



Let's Build Something Together™

Fence Installation Tips:

CHOOSING AND PLANNING YOUR FENCE

Skill Level: INTERMEDIATE Give these projects a try if you're a confident DIYer with a good working knowledge of a variety of tools. They can take a day or more to complete. If you can build a birdhouse or install a ceiling fan, your skill level is probably appropriate.

✓ MATERIALS

- Tape Measure
- Paper
- Pencil

Building a fence is a great DIY project. In this series, you'll learn how to plan and install a fence in your yard. This first set of instructions and accompanying video covers choosing and planning your fence. Others in this series are available online at [Lowes.com/Videos](https://www.lowes.com/Videos).



CHOOSING A FENCE

Taking the time to design and select the proper materials will help make sure your fence is practical, secure and safe.

01 Contact your local building department or homeowner's association to verify fence requirements and restrictions. Some zoning ordinances limit fence height, style, location, and some even prohibit fence construction. In most cases, to begin any construction you'll need to apply for a building permit and be subject to inspection by a building inspector.

- **TIP:** If your town has restrictions on fence construction, you might be able to apply for a *variance*. A *variance* is a request to perform some type of new construction or alteration that is otherwise not permitted by zoning regulations.

02 Select fence function(s).

- Keep pets or children safely in the yard.
- Offer increased privacy.
- Surround a swimming pool or other safety hazard.
- Protect landscaping.
- Be a decorative addition to your yard.
- **TIP:** You can select different styles of fences for your yard, matching the various functions. For example, select a tall vinyl fence for patio privacy and a short chain-link fence for a small pet area.

IMPORTANT

Before you begin this project, watch all of the videos and read all of the instructions in this *Fence Installation Tips* series. If you are not comfortable planning and building a fence, discuss the job with a Lowe's associate or call a professional for help.





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CHOOSING A FENCE (cont.)

03 Select a type of fence.

- A privacy fence is a solid panel where the top is typically at eye level or higher.
- Semi-privacy options can have solid panels with decorative lattice along the top. Or they can be shadowbox, meaning the individual boards alternate on both sides of the panel.



- Decorative fences have pickets, which can help keep children and pets in your yard but are more ornamental.

- **TIP:** Try to match the architecture of the home and landscape with a complementary fence design.



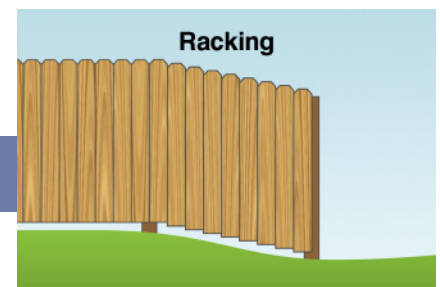
04 Select fence materials.

- Wood fences have a traditional look, but require ongoing maintenance. They need to be cleaned and stained or painted periodically to help keep the wood in good condition. (A.)
- Vinyl fences only require an occasional rinsing. It doesn't fade or rot, and it offers options that look similar to wood. (B.)
- Aluminum and steel can add a more decorative style to landscaping. Aluminum fencing materials require little maintenance while steel needs a coat of paint every few years to keep it looking its best. (C.)
- A good quality chain-link fence will resist years of weathering and is a good way to keep pets in the yard. (D.)



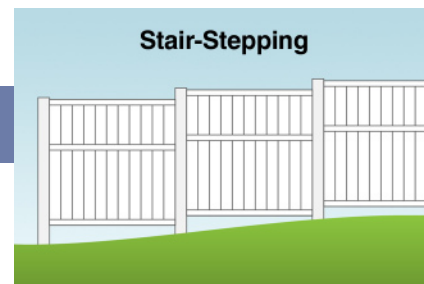
05 Consider fence component styles.

- Component fences, sometimes called stick-built fences, typically are made of wood. Every piece is assembled separately, so they can take a little longer to build.
 - Some people like the way they can follow the contours of the land, a technique called racking.



CHOOSING A FENCE (cont.)

- Panel fences are constructed of pre-assembled panels. Most metal and vinyl fences, as well as some wood fences, are only available as panels.
 - Panel fences can be easier to assemble but instead of following the ground contours, many have to “stair-step” on grades.



PLANNING A FENCE

- 01 Use a tape measure and pencil to begin sketching the location of the new fence on paper. Include the location of the house, garage, outbuildings, trees, landscaping, and any existing fences.**
- 02 If the fence will run along property lines, talk to the owners of the neighboring property. You want to make sure your fence will indeed be on your land, and if needed, contact a land surveyor to mark the property line.**
- 03 If required by local ordinance, apply for a building permit from the local building department, who can offer guidelines on post depth, post spacing, and other technical requirements, as applicable. Some ordinances only require a building permit for structures taller than 4' or of a specific value.**
- 04 Before digging, call 811 to be connected to local utility companies. They will mark any underground service lines free of charge.**

Now that you have selected your fence and made a plan, you can mark your layout and begin digging post holes, which are the topics of the next video and printable instructions in the *Fence Installation Tips* series available at [Lowes.com/Videos](https://www.lowes.com/Videos).

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