



4' x 10' Raised Garden Bed Building Instructions

Materials:

- 2 2" x 10" x 10' Treated Lumber
- 1 2" x 10" x 8' Treated Lumber
- 1 2" x 4" x 8' Treated Lumber
- 28 2 ½" Exterior Screws Rated for Treated Lumber
- Cardboard, newspaper, or burlap (optional but recommended)
- Drill
- 1.25 Cubic Yards of Soil

Information about your Raised Bed

Raised beds are a great way to grow edible and ornamental plants. The added height makes weeding and planting easier while creating a nice defined border for the garden that keeps everything looking neat and tidy. Raised beds also allow the addition of high quality soil to grow plants in, which is usually in short supply around homes where good topsoil was scraped off or mixed with much lower quality clay subsoil during construction. Bringing in the soil for the raised bed also allows you to avoid the possible danger of soil contaminants like lead.

Deciding Where to Put Your Raised Bed

Remember that if you want to grow vegetables, you should put your raised bed in an area that gets at least 8-10 hours of full sunlight a day during the growing season. If your bed receives less than 8-10 hours of sunlight you can still grow vegetables, but it will be more difficult with lower yields. You also want to pick a spot that is level. It is fine if there is a slight slope. Fill in any wet or boggy areas or divots to level the ground and help with drainage.

Once you have a general idea of where you want the raised bed to go, you can decide exactly where you want it. Although you can put the bed against something like a fence or wall, having it easily accessible with at least 4 feet on each side will allow you to easily reach everything in the bed and provide enough space to get a wheelbarrow around all sides. Some gardeners recommend orienting the 10-foot side of the bed on the east west axis so that you can plant more tall plants without shading other shorter plants.

If desired, you can draw a sketch of your lot and move around a piece of paper representing the bed that is the right scale to decide where it looks best before you start assembling it.

Assembling Your Raised Bed

Note: It is usually much easier to assemble the bed at its final location than to try and move the bed once assembled.



Step 1:

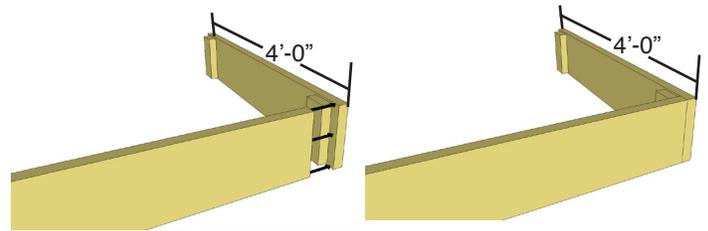
Cut the 2” x 10” x 8’ board into two 4’ long sections, these are the end boards. Then from the 2” x 4” x 8’ board cut 4 9” long pieces, these are the corner support blocks. Using the 2” x 4” pieces you have left over, place the thinner side flush with the end of the 2” x 10” x 4’ piece as a spacer. Then, using two screws, attach one of the corner support blocks to the end board. This can be seen below with the circles on the support block representing approximately where the screws should go.



Repeat this on the other side of the end board so there is a support block on both ends of the end board, as shown at left.

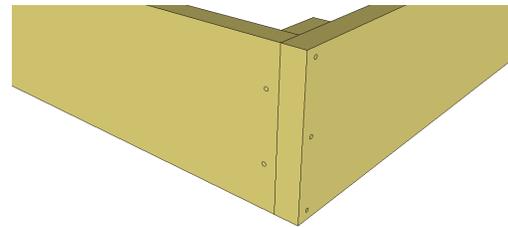
Step 2:

Put the side board flush with the support block on the end board so that the tops of the side board and end board are flush with each other like the images to the right.



Step 3:

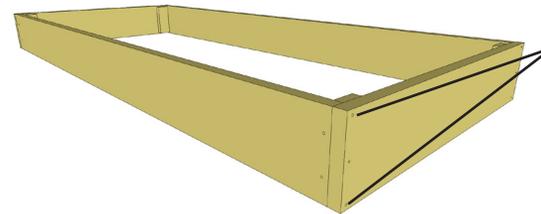
Secure the side board to the support block of the end board with two evenly spaced screws, as shown in the image to the right. Next secure the end board to the side board with three screws through the end board into the side board. It is helpful to have one person using the drill and a second person squaring the corners to keep all boards flush.



Put the 5 screws approximately where you see these 5 circles.

Step 4:

Repeat step 2 and 3 for the remaining 3 corners of the raised bed, finishing the raised bed assembly.



Put the 5 screws approximately where you see these 5 circles in each corner.

Filling the Bed

Once the raised bed is assembled and where you want it, we recommend lining the bottom of the bed with some sort of decomposable material to smother grass and weeds. Good materials for this are cardboard, several layers of newspaper, or even burlap bags. We do not recommend weed mat or plastic as these materials can restrict water flow and root growth. Now fill the bed with soil, mounding the soil over the top of the bed height since the soil will settle over time. Each 4’x10’ bed will require 1.25 cubic yards of soil. If you get your soil from St. Louis Composting, we recommend you get the “Garden Mix” soil blend. You can continue to top off your bed each year with compost, more soil, or other soil amendments to maintain the fertility and keep the bed nice and full of soil. That’s it. You are ready to start growing!

Lumber Source

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Soil Source

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Call or see their website for locations in the St. Louis region