



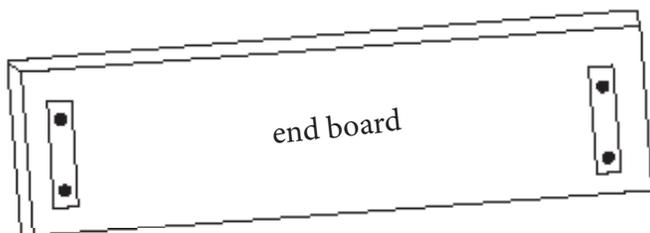
A GUIDE TO BUILDING A RAISED BED

Before constructing your raised bed, make sure the property is free from low spots. A slight slope is fine, just fill in and level any wet or boggy areas that retain water after rainfall. Next, decide on the size of the raised beds. 4' x 12' and 5' x 10' beds are common sizes, but other dimensions are appropriate depending on the site. Keep in mind that 3 feet is comfortable reaching distance for an adult gardener. So if the bed is not accessible from both sides, do not exceed 3 feet in depth. With your bed size in mind, make an accurate drawing of the lot. Sketch in the raised beds with accurate measurements. Some gardeners recommend aligning the beds with long measurements going east-west since that will allow for planting more tall plants without having them shading out the shorter ones. Allow 3 to 4 feet walkways between beds so that a wheelbarrow can pass through or two gardeners can comfortably pass by one another. At this point, you may decide to change bed dimensions to better make use of the lot space.

BED CONSTRUCTION

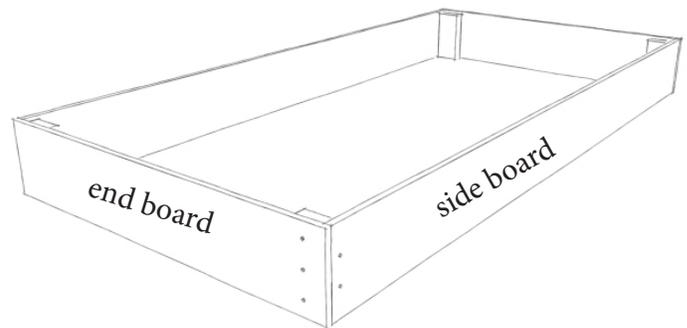
Materials:

- (2) side boards 2"x10" at 4-20 feet in length
- (2) end boards 2"x10" at 2-5 feet in length
- (4) corner blocks 2"x4" at 9" long
- (28) 2^{1/2}" exterior wood screws
- Cardboard or newspapers



STEP ONE

Measure the thickness of your boards and mark that distance from the edge of your end boards (approximately 1.5"). Double-check that when you align the side board and end board that they will be flush. Screw two corner blocks to each end board using two screws for each corner



STEP TWO

Next, insert the side board flush with the corner block on your end board. Secure the end board to the side board with three screws spaced equally. Then, secure the long board to the corner block with, careful not to drill into the corner block screws. Repeat for the remaining corners. It is helpful to have one person with the drill and the other person squaring the corners keeping all boards flush.

Optional: If the board is 12 feet or more, a wooden stake driven in at its center will provide much needed support. Beds have a tendency to bow out due to weight of soil and pressure from growing roots. Drive stake into ground, about 1 inch below top of long board, and then screw board to stake.



HOW TO GUIDE

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STEP THREE

Build the beds near their final positions in the garden to avoid carrying the fully assembled beds. You will still need to move them a little to get the perfect line-up. When the bed is in its final place in the garden, place cardboard or newspapers inside the bed to completely cover any grass or weeds. This barrier will smother the growth of the unwanted plants and decompose over time.

STEP FOUR

Fill the bed with soil, mounding the soil over the top of the bed height since the soil will settle over time. Treated lumber beds can last 10-15 years with little maintenance. Each year top off the bed with compost, soil or another amendment to ensure proper amounts of soil in the bed.

COST

Lumber prices vary, but are generally a little over \$1 per foot. Soil is approximately \$25 per cubic yard.

LUMBER SOURCE

Most of GGI's lumber for raised garden beds is purchased from:

Fehlig Brothers Lumber Company

1909 Cole Street

St. Louis, MO 63106

Phone: 314.241.6900 | Fax: 314.436.0315

<http://fehligbrotherslumber.com/>

Lumber orders can be placed through Gateway Greening sales tax-free.

SOIL SOURCE

St Louis Composting

(636) 861-3344

<http://stlcompost.com>

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

Route 66 Landscape Supply Center, Inc.

18900 Franklin Road

Pacific, MO 63069

636.271-3352



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Visit Bell Garden at 3871 Bell Ave, St. Louis, MO 63108 on Saturdays from 9am-12pm, March-October to see raised beds planted using both square foot and traditional methods.