

RAISED BEDS- THEIR BENEFITS, CARING FOR ONE, AND HOW TO MAKE ONE.

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WHY HAVE A RAISED BED

- *Assist with mobility issues, making gardening accessible and easy again.*
- *Less work*
- *Space limitations*
- *Very poor soil- stony, heavy clay, contaminated or very shallow.*
- *The soil will heat up much quicker in spring*
- *Plant more in your space compared to the ground*

MATERIALS A RAISED BED CAN BE MADE OUT OF

Anything can be used to make a raised bed, even just raising up the soil with a layer of mulch such as garden compost will be classed as a raised bed.

Timber is normally first on the list. When buying timber try and make sure it's sustainable- do this by buying locally felled timber, timber from trees that are grown for that purpose or timber from companies that get the wood from woodland management.

don't worry about wood being pressure treated or oiled as nowadays it's okay to use with it being copper they use not arsenic anymore..



Even upcycling wood you have in the house, garden etc. such as pallets or an old dresser you had etc.



Concrete blocks, bricks, landscaping stone can also be used.

You can also buy packs online for an easy raised bed starting at £30 up to £200 and up for wooden ones.

When erecting your raised bed, it may be a good idea to prolong the lifespan by coating with wood varnish and / or putting a protective layer on the inside such as landscape fabric, i.e. terram and make sure its breathable- hold in place by a strip bit of wood, heavy duty staples or nails.



GROWING MEDIUM FOR A RAISED BEDS

When choosing what to put into a raised bed. Please don't waste your money and buy loamless or solely compost, this is because this will degrade within the year or two and lose all structure making it impossible to hold any moisture, nutrients or substance.

Instead opt for topsoil mixed with garden compost or manure and a fertiliser. Buying general purpose to premium quality grade is for this purpose or adding to your existing garden soil.

What is topsoil ?

Topsoil is the upper layer of soil you naturally have in your garden. It's high in nutrients and organic matter.

AFTERCARE OF RAISED BEDS

Watering and mulching.

Watering a raised bed and keeping it moist can be tricky. To make this easier make sure you have the right mix of growing medium as mentioned above with plenty of organic matter. This will increase the amount of water the soil can hold. To stop moisture evaporating and to shade the surface of the soil mulching is always a good idea. Using wood chips, sawdust, bark, straw etc. all these will preserve moisture and suppress weeds. (using fibrous material such as sawdust, wood chips etc. wont take nitrogen out of the soil. This will only be an issue when mixed in. so be mindful of not mixing it in.)

Feeding

If there are signs that your raised beds are lacking nutrients such as slow growth, yellow leaves and lack of fruit. Then top dressing with mushroom compost, home compost or well rotted manure at a depth of 9 cm apx. A liquid fertilizer such as seaweed will help to be added to hungry crops throughout the growing season

Any queries ? Email us !! CardenEden@orevalleyha.org.uk

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