A)

- Talk to a tree specialist or arborist to get advice
- Choose a big, strong, and straight tree
- Choose a tree with few low branches for minimum impact
 - Carefully cut off excess branches

Getting Started

Bolt central support joists to the tree (see fig. B)

- Pre-drill hole in the joists and tree
- Screw the joists into place on the tree with stainless steel jumbo lag bolts (stainless steel will not damage the tree)
- Level the joists on
- Tighten bolts with a SOCKET SET (tool of the day)

Add a support block between the two joists around the tree

Build framing for the floor on the ground first

- Measure and assemble 2 rim joists with floor joists centered at 16 inches
 - Remember to place the floor frame around the tree before closing it in with the last joist
- Square-up the frame
- Attach floor frame to central support joists with galvanized screws

Install corner posts

- Place and level concrete support in the ground
- Place a 4x4 on the paver
- Check to make sure it's level and square
- Screw the post to the frame

Install the floor

- Use tongue and groove, exterior grade plywood for the floor
- Measure and cut out a long U-shaped slot to fit around the tree (see fig. C)



A. A big, strong tree.



B. Bolting central support joists to tree.



C. Installing the floor.

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- Save the cut out piece to slide it in on the other side of the tree (you'll have to cut a bit off so it fits around the tree)
- Slide tongue into the groove of the each piece of plywood and place at the outside edge of the floor frame
- Screw down the plywood using galvanized decking screws

Install railings (see fig. D)

- Build the railings on the ground first
 - Remember that one side will be different to accommodate the ladder and slide
- Measure and cut the frame
- Screw and nail the frame together
- Lift onto the tree house floor making sure it's super flush and square on all sides
- Screw into the floor and attach at the corners



D. Installing the railings. Sort of.

Install top plate

- Screw 2x6s along the top of the tree house corner posts to support the roof with galvanized screws



E. Building a rafter jig.

Build the roof rafters

- Stick to the book for rafter plans
- Build a rafter jig to keep the rafters consistent (see fig. E)
- Notch out the rafter where it will rest on the top plate
- Screw together rafters in the jig



F. Installing rafters.

Install the rafters to the top plate (see fig. F)

- Toe screw the rafters into the top plate 16 inches on centre
- Slide the ridge board into place through the tops of the rafters
- Make sure it's level
- Toe screw into place

Install the roof

- Use exterior grade plywood
 - Pre-cut a hole in one piece to fit around the tree
- Screw in plywood around the frame, and every eight inches along the joists



G. Installing cedar siding.

Install cedar siding on the walls (see fig. G)

- Cut the top off of the first piece and install it along the bottom of the wall to create a starter strip
 - This starter strip will push out the first full piece of siding to the same angle as the other overlapping pieces