

Raised Bed Guidance

When building a raised bed there are a few important factors to consider:

1. Use wood that is rot resistant. Do not use pressure treated wood as it can leach the chemicals over time into the soil. Best practice is to use hemlock or cedar.
2. Use corner braces for all sizes of raised beds. When building taller standing beds, be sure to add supports to the center of the long sides as well.
3. Be sure that the soil you purchase is a garden mix. 50/50 topsoil and compost at a minimum. There are raised bed mixes that include coconut coir or peat moss that support drainage and water retention.
4. Be sure to always have a mix of standing beds (30" tall) and standard beds (12" tall). This provides accessibility, although does not fulfill ADA requirements as the standing beds are not wheelchair accessible.
5. The soil will settle, especially in the first year. Make sure to budget accordingly to "top off" the beds in the fall. This may range from a couple inches to 6" or 8" depending on the depth of the bed.
6. When building a tall bed, you can consider putting a layer of hay bales and soil on top to defer the cost of soil.

Material needs:

Size of bed	Sides	Supports	Weed barrier	Soil
4'x8'x12"	(3) 2"x12"x8'	(4) 4"x4"x12"	1 (24"x50')	1.5 yards
4'x8'x30"	(9) 2"x10"x8'	(6) 4"x4"x30"	1 (24"x50')	3 yards

Cost:

Size of bed	Sides	Supports	Weed barrier	Soil	Total Cost
4'x8'x12"	\$50.40	\$15.20	\$15	\$90	\$170.60
4'x8'x30"	\$126	\$30.40	\$15	\$180	\$351.40

These costs are subject to change based on location. These estimates were provided back on using current costs as of 3/20/2022 at Clifford Lumber and Gardener's Supply. These costs also do not include screws, tools for cutting and measuring lumber, or labor.