

## Build a Bathtub Enclosure

A bathtub enclosure frames your tub and creates a look of elegance and beauty.

Bathtub enclosures are a necessary finishing touch to a drop-in tub or a whirlpool tub. Installing one is not as difficult as it looks. With a little skill and the right materials, anyone can build one.

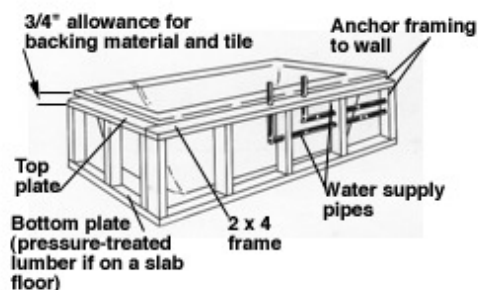
### Types and Sizes

The type of tub you have is important when building your enclosure. Drop-in bathtubs made specifically for bathtub enclosures are the best to build around, but whirlpool bathtubs are also great for building enclosures around. An enclosure is necessary to hide the water pipes on both drop-in and whirlpool tubs. Make sure to work around the plumbing and the draining systems to avoid interfering with pipes.

### Tools and Materials You Need:

- 2 x 4 framing wood (amount depends on tub and how many frames needed)
- Nails
- Hammer
- Saw (for wood cutting)
- Construction adhesive
- CDX plywood (or moisture resistant wallboard)
- Caulk
- Moisture resistant primer
- Tile, wood, or other finishing material
- Masking tape

### 1. Build a Tub Frame



Begin by framing your tub. Construct a frame out of 2 x 4 lumber for each side of the tub not connected to the wall. Each side of the frame should consist of 2 pieces of wood the length of the side it is adjacent to. The 2 long pieces are supported by 2 x 4 studs placed every 16 inches. The frame should be about 3/4-inch below the rim of the tub, just enough for the plywood and tile to fit under the rim. Nail the frames together and attach each frame to the wall and floor with nails and construction adhesive.



#### Tip:

When cutting the studs that will support the horizontal 2 x 4s in the frame, remember to cut off an extra 3 inches. These 3 inches will not be needed due to the height of the 2 vertical 2 x 4s.

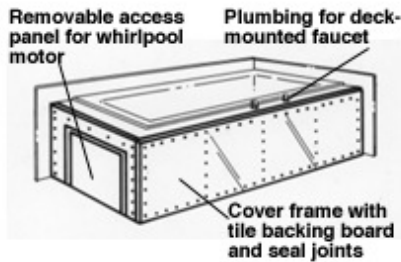
## 2. Attach the Frame to the Wall and Floor

To create a wider ledge, build a second frame parallel to the first



You can make your enclosure's ledge as wide as you want. To extend your ledge on both sides, build a second frame a few inches longer than the first and install it parallel to the first frame. If you want your ledge to be wider than 16 inches, build a third frame. Anchor these additional extensions to the wall and floor parallel to the previously installed frame.

## 3. Cover and Seal the Frame



Attach 1/2-inch CDX plywood to the sides and tops of the frame with nails. As an alternative, you can use a moisture resistant wallboard. Use caulk to seal all the joints between the bathtub and the covered frame, and coat the wallboard or plywood with moisture resistant primer to seal it. Let the primer dry completely.

## 4. Tile the Tub Enclosure

Using tile, wood or any finishing material, cover the plywood or wallboard once it is dry. Seal the finishing material well with tile grout, and caulk all the joints to prevent water damage.



### Tip:

To better understand installing tile or finishing material, see [How To Install Ceramic Tile](#).

## 5. Caulk the Joints

Once the tile or finishing material has been caulked and dried, apply a layer of caulk around the bathtub. Line all the tub edges with masking tape to make a straight line with the caulk. Apply the caulk to the tub edges and smooth it with your finger. Let the caulk dry thoroughly and remove the tape.



### Tip:

When smoothing the caulk, put soap on your finger to make sure the caulk does not stick to it.