

# PlexiDor® Performance Pet Doors



AS SEEN ON  
**This Old House**



## In the news... Featured Article

We think you'll enjoy this very informative article as published in **This Old House** magazine. See the article online and watch the full episode by visiting [PlexiDors.com](http://PlexiDors.com).

Article content is ©2018 This Old House Ventures, LLC. Reprinted with permission.

Glass Series | Door Series | Wall Series | Electronic Series | Accessories

## Dog door (in an) afternoon

Give your pet the freedom to come and go whenever it wishes by installing this energy-efficient kit

BY THOMAS BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIEULI

➔ **WHEN LIFE GETS BUSY**, it's easy to miss the signals that a dog needs to go outside *right now*. And when the message doesn't get through, the result can be a nasty mess. That isn't a worry with a dog door, fitted into either a human-sized door or a wall like the one at right, because it gives your dog the freedom to come and go at will.

Providing a pet with its own portal can also save on heating and cooling bills—a small door, when opened, allows less interior air to escape than a big one does—as long as it is weatherstripped and closes tightly on its own. The one at right has two saloon-style doors that close quickly and don't need much pressure to open. When the family is away, a metal plate inside deters intruders.

On the following pages, see how *This Old House* general contractor Tom Silva and host Kevin O'Connor installed a PlexiDor dog-door kit for Soleil, the Newfoundland at the Arlington Arts and Crafts TV project. These kits are available in a range of sizes for breeds big and small—even cats. Whichever size you choose, the door takes only a few hours to put in. Before you know it, your pet will be enjoying the ability to go freely in and out whenever it pleases.

*Soleil now goes outdoors anytime she wants through the dog door at the Arlington Arts and Crafts TV project. Inset: When coming inside, Soleil pushes the saloon doors inward and enters the laundry room. Shown: PlexiDor Wall Series, from \$332; plexidor.com*



• **weekend remodel****COST** About \$350**TIME** Two days**DIFFICULTY** Moderate. Cutting through an exterior wall requires careful carpentry.**TOOLS**

- > keyhole saw
- > wire coat hanger
- > pencil
- > level
- > drill/driver with 3/8-inch drill bit and No. 2 Phillips bit
- > reciprocating saw
- > pry bar
- > hammer
- > circular saw
- > taping knife
- > utility knife
- > hammer tacker or stapler
- > jigsaw or angle grinder with metal cut-off wheel

**MATERIALS**

- > PlexiDor dog-door kit
- > 2½-inch deck screws
- > polyurethane spray foam
- > 1¼-inch drywall screws
- > joint compound
- > 15-pound builder's felt

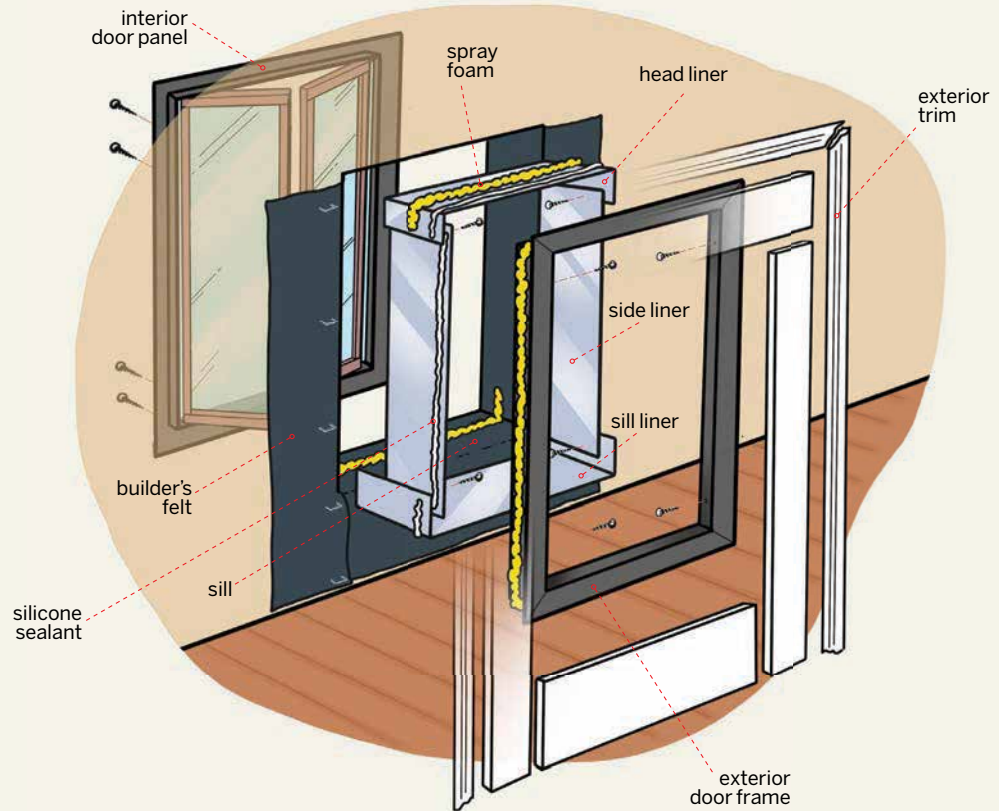
**DAY-TO-DAY  
TIMELINE****SATURDAY** Install the dog door (Steps 1–7).**SUNDAY** Install exterior trim and siding (Step 7).

ILLUSTRATION: DOUG ADAMS

**1** **Prep the inside**

**A] Find the best location** Cut an inspection hole in the drywall near the center of where you want the door to go. Stick in a straightened coat hanger to locate any studs. Here, an outlet box cutout showed where one stud was. Rest the door template's bottom edge on the floor, check it for level, and tape the template to the wall in a stud-free spot, if possible. Drill a horizontal 3/8-inch hole completely through the wall at each template corner, as shown.

**B] Cut out the drywall** Guide a reciprocating saw blade into the holes and make straight cuts between them, as shown. Remove and save any insulation. If no studs are in the opening, go to Step 3. Stuff or spray insulation in any voids behind the drywall and put 2× blocking behind all unsupported edges around the opening. Toe-screw each 2× to the sheathing, then screw the drywall to the 2×s.

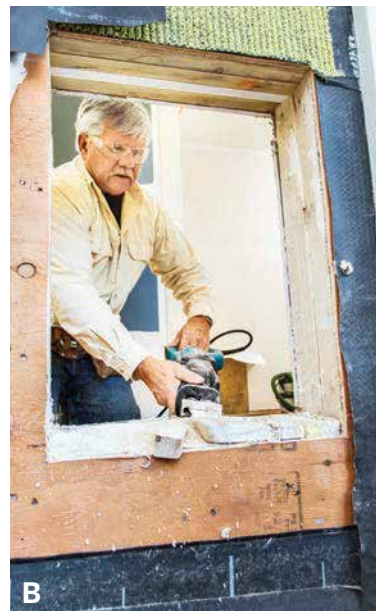
• weekend remodel | dog door

## 2 Reframe the opening

**A] Remove any studs** If studs are in the way of the dog door, make room for a header by cutting out a 5½-inch-wide strip of drywall above the opening. Extend this cutout past both sides of the opening to the nearest stud. In this case, Tom cut through the stud under the window, and saved the cutout piece of drywall. Then, using a reciprocating saw, he cut out the exposed studs, as shown, and used a pry bar to lever them off the sheathing.

**B] Build in a new header** To support the cut studs, build a header in place by screwing 2×6s to the sheathing and to each other, as shown. Here, Tom used three 2×6s, plus an additional filler strip made of 1-inch foam insulation, to make the header flush with the framing. Rest one end of each board on the cut stud under the window.

**C] Add support** Both ends of a header require support, so Tom cut a short 2×6 jack stud to fit tightly between the other end of the header and the bottom plate. After hammering the jack into place against the face of a full-length king stud, he fastened them together with 2½-inch deck screws, as shown. Then he added leftover insulation from Step 1 and filled any voids with spray foam. A second jack stud, set in line with the drywall's cut edge and toe-screwed to the header and bottom plate, ensures that the dog door's inner frame has solid backing on all four sides. Screw the saved strip of drywall onto the header.



## 3 Prep the outside

**A] Cut the sheathing** Remove the siding and house wrap within the area bounded by the holes made in Step 1, and 8 inches beyond. Next, cut through the sheathing on the top and sides of the opening with a reciprocating saw; use the framing alongside the opening to guide the blade. Draw a horizontal line 1½ inches below the lowest holes on either side, and cut along it with a circular saw. Push out the scrap sheathing, as shown.

**B] Rough-in the sill** Trim the bottom of the opening so it's flat and slopes to the outside, as shown. Let the bottom edges of the sheathing and drywall guide the blade.



## 4 Mount the door panel

**A] Patch the drywall** Using a taping knife, fill the screw holes and any cracks around the opening with joint compound.

**B] Attach the interior panel** Fasten the door to the blocking with the screws included in the kit.

**TIP** The door's height above the floor should be 2 inches greater than the height of the dog's shoulder. For door-sizing guidelines, see [thisoldhouse.com/pet-chart](http://thisoldhouse.com/pet-chart).

## 5 Prep the exterior

**A] Weatherproof the opening** Using a utility knife, cut a piece of builder's felt wide enough to reach from the bottom edge of the interior door panel, across the sill, and 8 inches below it. Staple the felt to the sheathing only, not to the sill. Cut two strips of felt 8 inches wide and long enough to reach from 3 inches above the top of the opening to 8 inches below the sill. Slip the top 3 inches of each strip under the existing house wrap, align their long edges with the edges of the opening, and staple them to the sheathing, as shown.

**B] Flash the sill** Cut the bottom piece of felt where it meets the face of the stud on each side of the opening. Press the resulting flap down flat against the sill so its top edge touches the door panel, as shown. Protect the exposed wood in the opening by stapling a strip of builder's felt to each stud face and to the underside of the header. In this installation, Kevin also stapled the siding's yellow rainscreen mesh up to the edges of the opening.

**C] Install the outside frame** To prevent water from getting behind this frame, squirt a bead of spray foam into the frame's inside corner around its entire perimeter, as shown. Immediately press it into place in the opening.

**D] Fasten the frame** As soon as the frame is set, screw it to the studs on the sides of the opening, as shown.



• weekend remodel | dog door

## 6 Install the sill liner

**A] Cut the metal to fit** The aluminum liner provided in the kit is bent in the factory to fit the door width, but it has to be cut in the field to fit the tunnel between the inside door panel and the outside frame. Mark the cutline, then make the cut using a jigsaw or an angle grinder fitted with a metal cut-off wheel, as shown. Here, Tom uses the edge of a piece of scrap trim to guide the cut.

**B] Apply spray foam** Squirt a bead of foam over the sill flashing and partway up the sides, as shown. The foam acts as an adhesive, eliminating the need for fasteners in this vulnerable location.

**C] Set the sill liner** Squeeze a bead of silicone sealant, supplied in the kit, along the outside edge of the liner's bottom face. Now remove the metal's protective film and fit the liner under the bottom edge of the inside frame, as shown. Press down firmly on the liner to ensure that it's securely attached and that there aren't any gaps in the sealant.



## 7 Install the remaining liner pieces and the trim

**A] Attach the head liner** Following the same procedure used in Step 6, install the head liner piece, as shown. Because it's protected from rain, it's okay to screw this liner to the top of the outer frame.

**B] Fit the side liners** Using a jigsaw or an angle grinder, cut each side liner to fit the depth of the tunnel, and trim the lower ends to match the angle of the sill. Cut the upper ends to overlap the ends of the head liner. Apply beads of silicone and spray foam, remove the protective film, and slip the liner in place, as shown.

**C] Fasten the sides and the exterior trim** Screw the lower and upper ends of each side liner to the outer frame, as shown. Now, nail up the exterior trim that surrounds the dog door so it overlaps the face of the outer frame (see page 28). Reinstall the siding up to the trim. ■



### SEE IT DONE

Watch Tom and Kevin install this kit at [thisoldhouse.com/dog-door](http://thisoldhouse.com/dog-door)



“We love this door and so does our seven month old Cairn Terrier MacDuff. We really are impressed with how well the door seals itself. There is absolutely no draft. Truly an exceptional product! Thank you.”

Ian McIntosh – Calgary, Alberta, Canada

“I have had your PlexiDor for several years now. Here in Las Vegas our summer heat exceeds 115 degrees. In the summer, your pet door allows our entry way to remain cool and keep the dust under control.”

M. Bialac, Nevada

“They have stood up to the beating the dogs give them. They keep the heat in the winter and the flies out in the summer.”

Alex Pierson, Ontario, Canada

“We’ve had a PlexiDor for eight years and are amazed at how well it has withstood the pounding of three extremely active Australian Cattle Dogs. These dogs charge through this door at a full run and somehow it has survived, which is more than I can say for most things they get near. Love the door and highly recommend it.”

Mike Cogswell, Virginia

“Our PlexiDor looks nice both inside and outside of the house. It is better than I had thought. We’ve had temperatures of -34° C since it was installed and I didn’t feel any draft from the door. The front doesn’t feel any cooler than the rest of the wall around it. Well insulated.”

Kaylendra, British Columbia, Canada



“I just wanted to say that I installed your PlexiDor 12 years ago. I have four dogs that have access to this door 24 hours a day. Needless to say the door has been used millions of times and I have not had the first problem. Thanks for a great product.”

D. Rickman, Arizona

“I’ve had my PlexiDor since 2000 and it is super tough. My 85 pound Weimaraners blast through the dog door with mammoth bones and there is still not a single scratch on the door panels. My toy Fox Terrier can use it with ease as well. It is the perfect dog door! I love it so much that I plan on adding a second PlexiDor in another location soon.”

C. Tynes, Mississippi

# Manufacturing the world's highest quality pet door begins by using the highest quality components

## Quality

Military grade aluminum frame provides increased durability. Choose from Bronze, White or Silver to compliment the décor of any home.

## Efficiency

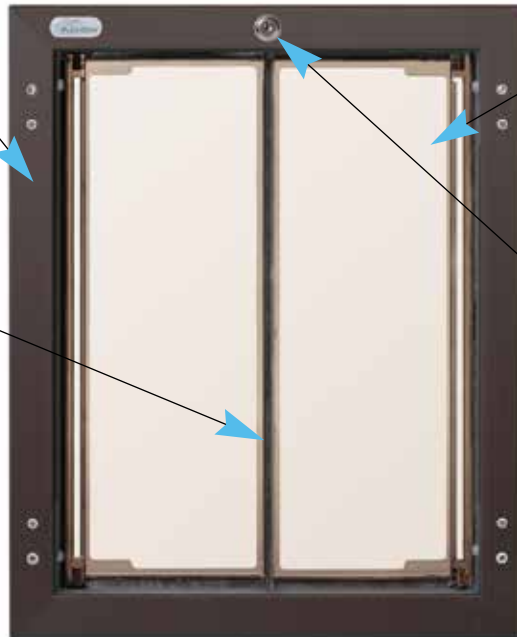
Exclusive K-9 COMPOSITE™ thermo-pane panels are lined with plush weather seal. They provide excellent insulation and superior draft control.

## Innovation

Saloon-style door panels open with a gentle push and close automatically. Heavy-duty springs concealed within the frame ensure quiet operation.

## Security

The key lock feature secures access when not in use. The steel security plate can be applied for added protection while you are away.



PlexiDor Wall Series with Bronze frame

### PlexiDor Frame Colors:



## Aluminum Tunnel

Each **Wall Series** pet door comes with an aluminum tunnel kit that connects the interior and exterior frames. The bottom section of the wall tunnel has an outward slope to prevent water from entering your home. The tunnel will not rust, has no sharp edges and is easy to keep clean.



We are proud to have been featured by **This Old House** in their pet door installation project. View the article online and watch the full episode by visiting [PlexiDors.com](http://PlexiDors.com).

Article content is ©2018 This Old House Ventures, LLC. Reprinted with permission.



## PlexiDor® Performance Pet Doors

PDUSA, Inc., 4523 30th Street West #E502, Bradenton, Florida 34207 USA

Toll-Free: 1-800-749-9609 Website: [www.PlexiDors.com](http://www.PlexiDors.com)

