

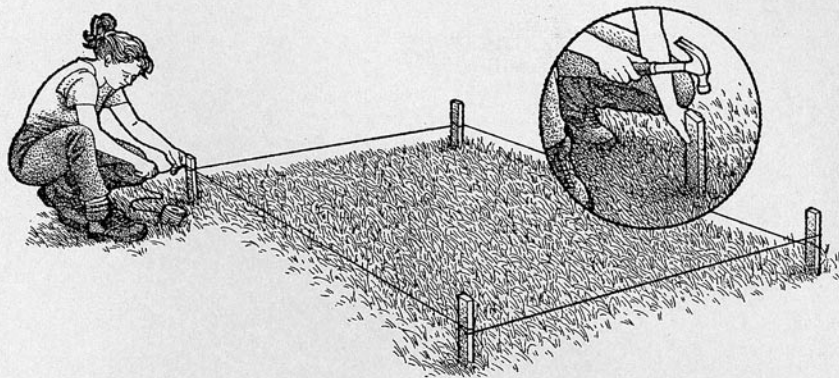
how to build a new bed

this no-dig method is easy on the back and gentle on the soil
by jill jesiolowski cebeneko

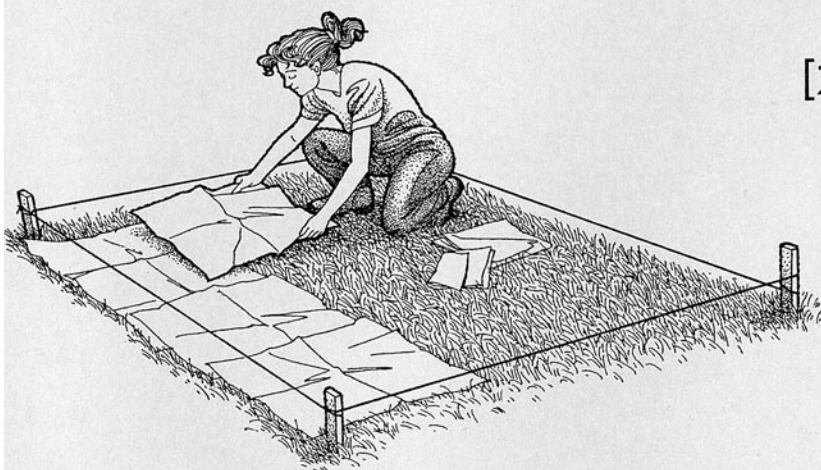
WHEN IT COMES TO building a new bed, there are as many methods as there are gardeners. Our simple technique is used to build raised beds to any specifications. All you need are string, stakes, newspaper, and an ample supply of good quality compost mixed in equal parts with soil.

Raised beds allow water to drain quickly and warm up quickly in spring. Foot traffic is confined to pathways, so soil remains loose and roots can grow deep, which helps plants withstand drought. Frames around raised beds are a matter of personal taste—the beds will stay intact without a structural border.

[1] **OUTLINE** the new bed. Hammer the stakes into the ground, then wind string around them to define the boundaries.



[2] **MULCH** over existing sod with a thick layer of newspaper. (In a few months, the newspaper will completely smother the grass, and deep-rooted plants will be able to penetrate any remaining newspaper.)



[3] **APPLY** a 4- to 6-inch-deep layer of well-aged compost mixed with equal parts soil over the entire newspaper-covered area. Seeds or shallow-rooted annuals may be planted in the new bed immediately; deeper-rooted plants, in a few months.

— OR LEAVES + FERTILIZER.

