



A Collaborative Program of
Arbor Day Foundation and
Dimensions Educational Research Foundation

Raised Planter Beds

#6973, 6974, 4269, 4270, 4271, 4272

Assembly Instructions

Please open and inspect all items upon receipt. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us immediately.

1-888-908-8733 | service@natureexplore.org | natureexplore.org



Quality Commitment

Nature Explore is dedicated to children's education and safety. All of our resources are field-tested by experienced teachers and researchers prior to being available in the Sourcebook. Items that are hand-crafted, such as instruments, tables or balance beams, are done so by trusted professionals who share in our mission to connect children with nature. Our natural resources are crafted out of wood and other materials carefully selected for functionality, safety and durability.

If you ever have questions or would like more information about items you would like to order or have received, please contact us via phone or email. We are happy to discuss things in detail with you or send you additional information.

If inquiring about an existing order please have your 'bill to' zip code and order number handy (Ex: SO90001234). Also, our warranty, return and exchange policies are located online for your quick reference.

All items created by and manufactured exclusively for Nature Explore are done so in accordance with all relevant and applicable safety standards and recommendations as set forth by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and ASTM International. Be sure to consider additional regulations that may be unique to your site.

How to Assemble a Raised Planter Bed

Recommended Ages: All Ages



When using volunteer labor, make sure that the person assembling the raised planter bed has the necessary skill level.



Do not allow children to play on or near equipment which is in need of repair or replacement, is incomplete or is otherwise considered unsafe as serious injury may occur.

Raised Planter Beds are NOT water-tight or weather-proof. You may want to treat with a commercial water-seal to extend the life of the unit. **Raised Planter Beds will check, crack and possibly warp over time.** Nature Explore Raised Planter Beds are made of untreated wood and will endure the natural process of 'checking' or cracking as they age and adjust to your local climate. This is not a defect in the product, but a natural process that should be expected.

Maintenance:

General Maintenance - Performed every few months. This maintenance will help reduce injuries and extend the life of your raised garden bin.

- Sand to remove any splinters
- Ensure that the raised garden bed is level and sturdy on ground

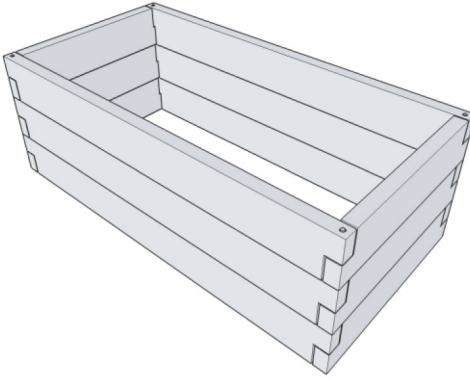
Bi-annual Maintenance - Performed every other year or more based on local climate.

- Protect wood with a commercial wood-protector or water-seal. Check with local building codes, playground experts, and wood preservation experts for the local rules and regulations and to ask what would work best to use around children.

Parts List:

Verify component and hardware quantities received before assembling.

Tools Needed: Cordless/Electric Drill or Phillips Head Screwdriver



#6973 - 2' L x 2' W x 16 1/2" H

Parts List:

12 - 2' Boards
4 - 16.5" Pins

Capacity:

.20 Cubic Yards

#6974 - 2' L x 2' W x 22" H

Parts List:

16 - 2' Boards
4 - 22" Pins

Capacity:

.27 Cubic Yards

#4269 - 4' L x 2' W x 16 1/2" H

Parts List:

6 - 4' Boards
6 - 2' Boards
4 - 16.5" Pins

Capacity:

.38 Cubic Yards

#4271 - 4' L x 2' W x 22" H

Parts List:

8 - 4' Boards
8 - 2' Boards
4 - 22" Pins

Capacity:

.52 Cubic Yards

#4270 - 6' L x 2' W x 16 1/2" H

Parts List:

6 - 6' Boards
6 - 2' Boards
4 - 16.5" Pins

Capacity:

.57 Cubic Yards

#4272 - 6' L x 2' W x 22" H

Parts List:

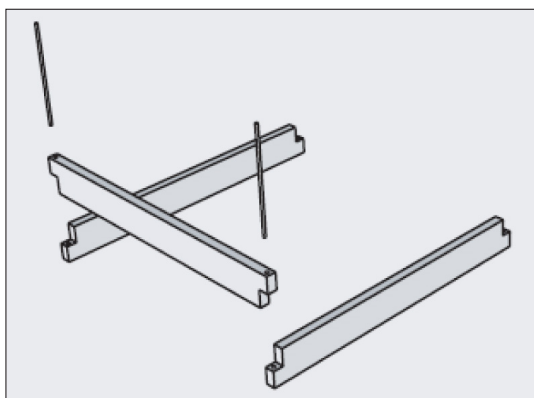
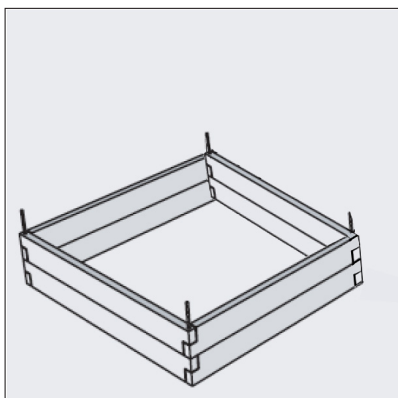
8 - 6' Boards
8 - 2' Boards
4 - 22" Pins

Capacity:

.78 Cubic Yards

1 Thoroughly read and review all instructions before you begin. Select a location to place your assembled raised planter bed.

2 Level the ground and position the boards so the notched ends overlap and the 3/8" holes line up. Start at one end and work your way around the bed, inserting the metal pins into the holes to lock the boards together.



Your Raised Planter Bed is now complete and ready for use.



How to Fill a Raised Planter Bed

To set up raised beds on nonabsorbent surfaces, like concrete or heavily compacted dirt, you need to provide a way for water to escape from the bottom of the planter—or drainage can become a real problem. One solution is to setup your raised beds on 1”-3” of loose gravel, so that water can flow out the bottom and sides of the bed. Putting down an additional 2”-3” of rock inside of the bed will further improve drainage.

We recommend the following layers/mix of materials to give you adequate drainage and allow for maximum growth of the plants.



Note: Depending on the size of planter bed you have, it will cost you approximately \$60-\$120 to fill.



For 16.5” H Planter Bed:

- 2” Open on top
- 5” Seeding mix
- 6.5” Black soil
- 3” Gravel

For 22” H Planter Bed:

- 2” Open on top
- 6” Seeding mix
- 11” Black soil
- 3” Gravel

	#6973 2' L x 2' W x 16 1/2" H		#4269 4' L x 2' W x 16 1/2" H		#4270 6' L x 2' W x 16 1/2" H		#6974 2' L x 2' W x 22" H		#4271 4' L x 2' W x 22" H		#4272 6' L x 2' W x 22" H	
	Depth	Cubic Yards	Depth	Cubic Yards	Depth	Cubic Yards	Depth	Cubic Yards	Depth	Cubic Yards	Depth	Cubic Yards
Seeding Mix	5"	.06	5"	.12	5"	.19	6"	.07	6"	.15	6"	.22
Black Top Soil	6.5"	.08	6.5"	.16	6.5"	.24	11"	.14	11"	.27	11"	.41
Gravel	3"	.04	3"	.07	3"	.11	3"	.04	3"	.07	3"	.11



Helpful Tips and Information:

- **Level ground to ease assembly**

Level ground to ease assembly and promote even watering. Protruding rocks, roots, etc. or **gaps beneath** boards may result in misshapen beds. Fill in gaps with rock and soil.

Note: Please call 1-888-908-8733 for more information on additional sizes, etc.

- **For beds on lawn, smother grass with cardboard**

To set up raised beds on lawn, put down a layer of **cardboard or thick newspaper** and assemble the planter on top of this surface. The paper acts as a **barrier against weeds and grasses**, and will eventually break down, allowing roots to penetrate the native soil.

- **Provide drainage on patios, driveways, etc.**

To set up raised beds on **nonabsorbent surfaces**, like concrete or heavily compacted dirt (e.g. driveways) add **1-3 inches of loose gravel**, or similar material, to the bottom of the planter before filling it with soil. The deeper the bed, the more gravel necessary for **healthy drainage**.

- **Keep gophers out with hardware cloth**

To keep out gophers, assemble raised beds on **½" hardware cloth**. Use wire cutters to **trim the edges** so they wrap an inch or two around the sides of the planter and **secure in place** with nails or staples.

- **Add height/depth with additional vertical boards**

The height of raised beds can be increased with **additional 5.5" layers**. Assemble new layers on top of old and **stake pins to hold in place**.

Important Facts About Natural Wood Products

Many of our items, such as Giant Tree Cookies, balance beams, tables, seating, and instruments, are hand-crafted out of natural materials for their educational and environmental value, natural aesthetic qualities, and personal enjoyment. Routine visual inspection and occasional sanding or bolt tightening is recommended to ensure items are in the best and safest condition and to extend the overall useful life of the item(s). If indicated, items can arrive with an initial application of a weather sealant. Annual application is recommended.

As natural wood resources age and acclimate to changing climates, you will notice graining, knots and checking (a natural cracking process that occurs as wood releases moisture across annual growth rings) as shown below. Should this natural process result in splintering or a rough surface, simply sand the area and return it to use. Also, these resources will naturally develop a beautiful silvery-gray patina over time. Observing wood's natural color change and aging is a valuable part of children's connection with nature. Each item's dimension and appearance will vary due to the uniqueness of the wood from which it was created.



There are a variety of treatment options you can use to extend the life of your Nature Explore product such as linseed oil or soy-based sealants. Please consult a local expert (i.e. wood-working expert, general contractor, lumber yard, parks & recreation department, etc.) to see what options are appropriate and safe in your particular area.

In rare cases, as items continue to dry and acclimate to your local climate/environment, there is a chance that mold discoloration will appear. Routine sanding and ensuring the item is installed on a surface with adequate drainage (i.e. mulch, gravel, etc.) will reduce the potential for mold. Installing on grass surfaces allows moisture to be trapped underneath the product and is not recommended. Should mold occur on any of your Nature Explore items, please contact us for a quick and easy removal recommendations.

Nature Explore Classroom resources are designed to bring children closer to nature and help them develop life-long learning skills. To ensure safety and effectiveness, please be sure to follow the instructions for installation, building codes, warnings, and maintenance. Failure to follow all of the instructions will void any warranty offer. Furthermore, even Nature Explore Classroom resources installed and maintained in accordance with the instructions can present hazards to children in the absence of adequate supervision.

Depending on the location and nature of the outdoor classroom, the supervisors may be paid professionals (full-time park or school/child care facility staff), paid seasonal workers (college or high school students), volunteers (PTA members), or the parents of the children playing in the outdoor classroom. The quality of the supervision depends on the quality of the supervisor's knowledge of safe play behavior. Therefore, supervisors should understand the basics of safety in an outdoor classroom.

Outdoor classroom supervisors should be aware that not all equipment and items are appropriate for all children who may use the outdoor classroom. Posted signs or labels indicating the appropriate age of the users should be checked before play begins, and supervisors should direct children to equipment appropriate for their age. It is also very important to recognize that preschool-age children require more attentive supervision than older children do.

Building Codes:

Variations in building codes, specific local development covenants, or site conditions may require modification to the installation of the product. Outdoor classroom owners are ultimately responsible for complying with all applicable permits, building codes and other regulatory requirements, and should review their outdoor classroom with local building inspectors. All appropriate building permits should be obtained prior to starting installation.

Liability:

Nature Explore shall have no liability or responsibility for actions or inaction in connection with any Nature Explore item or any damage or liability that arises during the construction and/or use. Always read and observe all safety precautions provided by the Consumer Product Safety Council regarding toy safety, playground safety, and any other applicable programs. Likewise, always read and observe all safety precautions provided by any tool or equipment manufacturer consulted during installation.