

# HOW TO START AN ORGANIC VEGETABLE GARDEN BED

Starting an organic raised vegetable garden bed can seem like a daunting task, especially if you have never gardened before. However, with a little planning and preparation, you can create a thriving garden that will provide you with fresh, organic produce all season long. In this guide, we will go over the steps to take to establish an organic raised vegetable garden bed.

## Choose a location

- Look for an area in your yard that gets at least six hours of direct sunlight each day and has some shelter from the wind
- Also consider how you will water your garden and how close it is to the house for convenience.
- Once you have found the perfect spot, mark out the area where you want your garden bed to be.



## Build the garden bed

- You have the choice of various materials to choose from to form any size, shape and height. Examples are brick, wood stone and metal.
- If you choose wood, make sure it is untreated as over time, toxins can leach from the wood if it is treated.
- An untreated hardwood like [macrocarpa](#) is rot resistant and looks great.
- Build it at least 30cm high to enable a good sized growing zone in your bed in your organic mix.

## Add a layer of mulch

- Add a layer of mulch to the bottom of your garden bed. This will help to suppress weeds and retain moisture. You can use a variety of materials for mulch, such as leaves, straw, bark mulch or even cardboard.

## Fill the garden bed

- The right mix is crucial for planting in when planting in a raised garden bed or box. [Intelligro Organic Growing mix](#) is certified organic and is ready to plant straight into.
- You want at least 30 to 40cm of the organic growing mix in the top of your bed to plant into.
- If you have a taller raised garden, then you can fill the bottom with [Intelligro Certified Organic Compost](#) or [Intelligro Garden soil mix](#) which is a 50/50 blend of compost and soil.

## Plant your vegetables

- Now it is time to plant your vegetables, start by choosing the plants you want to grow and you know you will eat.
- Make sure to read the seed packets or plant labels for information on spacing and planting depth and timing for your crop.
- An important part of going organic is buying certified organic seeds or seedlings. Most plant stores will carry a certified organic range.

## Water and fertilize your plants

- Once your plants are in the ground, it is important to water them regularly. Most vegetables need at least 2cm of water per week, either from rainfall or watering.
- After a couple of months of growing your veggies, add some compost to keep your plants healthy and productive. Plants will take nutrients from the mix that will need to be replenished.
- [Certified organic compost](#) is an excellent option. Not only does it feed your mix, but it also adds organic material to increase the biological activity in your mix.

## Monitor for pests and diseases

- Unfortunately, pests and diseases are a part of gardening. Keep an eye out for any signs of damage or disease on your plants, such as holes in leaves or yellowing leaves.
- [Kiwicare Organic Spraying Oil](#) is a ready to use spraying oil that is effective against common insect pests.
- You can also use natural pest control methods, such as crop rotation, and handpicking pests off your plants.

## Harvest your vegetables

- Most vegetables will be ready to harvest when they are fully ripe, which can be determined by their colour and texture.
- It's important to harvest your vegetables regularly to keep the plants producing more fruit.

## Tips

- A great tip is to dig a little channel around where your bed will sit on and put down gravel for your bed to sit on. This will minimise soil contact on wooden beds.
- Read the labels of everything that you put into your garden and make sure it is certified organic, if you are unsure then ask.
- Build an ecosystem around your garden bed, add some flowers to invite bees and beneficial insects to your garden.