

RAISED BEDS



Raised bed gardening refers to gardening in soil that has been mounded or contained higher than the surrounding soil. The "raised" part means that the soil level in the bed is higher than the surrounding soil, and "bed" implies a size small enough to work without actually stepping onto the bed. A bed should be no wider than 4 feet, but length can be whatever suits the site or a gardener's needs. Wider beds can be subdivided into sections accessible from planks or stepping stones.

Building soil is a critical step in ensuring healthy and uninterrupted plant growth. Plants thrive in loose and well aerated soil as it allows for better root penetration as well as appropriate moisture, air, temperature and nutrients. Raised planting beds are time-tested method which must always be positioned from North to South, so as to get even sunlight. The curved surface of the raised beds provides more surface area for penetration and interaction of air, light, water and soil.

Raised beds produce a variety of benefits: they extend the planting season; and they can reduce weeds if designed properly. Since the gardener does not walk on the raised beds, the soil is not compacted and the roots have an easier time growing. The close plant spacing and the use of compost generally result in higher yields with raised beds in comparison to conventional row gardening. Depending on the nature of the soil available, preparing raised beds can be done either by the double-dig or single-dig method.