5. Habitat – Most nursery colonies of bats choose roosts within 1/4 mile of water, preferably a stream, river or lake. Greatest bat-house success has been achieved in areas of diverse habitat, especially where there is a mixture of varied agricultural use and natural vegetation. Bat houses are most likely to succeed in regions where bats are already attempting to live in buildings.

6. Mounting – Bat houses should be mounted on buildings or poles. Houses mounted on trees or metal siding are seldom used. Wood, brick or stone buildings with proper solar exposure are excellent choices, and houses mounted under eaves are often successful. Single-chamber houses work best when mounted on buildings. Mounting two bat houses back-to-back on poles (with one facing north and the other south) is ideal. Place houses 3/4-inch apart and cover both with a galvanized metal roof to protect the center roosting space from rain. All bat houses should be mounted at least 12 feet above ground, and 15 to 20 feet is better. Bat houses should not be lit by bright lights.

7. Protection from Predators – Houses mounted on the sides of buildings or on metal poles provide the best protection from predators. Metal predator guards may be helpful, especially on wooden poles. Bats may find bat houses more quickly if they are located along forest or water edges where bats tend to fly. However, they should be placed at least 20 to 25 feet from the nearest tree branches, wires or other potential perches for aerial predators.

8. Avoiding Uninvited Guests – Wasps can be a problem before bats fully occupy a house. Use of 3/4-inch roosting spaces reduces the risk of wasps. If nests accumulate, they should be removed in late winter or early spring before either wasps or bats return. Open-bottom houses greatly reduce problems with birds, mice, squirrels or parasites, and guano does not accumulate inside.

9. Timing – Bat houses can be installed at any time of the year, but they are more likely to be used during their first summer if installed before the bats return in spring. When using bat houses in conjunction with excluding bats from a building, install the bat houses at least two to six weeks before the actual eviction, if possible.

10. Importance of Local Experimentation – It is best to test for local needs before putting up more than three to six houses. Compare houses of different colors or shades and sun exposure.