

How to Build a Raised Garden Bed

Materials Needed for a 4' x 9' Garden Bed:

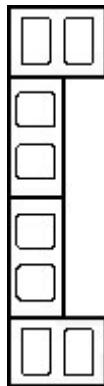
1. Cement Cinder Blocks (48 total; use 24 per level, 2 levels high)
2. Shovel
3. Rake
4. Gloves (if desired when handling cinder blocks)
5. Fertile Soil (3 cubic yards)

Hints:

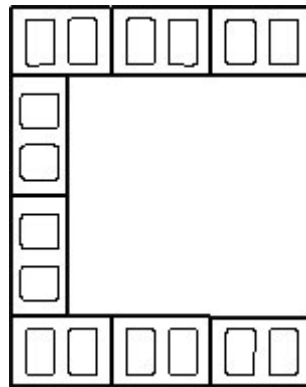
- If the ground is uneven, lay the first level of cinder blocks. Then, you can even out the height of the blocks by adding or removing dirt from under each block until they are all stable and level.
- Finish each layer before starting as new one.
- Drawings show block position, but do not show the actual number of blocks indicated in the Materials Needed.

Steps:

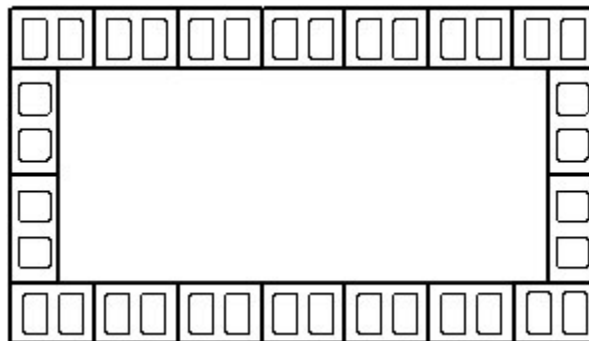
1. Build the corners and edge of one side.
 - a. Lay blocks with the holes facing up. Make sure the blocks are touching and eliminate any gaps between them.



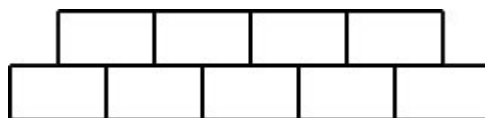
2. Add blocks simultaneously (for alignment) to both sides extending from the corners.



3. Enclose the structure by building the last two corners.



4. View the structure to make sure the blocks are placed tightly together and are as flat and as even as possible. If a block is wobbly, move the block and use a shovel to either add or remove dirt from where it sits. Then, replace the block.
5. Start placing the 2nd layer of blocks on top of the 1st layer. Stagger the 2nd layer over the joints of the 1st layer for stability.



6. Shovel the soil into your bed and start planting!

Choosing Where to Put Your Garden Bed

Sunlight:

- Make sure the area where your bed will be gets at least 6 hours of direct sunlight each day.
- If the best location has some shade, locate cool-season crops, such as lettuce, radishes, carrots, and cabbage in partial shade. The warm-season crops, such as sweet corn, snap peas, tomatoes, and peppers need full sun.

Water Source:

- The bed needs to be located near a water source, such as a spicket or well. If this is not possible, attach a long hose to the water source that will reach your garden.

Handicap Accessible:

- If someone with a disability will use your garden, be sure there is plenty of room around the bed for a wheelchair.
- Remove any large rocks and fill in any holes to make the ground more even.
- Build your bed three layers high, instead of two. This will make it easier for someone in a wheelchair to reach the plants. Also, this will be a convenient height if the gardener wants to sit on the edge while they garden.
- Change the conformation of the garden so it is long and narrow. This makes it much easier for the gardener to reach all of the plants, and decreases their risk of falling.

Location

- Locate the garden near your house so it is convenient to garden in your spare time. This also makes it easier to spot new vegetables that are ready to be picked.