



## SUPPLIES

- One 4-foot-long 4-by-4
- Three 8-foot-long 2-by-10's
- 32 3½-inch #14 wood screws and 16 ½-inch #8 wood screws
- One 4- by 10-foot roll of weed cloth
- 32 cubic feet (1 1/5 cu. yd.) soil mix
- Table or circular saw
- Drill

# RAISED BED GARDENS

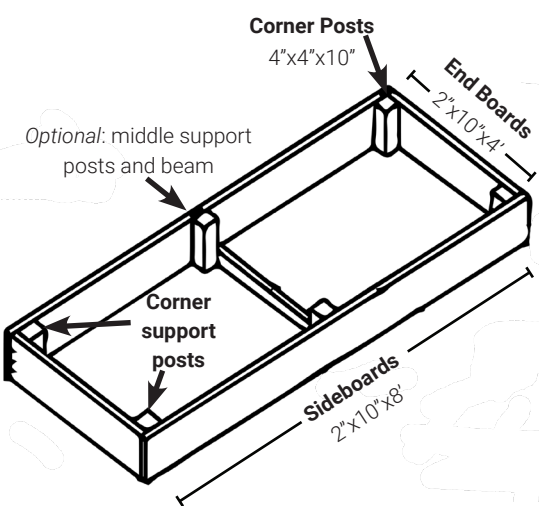
### Time needed: 60 minutes

Raised beds can be a great solution for growing vegetables, herbs, and flowers in the school garden. They are easy to make and maintain and provide a defined boundary for young gardeners. Most school environments have compacted subsoil in the landscape which makes for poor growing conditions. By creating pressure-treated timber or cedar beds, they will not only withstand the weather, but when filled with a compost and topsoil blend will offer a great growing environment for plants.

## LET'S DO IT!

### Before getting started:

Walk your outdoor area to determine good location for your raised beds. There should be easy access to water and at least 6-8 hours of direct sunlight.



**FIGURE 1.** Diagram illustrating the dimensions and set up of an easy raised bed for the school garden.

1. With a table or circular saw, cut the 4-by-4 post into four 10-inch-tall corner posts.
2. Cut one of the 2-by-10s in half, to become the two end pieces of the bed that measure 2"-by-10"-by-4 feet.
3. Begin to assemble the bed placing one of the 4x4-inch posts at the end and under one of the long side boards (2-by-10-by-8 feet).
4. Secure post to the board with four 3½-inch screws. Repeat with another post at other end of board.
5. Repeat with other long side board.
6. Join the long sides with the 4-foot board end boards and secure with two screws.
7. Screw the other short side to the remaining end.
8. Position the raised bed into the right spot and lay the weed barrier down. Trim the cloth with scissors to fit around corner posts.
9. Fill the bed with a soil mix of topsoil and compost. Rake it smooth and it is ready to plant!



**FIGURE 2.** Installing season extension systems while building the raised beds allows gardeners to grow longer!

*Season Extension Variation* To extend the gardening season or to control pests, it is easy to install a PVC hoop system inside your raised bed. Plastic, horticultural fabric or fine netting can then be pulled over the pipes to raise temperatures and keep out pests.

1. Attach four, 10-inch pieces of 1-inch PVC pipe inside the bed on both sideboards.
2. Space pipes about 2 feet and screw on two tube straps or PVC brackets to the sideboards to secure each pipe.
3. To insert the hoops, gently bend a 6-foot pieces of ½-inch PVC pipe to form semi-circles, and slip their ends into the 1-inch pipes inside the bed.
4. Then drape the plastic sheeting, row covers or bird netting over them.