



Raised Gardening Preparation

Good soil is the single most important ingredient for a good garden. Raised beds give you an immediate advantage over a regular garden, because when you fill your raised bed, you can fill it with a blend of soil that's superior to the native soil in your yard. Soil that's loose and rich with nutrients and organic matter will allow the roots of your plants to grow freely, and ensure that they have access to the water and nutrients that they need.

To prepare your raised garden bed, first remove any grass or perennial weeds from the area.

Next, use a garden fork or shovel to loosen the native soil to a depth of 6-10". This will improve drainage and moisture retention in the beds. It will also add to the depth of your raised bed, so that even with a 5" high bed, your plants will think they're growing in a bed that's 12-18" deep; giving you plenty of room for carrots, potatoes, full-size tomato plants and more.

Warner's Raised Garden Soil Recipe consists of:

- 50% Mulch or Topsoil
- 40% Compost – I recommend a mix of Chicken Manure, Steer Manure Blend and a "Green" Compost, such as Warner's Supreme Planting mix and/or Black Gold's Garden Compost.
- 10% Potting Soil, or a mix that includes peat moss, perlite and/or vermiculite to allow for the right amount of drainage and moisture retention

How to calculate how much soil your Raised Bed needs:

- Measure the Length, width and depth of the planter (The depth is from the bottom to about 2" from the top).
- Take these numbers and multiply together to get the volume needed.

For instance, if your bed is 5 feet long by 4 feet wide and 2 feet deep, the volume you would need is 40 cubic feet of soil ($5 \times 4 \times 2 = 40$). This would equal 20 bags of soil in bags containing 2 cubic feet of dirt each.

If you get stumped, stop in and see us – we'd be glad to help!