

Fresh Connections in Urban Agriculture

Raised Beds

A practical solution for people with limited space who want to garden.

WHAT ARE RAISED BEDS?

Raised bed gardening is a form of gardening in which soil is retained in a container above the ground. These containers can be made of wood, stone, or even block. There is no hard bottom or top to these. It is simply a frame that holds your soil compost mix.

BENEFITS

- Adds vertical root space and prevents soil compaction.
- Reduces risks associated with some pests.
- Less bending and kneeling when tending your garden.
- Ideal for smaller spaces where a conventional garden might not work.
- Tend to look neater, are easier to maintain, and are very productive because planting is in weed free soil that is well drained and usually intensively managed.

CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES

Try to level the ground where you plan on building. It is important to choose an area that will provide adequate sunlight. 6 - 8 hours per day is recommended. Raised beds are typically made with 2"x8" boards. The length of them is entirely up to the person designing the bed. Most commonly used are 2"x8"x6' boards. Start by marking out where you want your first bed located. In each of the inside corners, place a 2 foot piece of 4"x4" wood. These will serve as corners to screw and secure your outside boards. Once you've made your rectangle two boards high, line the inside perimeter with a plastic liner. This creates a barrier between the wood and soil to help prolong the life of the boards. Fill the bottom 1/3 with wood chips or compost to provide drainage, and fill within a few inches of the top with soil or a soil/compost mix for the planting medium.

MATERIAL LIST

Based on these guidelines, you will need:

- (6) 2"x8"x6'
- (1) 4"x4"x8'
- Plastic garden liner at least 18' long and minimum 16" wide and utility knife to cut the excess.
- A saw to cut the lumber for ends and inside corners.
- A screwdriver or drill with the appropriate bit to match the screws you plan on using
- A small box of 3" screws (for securing the frame of your garden together)
- Staple gun & Staples (for stapling the plastic to the inside perimeter)
- Measuring tape
- Pencil for marking measurements
- Shovel
- Soil, compost and mulch
- Plants and seeds of choice



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