

RAISED BED GARDENS PREPARE & BUILD

Recommendations and considerations for building a raised bed vegetable garden



Location, Location, Location

Build your garden in a spot that will allow for maximum growing ability. An ideal location for growing veggies:

- Gets 6-8 hours of full sunlight.
- Is on level ground.
- Is close to a water source.
- Is easily accessed by those who will be maintaining the garden.



Lumber Size & Shape

Thickness - 2 inches

- Thinner boards are too flimsy and will bow overtime.

Width - 4 feet

- The center of the bed is easily accessible from both sides.
- Lumber is readily available in 4-foot-length multiples, minimizing the amount of sawing needed.

Length - 8 or 12 feet

- Length is mostly determined by space available at garden location.
- Other considerations include:
 - size of vehicle that is transporting lumber (i.e. can you fit a 12 ft. board in your car?)
 - lumber availability at retailer

Depth - 8 inches (6 inches minimum)

- Most plants prefer a 6 to 12 inch rooting zone or deeper.
- Taller beds require less bending and have more root space, but require more soil and possibly more lumber.

Lumber Recommendations

There are a few types of lumber KCCG suggests using for your raised bed garden. Each comes with considerations, but the final decision of which to use is up to the individual gardener's goals and budget.

- **Cedar and Redwood**
 - Naturally water-resistant
 - Untreated
 - 7-10 year lifespan
 - Expensive
- **Pine and Fir**
 - Untreated
 - 3-5 year lifespan
 - Cheaper option
- **Treated Lumber***
 - Appropriate options include Alkaline Copper Quaternary (ACQ) also known as Copper Azole (CA or MCA)
 - 15+ year lifespan
 - Cheaper than cedar

**After much research, KCCG has determined that treated lumber, as mentioned above, is safe for use in edible raised bed gardening. We do recommend you take precautions while cutting and building with treated lumber (i.e. wear gloves, masks, etc.)*



Soil Recommendations

Soil quality is a very important ingredient in a successful raised bed garden. KCCG recommends a 50/50 mixture of top soil and organic matter (compost).

- **Bulk (sold by cubic yard)**
 - Most cost effective (especially for larger projects)
 - Requires a pick-up truck for hauling
 - 1 cu. yd. per 4x12 raised bed
- **Bagged (sold by cubic foot)**
 - Much more expensive than bulk and not recommended for filling new raised beds
 - Good option for topping off existing soil
 - Can be transported in car or SUV
 - 27 cu. ft. per 4x12 raised bed



Materials to Avoid

- Some Treated Lumber
 - Methyle Bromide Treated Pallets (MB)
 - Railroad Ties (Creosote)
- Tires



RAISED BED GARDENS

4X12 CEDAR

How to build a notched 4x12 cedar raised bed garden "KCCG Style"

Tools

- quick square tool (to mark precise lines)
- measuring tape (at least 12 ft. long)
- marker
- circular saw
- sawzall or jigsaw or handsaw
- lumber template*
- drill and bit (3/16 of an inch)
- hammer

Materials

- plywood/cardboard (for the template*)
- 2"x8"x12' cedar lumber (2 boards per bed)
- 2"x8"x8' cedar lumber (1 board per bed)
- 4" pole barn nails (16 per bed)
- 1 cubic yard of KC Compost enriched topsoil
- coffee bags, cardboard, or landscape fabric (to line beds)

Suggested Retailers

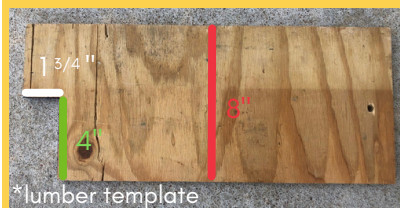
- Schutte Lumber - <https://schuttelumber.com/>
- Owen Lumber - <https://owenlumber.com/>
- KC Compost - <https://www.kccompost.com/>
- Home Depot or Lowes - any location with available supplies

If tools are limited, have retail associate cut lumber to size and use brackets to secure corners instead of notching. Then proceed with lining bed and filling with soil.

Making a Template & Marking the Lumber

1

Create your lumber template by measuring and cutting a piece of plywood or cardboard. The height will be 8" (same as your lumber) and the notches will be $1\frac{3}{4}$ " across and 4" down.



2

Measure and mark all long (12ft.) boards to exactly 12 ft. Most rough cut cedar tends to be a little over.



3

Use your template to mark the notches on either end of your 12ft. boards. Don't forget to mark your notch starting at the true 12ft. line.



4

Mark your 8 ft. board at 4ft. to divide the board in half. The new 4ft. boards will be your short boards. Use your template to mark notches for all four ends of your short boards.



Cutting the Lumber

1

Use the circular saw to trim excess length off all boards.



2

Use the circular saw to cut the 8ft. board in half, making your two 4ft. (short) boards.



3

Use the circular saw to cut out notches on all boards. The circular saw will not cut the notches out completely. To finish the job, use a hand saw or sawzall to neatly complete the cuts. *Alternatively, use a jigsaw for all notch cuts.*



4

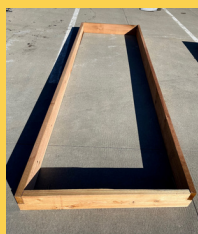
Use your drill and bit to predrill two holes at the end of each long and short board.



Building the Bed

1

Fit boards together to form a rectangle.



2

Find the pre-drilled holes and hammer in four nails per corner to assemble raised bed.



3

Place raised bed in desired location. Line bed with coffee bags, then fill with soil.



4

Celebrate! You built a garden!

