

BUILD A COMPOST BIN FOR FREE

You can make a strong, functional bin using a few pallet planks and four pieces of reclaimed wood, such as old fence posts. Wherever you live (rural or urban), these materials are easy to source and often given away for free.

HOW TO BUILD

There are variety of places to source pallets for free (see p36). You'll need two to three pallets to make a 1m (3ft) tall bin like this one. Try to source them well ahead of time, so that you can leave them out in heavy rain for a few hours. This will soak the wood, making the pallets easier to dismantle. I used screws I had lying around to build this bin. If you can't find any, you could use the reclaimed nails from breaking down your pallet instead (or even a mixture of screws and nails).

1. Split down your pallets until you have the required materials (see opposite). Wear eye protection and gloves, and use a bit of brute force. As you split the pallet

into individual sections, remove any nails using the claw hammer and keep them in a pot. Before you start, lay out all of the wood to ensure you have everything.

2. Measure the length of the pallet planks and put two posts flat on the ground the same length apart. Lay a plank across the two posts at one end. The outer edge should be flush with the plank's edges, with no overhang. Screw the first pallet plank to the posts. Repeat at the other end of the posts with the second plank, then with three more planks to create a slatted side.

3. Lay the other two posts on the ground as before and repeat step 2, using five more pallet planks and 10 screws to create the second slatted side. Set down

your two complete side panels, posts facing down as shown. Place a set of five pallet planks beside each, laid out at the same intervals. You should have two sides and 10 planks.

4. Ideally, find a second person to help you join the two panels. It's a little tricky to do on your own, but it is possible (with a bit of care, a cordless electric drill, and a piece of flat ground). Upend one of the side panels, with the post lying on the ground and facing inwards. Use a plank to keep it upright if it's unsteady. Repeat with the other side, so the distance between the two is the length of the pallet plank. Screw the first plank down so it joins the top of the two sides (with no overhang) then screw a second plank down to join the base. Repeat with the remaining three planks.

5. Roll the three-sided pallet structure over so the fourth, open side is facing upwards. Screw the five remaining pallet planks down, as in step 4. This should be a lot easier because the structure is more stable. You now have a complete compost bin.



TOOLS AND MATERIALS

You will need gloves, eye protectors, a pry bar, claw hammer, and screwdriver (cordless electric if you have one; if not, try to borrow one) plus:

- 4 reclaimed posts around 1m (3ft) tall, such as old wooden posts or door frames
- 20 pallet planks, all the same length
- 40 screws



1



2



3



4



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