



Let's Build Something Together™

Wood Fence Installation Tips:

INSTALLING POSTS AND PANELS

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

- Wood Fence Posts
- Wood Fence Pickets
- Wood Fence Rails
- Hammer or Pneumatic Nail Gun and Compressor
- Screws and Nails
- Drill with Bits
- Gravel
- Concrete
- Water
- Saw
- Carpenter's Level
- Post Level
- Mason's String
- Furring Strips
- Pencil
- Tape Measure
- Work Gloves
- Ear Protection
- Safety Glasses

In this series, you'll learn how to plan and install a fence in your yard. In this set of instructions and accompanying video, you'll learn how to install posts and pickets for a component-built wood fence. Before you start working, refer to the information in this series on *Choosing and Planning Your Fence* and *Layout and Digging Post Holes* at [Lowes.com/Videos](https://www.lowes.com/Videos).



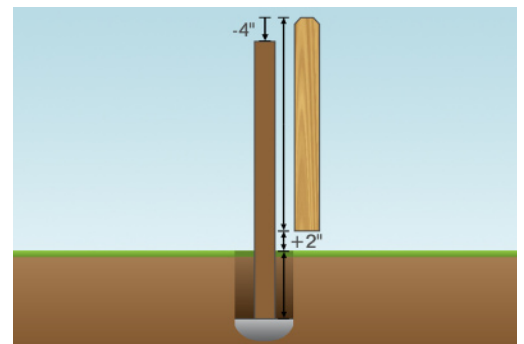
SETTING FENCE POSTS

When building a component built fence, you can dig all your holes and set all your posts at once. Once the post holes are dug, you can set the posts in concrete. Here's how:

- 01 Calculate the height of the post(s) to be installed. Your post height will be determined by building code. The following is a typical formula for figuring post height:**

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Depth of the post in the hole} \\ + 2" \text{ for clearance} \\ + \text{Picket height} \\ - 4" \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Height of posts



- 02 Cut the posts.**
- 03 Add 4" of gravel base to the bottom of the post hole.**
- **TIP:** Local building code may require a deeper post hole, one that is below normal frost line.
- 04 Set the post in place against the layout line and temporarily hold it plumb with clamps and braces or help from a friend.**



IMPORTANT

Before you begin this project, call 811 to be connected with your local utility companies. Make sure that the site you have selected and where you will dig does not have underground utility lines that can be damaged by digging tools. If you have additional questions, discuss them with a Lowe's associate or call a professional for help.



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SETTING FENCE POSTS (cont.)

- 05 Add concrete following the manufacturer's instructions. Work it to about 2" below the surface to allow for fill dirt later.
- 06 Verify that the post is plumb.
- 07 Continue installing the posts.
- 08 Depending on the fence design, either install stringers and pickets or install the next post(s), whichever is easier.
 - **TIP:** When setting posts for the gate(s), allow sufficient space for hardware installation.



INSTALLING STRINGERS

Once the post concrete has dried, install the horizontal rails, also known as stringers. Typically you'll need one for each 2' of post height. Attach them to the posts following the ground contour.

- **TIP:** Longer stringers can span two or more posts. Be sure to alternate joints on different posts, and not have any joints on the gate posts.

- 01 Attach the bottom stringer to the outside of the post with screws, at least 6" from the ground.
- 02 Attach the middle stringer near the middle of the posts.
 - If you're installing a decorative 36" picket fence, you won't have a middle stringer.
- 03 Attach the top stringer at the top of the posts.
 - If you're installing a decorative 36" picket fence, your top stringer will be below your picket height.
- 04 Cut the excess at gates or corners.





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INSTALLING PICKETS

- 01 To help keep the tops of the pickets even, attach furring strips to the posts and tie mason's string between them to use as a guide. (A.)
- 02 Attach 2" x 4" spacers on the gate posts between the rails to support the gate hardware. (B.)
- 03 Place the first picket board in the corner of the fence or edge of the gate post, aligning it with the edge and string guide, then attach it to the stringers with nails. (C.)
- 04 Place the second picket against the first and attach it with nails.
 - For a decorative 36" picket fence, cut a spacer to ensure equal spacing between pickets.
- 05 Install the remaining pickets in the same manner, frequently using a carpenter's level to check for plumb.
- 06 Overlap pickets at corners for a clean seam. (D.)



A.



B.



C.



D.

To finish your wood fence installation, you'll need a gate or two—which is the topic of the next video with printable instructions in this series, *Wood Fence Installation Tips: Attaching the Gate*. You can find it at [Lowes.com/Videos](https://www.lowes.com/Videos).

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