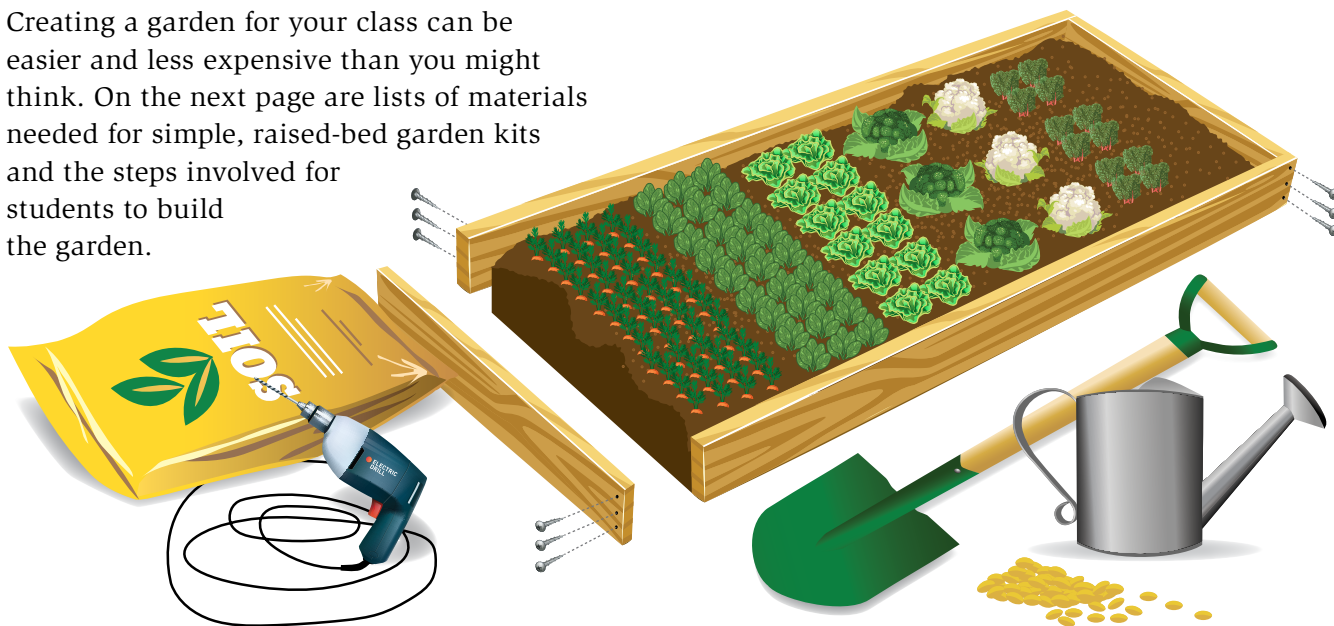


Quick and Easy School Garden Kit

Getting Materials, Building, and Planting the Garden






















Creating a garden for your class can be easier and less expensive than you might think. On the next page are lists of materials needed for simple, raised-bed garden kits and the steps involved for students to build the garden.



The *Learn, Grow, Eat & Go!* curriculum guides your class to plan a garden with three 1-square-foot plantings of each of six kinds of vegetables.

We recommend that your school garden also include a few extra square feet of open planting space. This could be used for additional plantings of favorite vegetables, flowers, or herbs that your class might decide to add.

One example of how a cool-season garden might be mapped is:

 Carrots	 Leaf lettuce	 Baby spinach	 Cauliflower	 Broccoli	 Swiss chard	 Kids' choice
 Carrots	 Leaf lettuce	 Baby spinach	 Cauliflower	 Broccoli	 Swiss chard	 Kids' choice
 Carrots	 Leaf lettuce	 Baby spinach	 Cauliflower	 Broccoli	 Swiss chard	 Kids' choice

DID YOU KNOW?

Most home improvement stores will cut boards and load soil into your vehicle at no charge



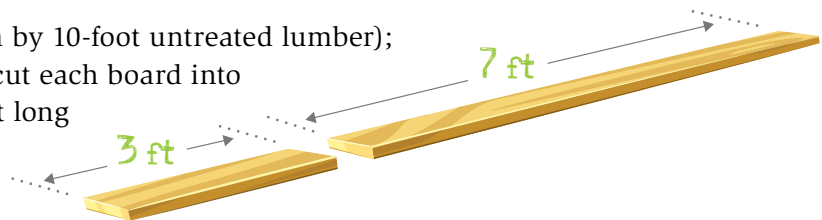
Garden Kit Materials

3- by 7-foot Garden Kit (21 square feet)★

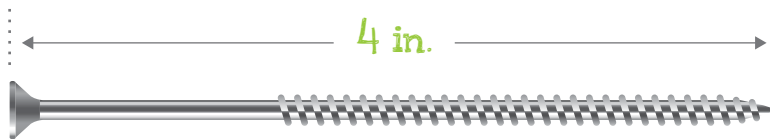
This garden provides all the space you need for implementing the Learn, Grow, Eat & Go! garden plus 3 extra square feet of “open space” to plant.

Materials:

- 1 2 boards (2-inch by 12-inch by 10-foot untreated lumber); ask the store personnel to cut each board into two sections of 3 and 7 feet long



- 2 12 exterior wood screws (each 4 inches long)



- 3 10 bags of garden soil (10 2-cubic-foot bags for a total of 20 cubic feet of soil)

Some brands of bagged garden soil are made to be mixed with equal amounts of bagged topsoil. Be sure to read the instructions on your garden soil bag. If that's the case, mix 10 cubic feet of garden soil and topsoil in your garden bed.



DID YOU KNOW?

Good garden soil will be the most expensive item on these lists. To reduce this cost, you might:

- Ask the manager of a local home improvement store to donate the soil or to donate one bag for each bag purchased.
- Invite parents to buy one or two bags of garden soil and drop them off at school.
- Buy damaged bags of soil; these are often discounted by as much as 50 percent.

★Garden Start-up Cost - \$150 (Estimated Retail)

Other basic materials that you'll likely need for the class to care for the garden include:



Quick and Easy Garden Build

A 5-step guide to creating your garden project

Although the dates are flexible, the garden should be built and planted soon after Week 4. This timing allows your class to complete the lessons on how to select a garden site to provide for their plants' needs. The garden kit can be assembled in less than an hour with the help of even just one volunteer working alongside your class with a power drill. To help make the garden build much easier, more successful, and a more meaningful learning experience for your class, consider sending a parent letter to solicit volunteers (pages 177–178).

Use the following steps to involve your students as much as possible in building the garden.

1 Step 1: Unloading

If it is possible, have the students team up to safely help unload the boards and carry them into the garden site.



2 Step 2: Boxing

Position the boards on their sides to form the garden perimeter. Have students hold the boards in place until the next step is completed.

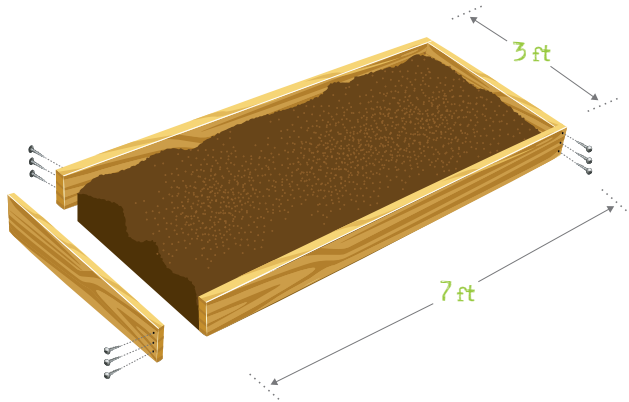


3 Step 3: Corners

One corner at a time, have the volunteer drill pilot holes and screw a 4-inch screw into each hole as shown in diagram. It's a good idea to start with one middle hole/screw at each corner. Then the volunteer can come back around to each corner to add screws at the top and bottom of each corner board.



3x7 Garden form



4 Step 4: Prepare the ground

To get rid of grass or weeds already growing where the garden will be placed, have the students/volunteers dig up as much of them as possible. Or a weed killer (herbicide) could also be used.

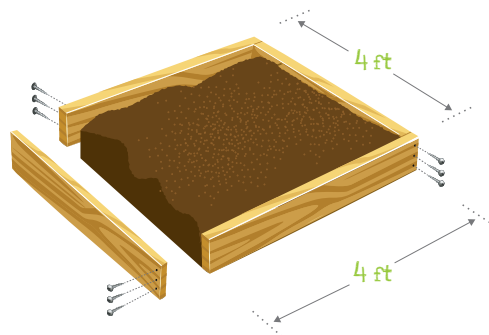
To prevent weeds from sprouting later, you could cover the area with a weed mat or fabric. An easy-to-use and less expensive weed barrier is newspaper. Have the students lay several layers of newsprint to cover in the ground inside the garden frame.

After the students place each layer of newsprint on the ground, one adult (or responsible student) should use hose/ water spray to weigh down the newsprint until the next step.

5 Step 5: Soil

Have the students line the bags of soil around the garden. Ask an adult to use scissors or a utility knife to cut open the tops of each bag.

Next, direct the students to lift up the bottoms of the bags and empty the soil into the frame. If you are using both garden soil and top soil, have a couple of students or volunteers use shovels to mix soil together as it's added to the bed. Once the soil is in place, have the students use hand tools to carefully smooth and pat the soil.



4x4 Garden form

Ideally, your class's garden area would be large enough to allow for multiple plantings of six types of featured vegetables in this curriculum. But to save space or the cost of creating a garden, a smaller garden can be just as successful. See Garden Size Variations on page 124 for plans to create a smaller 16 square foot garden.

