

Building Wooden Planters

Timber

Order wood from your local timber merchant – give him a cutting list – specify 50mm x 50 pressure treated timber and, although there may be some slight variations these won't be anywhere near as varied as if the timber is cut from wider pieces or cut by yourselves.

Pressure-treated timber is quite 'wet' but will shrink when drying so making sure each layer is bedded down properly is essential. Use a clamp to keep the material tight etc.

A cutting list for the timber is given below as a guide for planters of various sizes. We paid about £1.45 per metre for the timber.



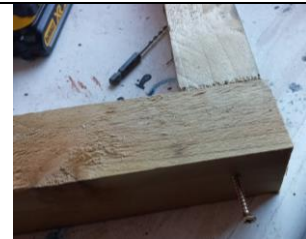
Screws

I have used Superdrive screws, (4.0 x 70mm) they create their own hole and tend to bite deep into the wood so nothing stands proud. Suggest pre-drilling the holes using an electric drill so that the screwdriver tool has an easier task and the batteries last a bit longer before requiring a charge. You will need approx. 100 screws per planter



Start the first layer off by screwing in sideways to create a frame – check it for square before you start the next layer.

Add a second layer onto the first, laying out the wood first to deal with any variations.



Overlapping on each corner adds strength and rigidity.

Build up layers as you go – minor differences in thicknesses can often be overcome by rotating the wood through 90 degrees – any discrepancy is then inside the planter and will be covered by the lining material. However, this can knock the corners out of line a little so be prepared to sand/plane down where parts stand proud.

Keep on building up the layers. Mark where the screws were on the previous layer so you don't try to screw into the screw head below.






Stop after the sixth layer (or second from the top if making higher or lower planters) and add your liner using a staple gun to attach it. Old compost bags are good, overlapping them where necessary. Alternatively purchase Visqueen from your DIY centre. This will help prevent the wood from rotting over time.



Fix the last layer of timber on top and screw down. This hides the edge of the cut plastic & the staples giving a nice clean finish.



<p>If you choose to fit a base I suggest you use recycled pallet material (it's free), but you could use wider pressure treated planks leaving gaps between the wood to allow for drainage. Here the slats have been fitted to the inside of the planter at the base.</p>	
<p>The planters on our stations don't have bases, we just make sure the lining overlaps to retain the soil but allows excess moisture to drain away.</p> <p>Once complete, use an electric plane or an electric sander to remove any excess material.</p>	
<p>Allow the planters time to dry out a little before treating with preservative or painting them.</p>	

Cutting List - 50 x 50mm (2" x 2") pressure treated timber

(2ft planter)	Quantity	Length (mm)	Total Length of timber needed (mm)
	16	550	8800
	16	400	6400
Approx. cost			£25.00
(3ft planter)			
	16	845	13520
	16	400	6400
Approx. cost			£30.00
(4ft planter)			
	16	1150	18400
	16	400	6400
Approx. cost			£38.00
(5ft planter)			
	16	1450	23200
	16	400	6400
Approx. cost			£50.00