

How to buy & build timber fencing

Smart new fencing can enhance a garden's appearance, support and shelter plants, provide privacy, security and act as a boundary marker – **it can also be used to divide up a larger garden or hide unsightly features.**

Kit

Tool List

- > Sledgehammer
- > Hammer
- > Spade
- > Handsaw
- > Cordless drill/driver
- > Tape measure

> String or twine

> Spirit level

Safety Equipment

- > Dust mask
- > RCD adaptor
- > Goggles
- > Gloves

As you would if working with any timber product, wear gloves to avoid splinters, and goggles when using circular saws, drills or sanders. Avoid breathing in dust when cutting wood by wearing a nose and mouth mask. Always use an RCD device when employing any power tools outside.

When driving in post supports, the protective dolly may jump out of the socket top, so always ensure that it is properly seated. Keep other people well out of the way when swinging a sledgehammer.



1

Which fence type?

Fencing can be divided into three categories: ready-made panels to be fitted between posts; loose fencing materials with which to make panels, and fence kits.

Ready-made panels

Overlap panels are available in four heights: 90cm (3ft); 1.2m (4ft); 1.5m (5ft), and 1.8m (6ft), all being 1.8m (6ft) long. These panels consist of a timber frame with horizontally-fixed, **overlapping larch slats** see **Fig. 1**. These panels are pre-treated with preservative to give them a golden brown colour. They are erected between evenly-spaced posts.

Fig. 1

Ready made overlap panel

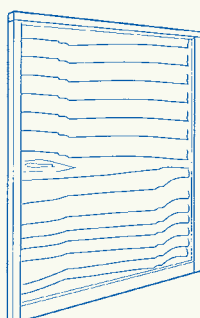
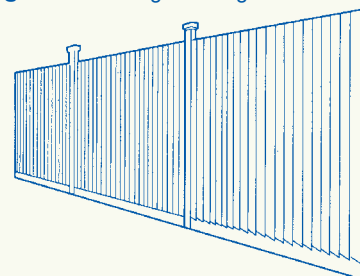


Fig. 2 Featheredge fencing



Loose fencing materials

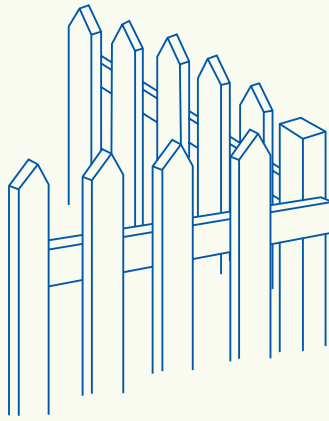
If ready-made panels don't suit, you can make your own fencing to almost any design. These types of fencing are usually erected in 1.8m (6ft) or 2.4m (7ft 10in) sections. The most common is **featheredge fencing**, see **Fig. 2** made by fixing vertical timbers to arris rails (above), with each slat slightly overlapping the next to provide complete privacy.

Fence kits

Palisade fencing see **Fig. 3** can be bought from Wickes in kit form, with each kit containing sufficient timber to make a 1.753m (5ft 9in) long run, just 91.4cm (3ft) high. A matching, 86.4cm (2ft 10in) wide gate is also available.

For instructions on making and erecting your fence, (see page 3).

Fig. 3 Palisade fencing



Skill level required

If you are building a fence with ready-made panels, you will only need basic carpentry skills. Working with loose fencing materials requires more experience and will take longer to complete.

Planning pitfalls

- > The height of a boundary fence may be limited by the planning department of your local council – so do check before work begins.
- > When installing posts, take special care not to damage underground cabling, pipes or drainage, and do not permanently obstruct manhole covers or other services.

2

Fence posts and accessories

Decorative trellis, sturdy posts and fence fixings are all essential buys – find out what to use where, and how.

Decorative trellis

Trellis panels are usually 1.829m (6ft) long and come in various styles and depths, including the traditional square lattice; a diamond pattern; and an arch-top **trellis** see **Fig. 4**.

Fence posts

Fence posts must be long enough to accommodate gravel boards at 150mm high, and any trellis on top. There are two types of fence posts: timber and concrete.

Timber fence posts are pressure-preserved and come in a range of lengths, including 1.5m (5ft), 1.8m (6ft), 2.1m (6ft 10in), 2.4m (7ft 10in) and 2.7m (8ft 10in).

Every post needs a post cap. If a gate is included in your fencing project, use a 100mm post for additional support.

Concrete posts offer a stronger, rot-free alternative that can help make a fence more durable in severe weather conditions.

Concrete repair spurs are useful for repairing a timber fence post that becomes damaged.

Fencing accessories

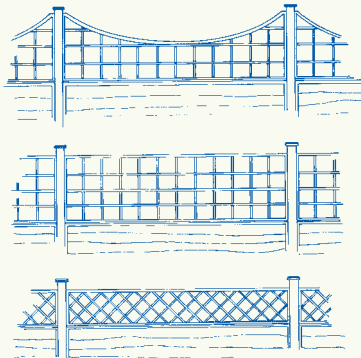
Fences must be securely fixed to their posts to withstand the weather, for which you need a variety of special fencing accessories.

Gravel boards

Fencing timber will last longer if you use it in conjunction with gravel boards, whether concrete or timber.

Concrete gravel boards are designed for use with slotted concrete posts and 1.8m (6ft) panels. The fencing is fitted above the gravel board, so the timber avoids contact with the damp ground. Concrete gravel boards are 1.8m (6ft) long and 150mm high.

Fig. 4 Trellis



Timber gravel boards are pressure-preserved and come in 1.8m (6ft) lengths to match the lap panels or 2.4m (7ft 10in) for self-assembled fencing. Both are 150mm high. Timber gravel boards still require treating with a preservative on a regular basis.

Panel fence clips

Panel fence clips are used to attach framed fencing panels to timber posts, and provide a far more effective method of securing the panels than nails alone.

Fig. 5 Fence fixing clip

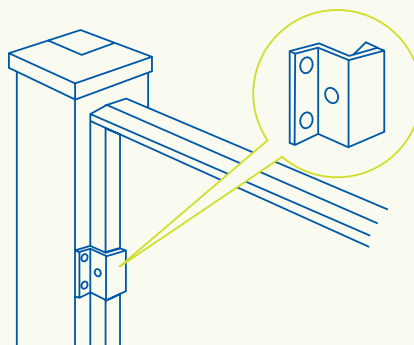
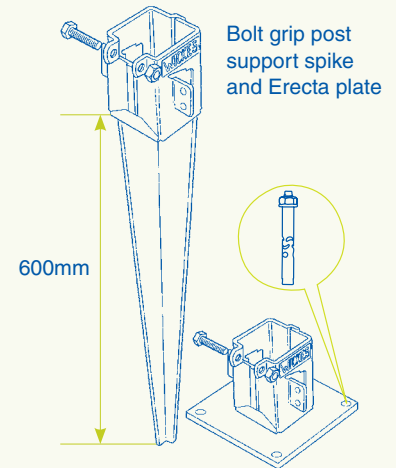


Fig. 6



You need four clips for 90cm (3ft) or 1.2m (4ft) panels, and six clips for 1.5m (5ft) and 1.8m (6ft) panels. They are secured to the post and the panel with galvanised nails see **Fig. 5**.

Arris rails

Arris rails are long, triangular-shaped pieces of timber that should be fitted to fencing and span between fence posts to provide the horizontal backing and support for featheredge fence.

Arris rail brackets

These are used to connect the arris rails to the timber fence posts. They are secured to the post and the rail with 38mm galvanised nails.

Metal post sockets

Metal post sockets will extend the life and stability of your fence posts. There are three basic types see **Fig. 6**:

Fixed top post sockets, such as the Wickes Metal Post Spike, have a spike that is driven into the ground, with the socket

remaining above ground level, along with the post that is clamped into it. Post sockets are driven into the ground with a sledgehammer (use a dolly – a chunk of strong timber or metal – or Post Support Driving Tool to protect the metal sides of the socket). This type of post socket should not be used with fence panels 1.8m (6ft)

and over, in very exposed and windy areas; it must never be set in concrete, and should not be used in freshly-dug ground.

Wedge grip concrete post supports are more work to put in place than spikes, but will be more stable over time. They should be embedded in concrete at least 300mm square and deep. Make sure the hole is trimmed square and the bottom is flat and not rounded.

Socket plates, such as the Wickes Erecta Plate, have the same socket at

the top, but with a flat metal plate beneath. Intended for bolting posts to a concrete base using Sleeve anchors.

Postcrete

If you prefer to set your posts into a concrete mix, such as Wickes' Postcrete, position the post, pour water into the hole. Add the Postcrete so that it sits proud of the soil, then smooth it so that runs downwards and away from the post. This will help rainwater run away from the timber to prolong its life. Leave to harden.

3

Erecting a fence

Putting up a fence is a two-person job, although you can do much of the preparation on your own.

Putting up panel fencing

Using post sockets, you can put up ready-made fence panels quickly and efficiently.

1. Mark the line Start by determining the line of the fencing. On a property boundary, mark the boundary line with twine, bearing in mind all posts and fencing must be on your side of the boundary marker.

2. Drive in the first post socket At the start of the fencing run, drive in a post socket, keeping the clamp face of the support facing towards your side of the boundary line. Fit the first post into the socket and secure in place. Use a spirit level to check it is straight.

3. Drive in the second post socket Temporarily prop the first panel against the post. Drive in a second post socket at the end of the panel, keeping the socket face aligned with the panel edge. Set the panel aside and fit the second post.

4. Cut and fit the first gravel board Cut the first gravel board to length to fit horizontally at ground level between the first two post sockets. Secure the gravel board to the socket at each end with fixing brackets and either black japanned or other plated, round-head screws.

5. Fit the first panel Refit the panel between the posts on top of the gravel board and secure with fence panel clips – two or three at each end (see page 2); the triangular section of the clips slots behind the timber framing. The panel should be located centrally on the posts.

6. Complete the run Repeat the sequence for the remainder of the fencing run.

7. Fit post caps To finish, fit a post capping to each of the posts.

8. Protect and colour the fencing Coat all the timber with a preservative to prolong the life of the fence.

Trade Tip

A continuous, flat run of timber fencing is most susceptible to wind damage. If possible, incorporate 90-degree returns at the ends. Even a slight change of angle between panels, or a zig-zag pattern, will provide a valuable bracing effect.

Make featheredge fencing

Featheredge fencing see **Fig. 2** (see page 1) consists of posts, post supports, arris rails (in 2.4m (7ft 10in) lengths) and brackets, and gravel boards, plus featheredge boards.

Pick the right materials

Although sections of fencing can be made up to 2.4m (7ft 10in), it may be better to work in 1.8m (6ft) runs in particularly exposed, windy areas so that there is a shorter span between posts. For a 2.4m (7ft 10in) run, you will need 32 pieces of feather-edge boarding; for a 1.8m (6ft) run, you will need 24 pieces of boarding. Each length overlaps the previous one by a minimum of 19mm.

Get boarding lengths correct

Featheredge boarding is available in 1.5m (5ft), 1.8m (6ft), and 2.4m (7ft 10in) lengths. So, if, for example, you want a 1.2m (4ft) high fence, the 2.4m (7ft 10in) lengths should be cut in half.

Trade Tip

If the gap between the posts is smaller than the ready-made panel, remove the end batten, measure between the grooves in the concrete posts and mark this on the fence. Cut the top and bottom batten, allowing for the width of the side batten, which can then be re-fixed. Finally, cut down the edge of the side batten, trimming off the unwanted part of the panel. You can do this with a handsaw but a circular saw or jigsaw will be quicker.

Choose arris rails and posts

For fences 1.5m (5ft) high, three arris rails per panel are required; for 1.8m (6ft) high fences, you need four arris rails per panel; for a 2.4m (7ft 10in) high fence, five per panel. The fence posts should be tall enough to cope with the height of the gravel board (150mm) and the featheredge boarding, plus they need to be set 600mm into the ground.

Consider design alternatives

Alternate panels can have the thick edges of the featheredge boarding facing in opposite directions. This creates no construction problems, and merely means fixing the boards from a different end for each panel.

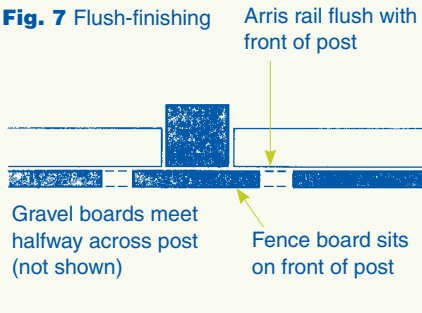
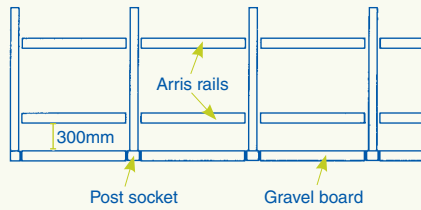
1. Erect the framework Featheredge fencing is built by erecting the main framework for the entire run before the boarding is fitted. Start by marking the fence line as described in step 1 of putting up panel fencing.

2. Drive in post sockets With the first post socket driven in at the starting point and a post fitted, use a length of arris rail as a guide to spacing, drive in a second post socket and fit the second post.

3. Fit the arris rails Check all the arris rails are exactly the same length, then connect the two posts with them, using arris rail brackets. Ensure the rails are horizontal with a spirit level, and set back from the front face of the post by at least the thickness of the featheredge boarding. Position about 200mm from the top and bottom edges of the intended position of the feather edge boards.

Trade Tip

If using concrete, either for Wedge Grip Concrete Post Supports or for concreting timber posts directly into the ground, support the posts or fence panels with temporary bracing for at least three days, until the concrete has had a chance to cure.

Fig. 7 Flush-finishing**Fig. 8** Building a frame for featheredge fence panels**Fig. 9** Driving nails into the featheredge boards

4. Fit the gravel board Fit the first gravel board between the post supports as described in step 4 of putting up a fence panel (see page 3), but with the face flush with the front of the post, see **Fig. 7**.

5. Finish the framework run Continue building the framework to the end of the fence run see **Fig. 8**.

Trade Tip

Pre-drilling the post cap before nailing it in place will stop it splitting. To help prevent wood rot, do not allow earth to come into contact with the timber.

6. Fit the featheredge boarding Start by securing the first length with its thick edge against the post at one end of the section. Use 38mm galvanised wire nails and ensure they go into the centre of the arris rail. Since it can be difficult to space out the lengths with equal overlaps and achieve a perfect fit at the opposite end, ensure all the remaining pieces are initially only lightly pinned to the top arris rail. Adjustments can then be made before the lengths are finally fixed. At overlaps, the nails should be driven in through the thickest part of the board to miss the thin edge of the board behind, which could split see **Fig. 9**.

7. Finish the fence Complete the fencing as in steps 7 and 8 of putting up panel fencing (see page 3).

Trade Tip

Metal post supports and gravel boards help keep the timbers proud of the ground, but don't then spoil this by banking up earth for flower beds next to the fence.

Product Checklist

Please refer to our catalogue or website for our very latest range and availability.

Product

Overlap Panels 6 x 3'

Overlap Panels 6 x 4'

Overlap Panels 6 x 5'

Overlap Panels 6 x 6'

Solway Panel 6 x 6'

Pre-Treated Timber Fence Posts

75 x 75mm (Nominal) x 1.5m

75 x 75mm (Nominal) x 1.8m

75 x 75mm (Nominal) x 2.1m

75 x 75mm (Nominal) x 2.4m

75 x 75mm (Nominal) x 2.7m

100 x 100mm (Nominal) x 2.1m

100 x 100mm (Nominal) x 2.4m

100 x 100mm (Nominal) x 2.7m

Fencing Accessories

Timber Fence Post Cap single

Concrete Repair Spur

Metal Repair Spike

Slotted Concrete Fence Post
19 x 100mm (Nominal) 2.4m

6" Concrete Gravel Board 1.8m

24" Post Spike

Bolt Down/Electa Plate

Sleeve Anchors M10 x 100mm

Postcrete 20kg

Fencingboard/Gravelboard

19 x 150mm (Nominal) Pack of 5 – 1.83m

19 x 150mm (Nominal) Single of 5 – 1.83m

19 x 150mm (Nominal) Pack of 5 – 2.4m

19 x 150mm (Nominal) Single of – 5 2.4m

Featheredge Board 11 x 100mm (Nominal)

Pack of 10 – 1.5m

Single 1.5m

Pack of 10 – 1.8m

Single 1.8m

Pack of 10 – 2.4m

Single 2.4m

Featheredge Accessories

Arris rail 37 x 75 mm (Nominal)
Pack of 4 – 2.4m

Arris rail 37 x 75 mm (Nominal)
Single – 2.4m

Arris rail brackets

Fence clips

Trellis

Diamond 6 x 1'

Arch top 6 x 1'6"

Heavy Duty Trellis 6 x 1'

Heavy Duty Trellis 6 x 2'

Heavy Duty Trellis 6 x 3'

Heavy Duty Trellis 6 x 6'

Our Wickes Project Guides cover a wide range of indoor and outdoor projects, and are regularly updated. Pick them up in store or view them online at www.wickes.co.uk.

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the product design, descriptions, specifications and techniques of constructing the products are accurate at the date of printing. Wickes products will inevitably change from time to time and the customer is advised to check that the design, descriptions, specifications and techniques of constructing any of the products described in this leaflet are still valid at the time of purchase or placing an order.
© Wickes Building Supplies Limited 2014.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be produced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without the written permission of the copyright holder and the publisher.