Picket Bed Cut & Fill Chart

Build a budget-friendly hugelkultur planter from the ground up.

Skip the backbreaking sod removal and build a lush planter right over your grass. This guide provides your exact cut list and soil volumes for a perfect build.



Cut List & Fill Chart

4 ft & 8 ft
Dog-ear fence picket cut lengths

17 in
4x4 corner post cut height

Bottom third (15.1 cu ft)
Log layer depth and volume

2 in (5.3 cu ft)
Leaf layer depth and volume

10 in (26.6 cu ft)
Bagged mix depth and volume

6+ in
Cardboard overlap on the lawn

3 ft
Arborist chip paths between boxes

Soak The Cardboard Base

Spray the flattened cardboard heavily until completely soft to jumpstart decomposition and prevent dry boxes from wicking moisture away from your freshly laid soil.

Assembly & Filling Sequence

1. **Prep the Lawn** Remove shipping tape, lay cardboard over grass, and overlap edges to block all sunlight.
2. **Build the Frame** Fasten horizontal pickets to corner posts using polymer-coated exterior wood screws to prevent rust streaks.
3. **Arrange the Logs** Place the heaviest logs parallel to longest sides and wedge small branches into deep voids.
4. **Tamp the Leaves** Spread dry leaves over logs, wet thoroughly, and compress with your body weight.
5. **Add Soil & Compost** Pour bagged mix, blend one bag of mushroom compost into the top three inches, and level.

Base Log Selection Guide

Find your row: **Your free wood type**

Your free wood type	Your pick	Why
Oak & Hickory	Slow decomposition	Provides long-term moisture retention
Maple & Ash	Moderate decomposition	Offers balanced nutrient release
Fruitwoods	Moderate decomposition	Safe for vegetable growing
Black Walnut	Do not use	Leaches chemical that stunts vegetable growth
Fresh Pine	Do not use	Ties up soil nitrogen as it decays

Material Quality Checks

- ○ Check each cedar board for severe bowing by sighting down edges.
- ○ Reject any pickets with split ends that might crack during assembly.
- ○ Verify actual picket thickness matches your corner post measurements.
- ○ Ensure leaves are from a healthy lawn, never bagged street sweepings.
- ○ Confirm logs contain no treated lumber scraps to avoid introducing toxins.

Garden Planning Notes

Enjoy your lush, budget-friendly garden bed and a bountiful heirloom tomato harvest!