

Build a Simple Raised Garden Bed

Spring is the perfect time to start a garden, and a raised garden bed is one of the easiest ways to grow vegetables, herbs, or flowers. Raised beds improve drainage, allow you to control soil quality, and make gardening easier on your back and knees.



With a few basic materials and an afternoon of work, you can build a sturdy raised bed that will last for years.

What You'll Need

- ▶ Four untreated boards (commonly 2x6 or 2x8 lumber)
- ▶ Four wooden stakes or corner posts
- ▶ Exterior deck screws
- ▶ Drill or screwdriver
- ▶ Saw (if boards need cutting)
- ▶ Level
- ▶ Soil and compost mix

Many gardeners start with a 4-foot by 4-foot bed, which is large enough to grow several plants but small enough to reach the center from all sides.

Step 1: Choose the Right Location

Select a spot that receives 6–8 hours of sunlight per day, especially if you plan to grow vegetables. The area should be fairly level and drain well after rain.

Step 2: Assemble the Frame

Lay the boards out in a square or rectangle. Secure the corners using screws and wooden stakes or posts for extra support. Pre-drilling holes can help prevent the wood from splitting.

Step 3: Prepare the Ground

Remove grass or weeds inside the frame. Some gardeners place a layer of cardboard on the ground to help suppress weeds while still allowing water to drain.

A QUICK SAFETY REMINDER

If your gardening plans involve installing posts, trellises, or digging deeper into the ground, remember to contact Indiana 811 before you dig. This free service helps locate underground utilities and prevents accidental damage.

With a little preparation, your raised garden bed can provide fresh produce, colorful flowers, and a rewarding outdoor hobby all season long.

Step 4: Fill with Soil

Fill the bed with a mixture of garden soil and compost. This combination provides nutrients and helps plants grow strong roots. Water lightly after filling so the soil can settle.

Step 5: Start Planting

Raised beds are perfect for beginner-friendly crops such as lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, herbs, radishes, and carrots. Follow spacing recommendations on seed packets or plant labels and keep soil evenly watered.