

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

How to: Start a Raised Garden Bed

When starting a home garden, gardeners have many different avenues to consider, one of which is the raised garden bed. A raised bed allows for better drainage, more control over sprawling vegetables and the soil warms quicker after the winter months. Normal gardens must be planted in well-drained areas with good soil but raised gardens can be planted anywhere there's good light as they sit above the ground, even on slopes. Raised garden beds can be used for both low-profile vegetables and those that vine.



[Raised garden bed kits available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

How to build:

Gardeners can construct their own raised garden bed out of materials like wood, concrete or stone. Use a piece of string to layout the dimensions for your raised bed. Dimensions depend on how large you want your garden to be, with a good starting size using 8-foot materials. Construct the perimeter of the bed, and more natural items like logs or stones don't require nailing. However, it's important to choose products like cedar, which naturally resists decay.

Build the bed so it's at least 8 inches deep. Once the bed is constructed, mow the area you will place the bed. You don't need to remove all the grass like for a home garden but adding a layer of plastic over the grass below the raised bed can keep the grass at bay.

Calculate the amount of soil you will need by measuring the bed and fill with soil. Moisten the soil and allow it to set for 24 hours.

Instead of building the raised bed, it's possible to purchase boxes that snap together to make the entire process easier.

Spacing vegetables in a raised garden:

A raised garden bed allows you to plant more produce in less space, as it doesn't require rows to work among the vegetables. Rely on seed packet instructions for spacing your vegetable. As long as the raised garden hasn't been constructed too wide, the gardener should be able to reach the center of the garden from the outside of the bed from all sides. Since raised garden beds require less space and allow for plants to grow together, it cuts down on weed growth.

Planting in a raised garden:

Add trellises to the raised bed to allow for the growth of vining or taller plants but keep them on the north side and add low-profile vegetables where shade won't hinder their growth. If there's space for multiple raised



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beds in your yard, dedicate one raised bed to vegetables and one to flowers and herbs. Adding a layer of mulch can prevent weeds even further and retain moisture.

Since raised garden beds have a looser soil, they are ideal for root crops, which grow underground.

Maintaining a raised bed:

Continue adding compost to amend the soil in the garden to all for continuous, healthy growth of the vegetables. Raised gardens can be made bigger as time goes on and experience increases.

You can find everything you need to start and maintain a raised garden bed from kits to seeds on our website at [ufseeds.com!](http://ufseeds.com)



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