



Alaska
Botanical
Garden

How to Build a Wattle Fence

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HISTORY:

Wattle fences have been used, at least since medieval times, as a popular, easy-to-construct, low-cost alternative to stone or timber. Wattle material consists of readily available, fast-growing plants like willow and alder that produce long straight branches. Historically, these fences enclosed animals, orchards, and gardens.

DIRECTIONS:

Materials & Tools needed:

- 2.5' Pieces of #4 rebar for staking.
- 2" Pieces of 1.5 "-2" diameter wood for end caps or dowels.
- 3'+ Freshly cut straight branches, 1.5" diameter at thick end, leaves and branches removed.
- Mallet
- Drill with 1/2" drill bit
- Hand clippers
- Loppers

Procedure:

- Drill halfway through end caps with 1/2" drill bit, twist caps onto rebar.
- Lay out 2.5' rebar stakes with caps every 1.5' on straight sections and every 1' on curved sections.
- Pound the rebar end 1.5' into ground with a mallet, leaving 1' above ground.
- Choose the thicker branches to start, weave them into the stakes. Alternate the branches in the same way you would a basket. Firmly press each weaving down to the ground as you go. Keep weaving until you reach the desired height, in this case 1'. Fill the stakes to the under side of the cap, which will hold them in place.
- Now weave smaller, thinner branches throughout to fill the gaps.
- Trim off any limbs sticking out.



NOTES:

- Green, bendable, freshly cut wood is best.
- The tighter you firm the wattle down, the sturdier the fence will be.
- You will need to repair and replace wattle from time to time.
- Wooden stakes can be used but may rot quickly.