

The 2026 Cardinal Feeder Quality Audit

Section 1: Ergonomics & Bird Comfort

- **Perch Width:** Are perches at least 1 inch wide or is there a stable landing tray?
- **Surface Stability:** Does the feeder remain level when 3–4 ounces of pressure (cardinal weight) is applied?
- **Body Clearance:** Is there enough vertical space (min. 6-8 inches) for a cardinal to stand upright without hitting its head?

Section 2: Material & Durability

- **Material Grade:** Is it made of HDPE (High-Density Polyethylene) or powder-coated metal? (Avoid thin, brittle plastics).
- **UV Resistance:** Is the reservoir clear polycarbonate with UV-stabilization to prevent yellowing/cracking?
- **Hardware:** Are hinges and hangers made of stainless or galvanized steel to prevent rust?

Section 3: Safety & Health (E-E-A-T Standards)

- **The 3-30 Rule:** Can this feeder be placed <3ft or >30ft from your windows?
- **Drainage Integrity:** Does the base have at least 4 unobstructed drainage holes to prevent seed mold?
- **Sanitation Access:** Can the feeder be fully disassembled for a 10% bleach soak in under 2 minutes?

Section 4: Placement Strategy

- **Shelter Proximity:** Is there a dense shrub or tree within 5–10 feet for a quick retreat?
- **Baffle Compatibility:** Does the design allow for a squirrel/raccoon baffle on the pole or hanger?

Verdict: * **10-12 Checks:** Elite Choice. Highly likely to attract a nesting pair.

- **7-9 Checks:** Functional. May require frequent maintenance.
- **Below 7:** Risk of "Empty Feeder Syndrome." Consider a different model.