

How to Make a Simple 3'x8' Raised Bed

Supplies:

- (2) 12'-long 2x10s
- (20) 3" decking screws
- Electric or cordless drill
- Circular saw or radial arm saw
- Level
- Tape measure

Note: Always buy untreated wood (fir, larch, cedar or redwood), especially if the beds are going to be used for edible crops. The chemicals found in wood sealants, paint and preservers can leach into the soil and subsequently into the produce you are growing. Even if you are growing flowers, the wood doesn't need to be painted or sealed. Because the sun will hit the outsides of the bed, the wood will stay relatively dry and last for many years.



1. **Cut** – With a radial arm saw or circular saw, cut each 12'-long board into a 3' length and an 8' length (left photo).

2. **Mark the screw holes** – Take the two 3'-long boards and mark where the screw holes will be predrilled to make assembly easier. Using a pencil, mark your holes 1" in from each short edge of the board (see photo at right) at 1", 3", 4 3/4", 6 1/2" and 8 1/2". Pre-drill the holes.



3. **Prepare site** – Prepare a level area for your new raised bed.



4. **Assemble** – Stand up the 8'-long boards lengthwise, about 3 feet apart. Place a 3'-long board at the end of the two 8'-long boards and line up the edges. Using a drill with a Phillips-head screw bit, fasten the short boards onto the ends of the long boards (see photo at left) using the 3"-long decking screws.

5. **Put the bed in place** – Your bed is now ready to set in place. Using a level, check the bed both lengthwise and width-wise to make sure it is level.
6. **Fill it!** Fill the bed with garden soil and compost, composted manure and/or organic soil amendments up to about 2" from the top of the bed. If you use a 3-way mix, be sure to add plenty of organic amendments as the mix will be sterile. Enjoy!