

IMPORTANT



- Before assembly and whilst unpacking, please be aware that there are sharp corners and edges that could cause injury and it is advisable to wear protective gloves when handling these items, sensible shoes are also recommended. Until such time as the SAFETY EDGE is fitted all necessary precautions need to be undertaken to avoid injury.
- We recommend placing the bottom edge of the bed on a layer of 10-20mm gravel, this allows excellent drainage and protects the bottom edge of the bed. Placing the bed on level ground is also advised.
- If filling with a bobcat or backhoe fill initial 1/3 of bed slowly. Also when filling your veggie bed do not climb in as this puts unnecessary pressure onto the bed.

ASSEMBLY

STEP 1

Remove protective plastic covering (on all coloured beds). Choose shape from available configurations (as shown below) and lay panels out on ground accordingly.

STEP 2

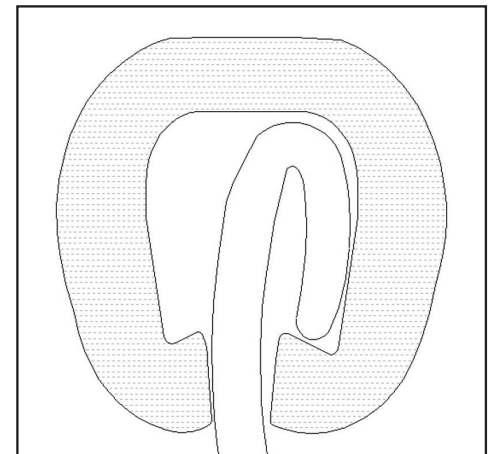
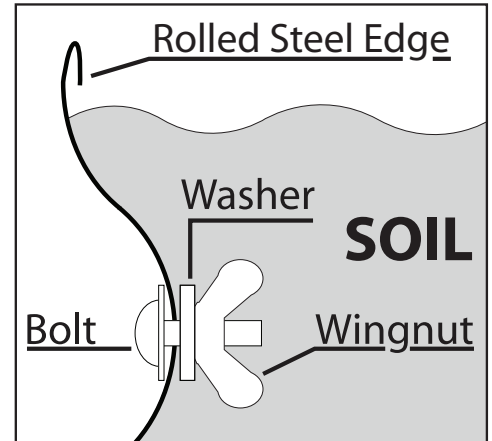
Please follow assembly diagram paying special attention to making sure the rolled steel edge is facing inwards in relation to the bed.

Initially attach all wing nuts loosely & then tighten using the wingnut tension tool as supplied (a screwdriver/cordless drill assists with this process). Failure to tighten each nut and bolt to its maximum may cause failure.

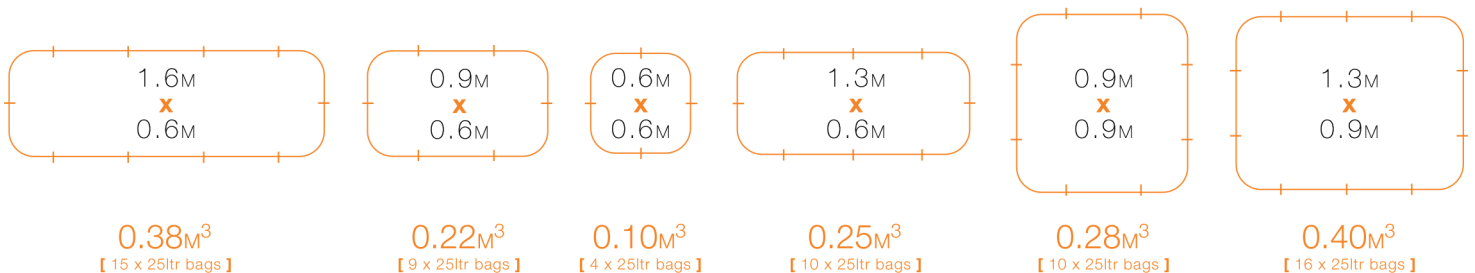
ENSURE THAT YOU ATTACH THE CORNERS ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE STRAIGHT SHEETS

STEP 3

Simply push the rubber edging onto the rolled steel edge and trim excess. The safety edging is designed to lock onto the rolled steel edge making it more permanent.



CONFIGURATIONS



DUE TO THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS BED SIZING MAY VARY +/-50MM

CLIMATE ZONE

Visit www.birdiesgardenproducts.com.au where you will find a 12 month print ready table of what veggies are actually going to grow best for the climate you live in. If you are unable to access this please contact us and we will mail a copy to you.

PLACEMENT OF YOUR VEGGIE GARDEN

This is a very important first step when establishing your garden bed for the first time. Being aware of where the sun's angle is positioned at different times of the year is imperative for a successful vegetable garden. Northerly facing and a spot that receives 6 hours of morning sun is perfect. Afternoon sun, especially at hot times of the year can stress your vegetable crop. Also be aware of any nearby trees that may throw shade or have invasive roots that may enter the garden bed (for ways to avoid tree roots see our website www.birdiesgardenproducts.com.au). Placing your bed onto concrete or paving is easy using our geotextile fabric, contact Birdies for installation and postage details.

Keeping your Birdies vegetable garden close to your kitchen is highly recommended as this allows you to keep an eye on your produce and allows for easy picking at meal times.

RECOMMENDED GROWING MEDIUM

There are many soils available from landscape suppliers around the country. The trick is finding a good one! Many soils are basically composted saw dust and wood chips, this can cause the soil to become water repellent (hydrophobic) plants wilt and die due to lack of water. Using a complete organic soil and mixing in plenty of cow manure into the top 100 - 200mm will go a long way to improving its structure. Adding regular amounts of compost and manures each growing season will ensure your veggies receive all the water and nutrients they require.

The top 300mm of soil needs to be of a good quality. The bottom half of the 820mm high bed can also be filled with the purchased organic mix as this tends to be the most cost effective and is generally lighter making it easier to handle. Get scientific and purchase a soil Ph test kit they are a cheap and an easy way to ensure your Ph is correct for growing, veggies require a Ph of 6.0 - 7.0.

REQUIRED SOIL QUANTITIES

FORMULA:

Bed Length x Bed Width x Bed Height = m³ of Required Soil
1m³ of Soil = 1000 Litres

EXAMPLE 1:

1.2m (L) x 0.4m (W) x 0.3m (H) = 0.144m³ of required soil
0.144m³ of Soil = 144 Litres

EXAMPLE 2:

0.9m (L) x 0.9m (W) x 0.4m (H) = 0.324m³ of required soil
0.324m³ of Soil = 324 Litres

EXAMPLE 3:

2.2m (L) x 1.3m (W) x 0.4m (H) = 1.144m³ of required soil
1.144m³ of Soil = 1144 Litres

WATERING

Watering is very important in the early stages of your crops life. Watering every 2 days in the first couple of weeks is necessary, especially if it is hot. Once established watering deeply and infrequently is best. Watering deeply encourages roots to go deep and aids your plant in surviving the hot days. Watering is the most time consuming part of growing your own so why not remove this chore! Irrigating with drip lines under the mulch is a very water efficient and convenient way of watering your crop. It can be linked to a timer making watering very easy, see www.birdiesgardenproducts.com.au for irrigation kits

MULCHING

Mulching is a very important ingredient to a successful veggie crop, especially in summer. The best mulches to use are mulches high in nitrogen, these include pea straw and Lucerne hay. Lucerne is the most readily available mulch. Placing a 50mm layer of this throughout your bed is best, then on top of this place another 50mm of sugar cane mulch or straw. By adding this extra layer it prevents the green Lucerne from turning yellow, the green of the Lucerne is high in nitrogen and if yellowing occurs it means the nitrogen is being lost to the air and what you want is the nitrogen going into the soil.

Mulching not only retains moisture in the soil it feeds worms and the soil, it improves the soil structure, keeps roots cool and the weeds away. I like to place the mulch into the bed first before planting seedlings. Open up a small hole for your seedling and plant ensuring to keep the mulch at least 50mm away from the seedling as this can cause fungal & rotting issues with your plant.

PESTS

Pests in a vegetable crop can cause havoc and can quickly turn your enthusiasm to grow your own veggies back to the supermarket! The health of your vegetable crop is imperative in ensuring the disease resistance of your crop. Using a seaweed solution every fortnight over your crop will keep it fighting fit. Regular watering especially in the early stages is important also. Pest numbers really pick up in the warmer months of the year when they breed and hatch. Growing in autumn and winter is easiest as the pest numbers are low.

Birdies Netting Systems act as a great way of keeping the nasties away. The net erects in minutes and has easy access with robust all-weather zips. Picking and fertilizing is the only reason to unzip the nets and they also throw a light shade taking the sting out of the afternoon summer sun. Netting systems are available in store or online.

Attracting insects that feed on your pests is a great way of controlling outbreaks. Do this by planting flowering plants and shrubs in and around your patch. Add a small water feature to attract frogs and dragonflies and place rocks and logs around the area to attract lizards. There are many organic sprays that you can make from household items also.

FERTILISING

Veggies are very hungry. They need regular amounts of Organic Fertilizer/Matter to keep your crops strong healthy and disease resistant. Organically based fertilizers are best to use as they are derived from organic sources, types of fertilizers include Blood and Bone, Fish Fertilizers, Seaweed, Compost, Manures, Worm Castings, Worm Wee and Rock Minerals. Applying fertilizers onto the soil surface before mulching is important for maximum benefit.

Using a liquid seaweed and fish fertilizer on a fortnightly basis is recommended, they improve the health of your crop and soil and protect it against disease and pest attack. Use liquid fertilizers in the late afternoon as this allows the plants to absorb the solution through their leaves.

Chemical based fertilizers contain heavy metals and are high in salts causing salinity, inhibiting soil microbes, which are vital for healthy soil. Remember Feed the Soil Not the Plant!

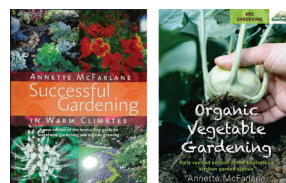
COMPOSTING

Composting is one of the most important things you can do in the garden it puts back into the soil what has been taken out, it reduces landfill by recycling waste from the home and garden, and improves soil structure. There are various ways to compost and it takes a little practice however the benefits are numerous.

Worms in the garden do a great job of composting mulch and organic matter in the garden. They till and aerate the soil they open up the soil encouraging water and organic matter to penetrate deeply. Worm farming is also a form of composting. Worm wee and poo have huge benefits for the veggie garden. Birdies Worm Tower is a cost effective and easy way to compost inside your garden bed. See in store for a Birdies Worm Tower.

Chooks are the hardest workers in a garden they till, aerate, weed, fertilize, control pests and produce food in the form of eggs.

RECOMMENDED READING



Learn how to keep your veggies at their best. 'Organic Vegetable Gardening' & 'Successful Gardening' by Annette McFarlane are available from all good book stores and online.