



The Step-by-Step Guide to Building Your Own Wood Fence

Let's break down the process of building a wood fence

Taking on a major home improvement project may seem like a difficult task. However, building your own wood fence can be extremely rewarding, and it's not as hard as you think. You don't have to chop your own wood or even nail your fence together board by board. A DIY fence project does not need to be time-consuming, and it can be fun.

With pre-assembled fence parts, even the most inexperienced DIYers can easily build a wood fence. The trick is simply to get the proper materials together and follow a specific set of instructions. There are a variety of wood fence styles that you can build, including board-on-board, spaced board, solid board, and split rail-and a variety of wood types that are excellent for fence construction, including cedar and spruce. This guide breaks down the steps to building a wood fence, from preparing your yard to final installation.

**With a little help, you too can
build your own wood fence!**



Preparing for Your Fence Project

Before you begin a DIY fence project, it's important to prepare by surveying your property.

Check ordinances

Make sure you have the right to build the type of fence you want. A simple trip to your town's municipal building or visit to their website will answer most of those questions. Some homeowner's associations put restrictions on the height and style of your fence, so make sure you're not in violation.

Mark underground utilities

You don't want to end up digging into utilities like cable and gas lines. Contact your state utilities department if you're unsure where utilities are located. You may be able to have someone come out and mark them for you.

Determine property lines

Unless you have your neighbors' permission, you cannot build on their yard. It's important that you understand exactly where your property lines are before you plan your fence. You may already have a deed that describes your property's boundaries. This information can also be found by checking your township's website to look at the maps or visiting the assessor's office. If you're still unsure, you can contact a surveyor to mark your property lines.



Consider obstructions

Survey your property and consider obstructions in your yard. Do you want to build around trees, bushes, and other obstacles, or do you want to remove them? If you build around them, you'll have to factor that into the area of your fence when you measure.

Once you have an idea of what type of fence you need and where you can build it, you can begin the process of planning for your fence and purchasing materials.

Measuring and Marking Your Yard

You don't want to end up buying an excess of fence materials-or worse, starting your project and realizing you don't have enough! By measuring and marking the area you want to fence in, you'll have a better idea of the right amount of posts and panels to purchase.

Most wood panel fences have sections that are 6 or 8 feet long. Split rail fences are a bit different, and sections often consist of rails that are 11 feet long. Your choice of panel section length may be impacted by the length of your yard's perimeter-especially if you don't want to deal with cutting any sections shorter to fit.

To mark your yard:

- 1) Determine the corners of the area you plan to fence in, and mark them by placing a stake at each corner.
- 2) In between each corner marker, make another marker point every 6 to 8 feet, depending on the fence you've chosen. These markers are where your posts will be installed, and the sections will be placed in between.
- 3) If relevant, choose where you would like your walkway or entry gates to be placed. Depending on the size of the gate, mark where each gate post will be located.

Count How Many Posts and Panels You Need

The main components of most wood fences are corner posts, line posts, end posts, and the sections of paneling. If you're building a split rail fence, you'll have rails instead of panels. Your fence may also include a gate. Now that you've marked and measured, it's time to figure out how many parts you need.

To figure out how many posts you'll need, count the number of stakes you marked, and note the types of posts:

- **Corner posts** are used to connect two sections of fencing that come together at a 90° angle. For every corner you are fencing in, you will need 1 corner post.
- **Line posts** have holes on two opposite sides to connect fence sections in a line (180° angle). For every stake you put in the ground in between the corner markers you originally placed, you will need 1 line post.
- **End posts** are used to end a line of fencing and are only connected to one section. If your fence stops at a tree, your home, an open space, or connects to a gate, you will need 1 end post for each of these situations.

By counting the number of sections between where you have marked posts, you can determine how many sections of paneling or rails you need. This can also be accomplished by dividing the perimeter of your fence by the length of the sections or rails.

If your fence has gates, count the number of gates and note the size. You'll need to purchase gate latches and hardware in addition to posts and panels.

Installing Your Fence

Now that you have your fence planned out and have acquired the posts, panels, and gates you need, you can begin the installation process.

Supplies for Fence Installation

- ✓ **Ready Mix Concrete**
- ✓ **Water for mixing concrete**
- ✓ **Gravel**
- ✓ **Line level**
- ✓ **Flat head screwdriver**
- ✓ **Digging/tamping bar**
- ✓ **Post hole auger**
- ✓ **Shovel**
- ✓ **Rubber mallet**
- ✓ **Clean rags**
- ✓ **Safety glasses**

Where can you find the supplies you need?

- Check your own garage to see what you already have
- Borrow tools and supplies from friends and neighbors
- Visit your local home improvement store



Fence Installation Steps

1. Starting with corner or end posts, use your auger to dig a hole 6"-12" in diameter and 24 to 36" deep.
2. Fill the hole with about six inches of gravel. This will ensure drainage of water away from the post and is important as wood fences are susceptible to moisture damage.
3. Set your first post to plumb level. Tamp and secure it with concrete.
4. Where you've marked the next post, dig your next hole, and repeat steps 1-3.
5. Insert the section of fence paneling (or rails if you're building a split rail fence) between the two posts. You've now completed one line of fencing.
6. Repeat this process until you have completed your fence.
7. Clean up the area, wipe down your fence, and enjoy!



Tips

- After each section of posts and panels is added, observe--you may need to lower or raise posts by prying them out and retamping.
- If you need to shorten a section, cut rails at the desired length. You may need to modify rails to insert into the post.
- When digging holes, don't dig more than one hole ahead until you are confident in the spacing.
- If your fence has gates, follow specific instructions for installing them.
- To protect your wood fence from water damage, you may need to seal it. Check that the finish you choose is safe for the type of fence you have.

Ready to Build Your Wood Fence?

With Jan Fence, installing a DIY wood fence is easy!

Starting a major home improvement project can seem daunting – but with the assistance of the professionals at Jan Fence, it does not have to be. Building a wood fence can-and should-be enjoyable! We have a variety of wood fencing styles to choose from in cedar and spruce.

Wood Fence Options

Board on Board



Spaced Board



Solid Board



Post and Rail



In addition to wood fences, Jan Fence offers a full inventory of aluminum, vinyl, and chain link fences. Simply select what type of fence you would like, and begin your DIY project! We also offer installation services for all of our fences.



www.janfence.com

Jan Fence is always here to help!

Jan Fence is here to help and provide all customers with the same exceptional service. In addition to providing you with all fencing materials needed at the best possible price, we will also provide you with detailed instructions-and we'll be here if you have any questions!

Are you ready to get started on your DIY fence project?

Contact our experts today! (973) 694-4055

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