

Victory Garden: Raised Bed Design

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There are many advantages of raised beds in a small garden. The soil in raised beds becomes deeper and more productive over time as you add compost and mulch every season. The beds keep your soil concentrated in one place and avoid erosion and compaction. In early spring, the soil in the raised beds tends to warm up faster.

Raised beds do not necessarily need sides, but it does help to keep your garden organized in a small space and it allows you to easily maintain the area around it without grass creeping into your beds.

The design idea below is based on using a small space as efficiently as possible and also based on reducing your effort. The beds are 30 inches wide – this means that one can reach from one side right across to the other and you do not have to walk around the bed. The center path is 3 feet wide which allows one to easily kneel or crouch between the beds and reach most of the space. It is also wide enough for a wheelbarrow if you need to bring in compost or soil.

The design is based on reducing waste and cost by using existing dimension lumber. There are many options for the sides (logs, untreated dimension lumber, galvanized metal etc.). Untreated, rough cut hemlock boards are affordable and will last 4 to 5 years before breaking down. Cedar decking is another option, but significantly more expensive.

The design ideas below are based on using 6 pieces of 8 feet. rough-cut hemlock. The design uses 2 inches by 8 inches by 8 feet lumber, but there are many creative ways in which one can do this.

The design uses 6 pieces of 8 ft lumber. The extra 5 ft left-over piece can be used to attach to the center of the back bed for a structure for pole beans.

At a cost of \$15 per piece, and including some screws or brackets for the corners, the whole structure could be built for less than \$100.

