

## Making a pallet garden

There are several ways in which you can turn a recycled shipping pallet into a raised garden bed. The simplest method is to lay the pallet flat on the ground and fill the gaps with compost / soil. For this method, look for pallets with larger gaps between the slats and cover the ground underneath with cardboard.



Another method is building a raised garden box by cutting the pallets into segments (3 or 4 slats wide) and nailing them together upright to form a rectangular raised bed. For this method, look for shipping pallets with narrow gaps between the slats. You will need at least 2 pallets for a 1m<sup>2</sup> garden.



You can build your pallet garden any shape and fill it with the 'no dig' method described in this brochure.

Shipping pallets are generally made from untreated pine timber. Over time, this will start to rot and break down. However, I have seen 5 year old pallet gardens that were still fully functional – and if the timber does start to break down, just replace the surround with a new one...

There are many places around the industrial areas of Lower Hutt and Petone that will happily give pallets away or leave them out for people to collect. However, note that painted pallets that have numbers printed on them are reusable pallets and not for the taking!



## Making raised gardens

Courtesy of the Green Gardener



- Making no-dig gardens
- Making pallet gardens

A 'no dig garden' follows simple natural processes of soil building, called deposition and decomposition. A variety of organic materials is laid down by the gardener in layers, 'lasagne style'. The materials can vary based on availability, but consist of alternating, successive layers of 'brown' (carbon-rich) and 'green' (nitrogen-rich) material. The material breaks down to form organic humus - the perfect growing medium!

**How to build a no-dig garden:**

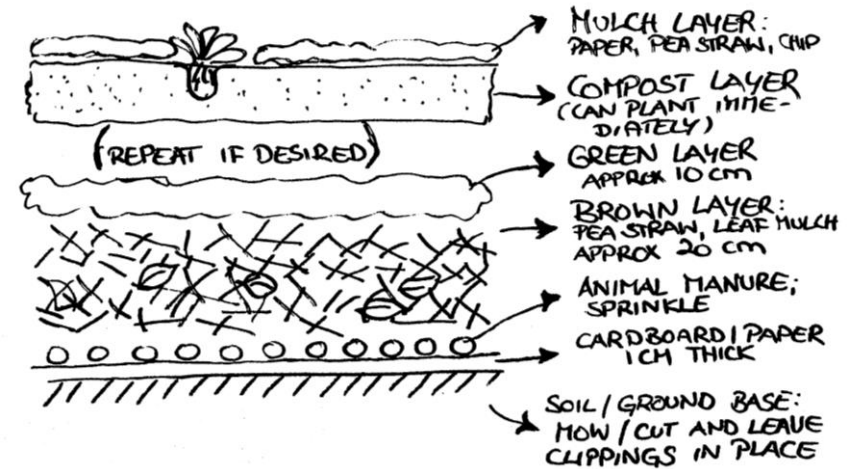
**1. Prepare**

- Prepare the area - if it is grassy trample the grass; if there are pernicious weeds - dig them out.
- Gather a pile of carbon and a pile of nitrogen

Carbon	Nitrogen
Hay	Fresh grass clippings
Dead leaves	Manure
Dried grass clippings	Fresh vege scraps
Ponga fronds	Green leaves
Straw or pea straw	Blood and bone
Pine needles	
Chip mulch (small, woody)	

**2. Create**

- Completely cover the prepared area with wet cardboard or newspaper or carpet.
- Then lay a thick layer of carbon, followed by a thinner layer of nitrogen and so on until you are 20cm above the edge of your garden bed. Water every layer well.
- Make the last layer carbon.
- Add a layer of compost to plant into immediately if you wish, OR leave out and cover the stack with sacks or an old sheet and leave it for about 8 weeks to break down a bit.



**3. Plant**

- Make holes in your no dig garden, fill the holes with garden soil or compost.
- Transplant seedlings firmly into these pockets of soil.
- Gather the carbon material back around the seedling to mulch

A no dig garden is

- A soil building exercise that creates rich deep fertile soil
- Easy to set up and requires very little ongoing maintenance
- A way to recycle kitchen scraps and garden waste
- Able to be built in a raised garden bed, on the bare ground or in a container. It can be built on gravel or concrete
- Is water efficient