

Building a compost bin from wooden pallets

Basic materials

4 x wooden pallets (unpainted and preferably the same size, with narrow slats)

Garden twine or thin wire



Optional extra materials

4 square metres chicken wire (finest mesh)

Approx. 32 small metal staples

6 x 1 metre (check) wooden stakes

4 x medium metal L brackets

Approx. 20 3.5" wood screws

Large hinges and latch



Tools

Hammer

Screwdriver / power drill

Wire cutters

Sledgehammer (optional)



How to construct your bin

1

Clear the area where you're going to put the compost bin and, if necessary, level the ground using a spade or a rake.

2

(Optional) Lay all 4 pallets down on the ground, face up. The face of the pallet is the side with the most planks on it. The pallet in the image overleaf is lying face up. Cover each face with chicken wire (finest mesh), securing it with staples.

3

Take a pallet and stand it on its long edge to form the back edge of the compost bin, facing inwards. (Optional) Push a stake between the two layers of the pallet at either end, using a sledgehammer to drive each one firmly into the ground - about 20-30cm deep.

4

Position the remaining two pallets at right angles to the first to make the sides, butting the corners tightly together to stop compost spilling through the gaps.

(Optional) Fix in place with stakes in each corner, as in step 3.

5

Lash the pallets securely together at each corner using bailing wire, garden twine or nylon rope.

6

(Optional) Use L-brackets and your 3.5" screws to attach the corners of the pallets together using your drill and screwdriver.

7

You should now have a 3-walled structure. The opening should be facing outwards to your garden. This opening will be your access point, which you will use to turn your compost, and remove it when it is complete. Attach the third pallet using wire or twine only, so that it can be easily removed for access.

8

Add all of your compost ingredients, and cover it with a piece of old carpet or tarp. This covering will help to keep out the rain and keep in heat, thus speeding up the composting process.

Happy composting!