



## **Installation Primer**

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## **How to Install Your Cedar Fence**

### **Part 1 – Before You Start**

Make sure you know your property lines

See if your town has any special fencing rules such as permits, set-back requirements or height limits

Make sure there are no underground utilities or other potentially problematic or dangerous surprises. Some states require you to call Dig Safe or a similar agency before digging.

### **Part 2 – Tools Needed**

Shovel

Post hole digger

Line level

36" standard level

String line & stakes

Hammer

Spade/root cutter if the fence line is near trees

Circular or hand saw if you are going to cut back any sections to fit

Screwdriver or electric drill driver

3" nails or screws for affixing backing rails to posts

### Tips

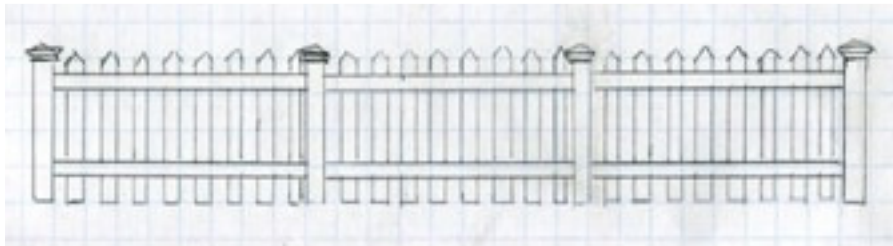
If the terrain is not level, it is always best to work down hill

As a general rule, do not use concrete to set the posts. Concrete tends to frost heave and make the post uneven over time. However, if you hit an unmovable rock or root, you will need to cut the post and set it with concrete

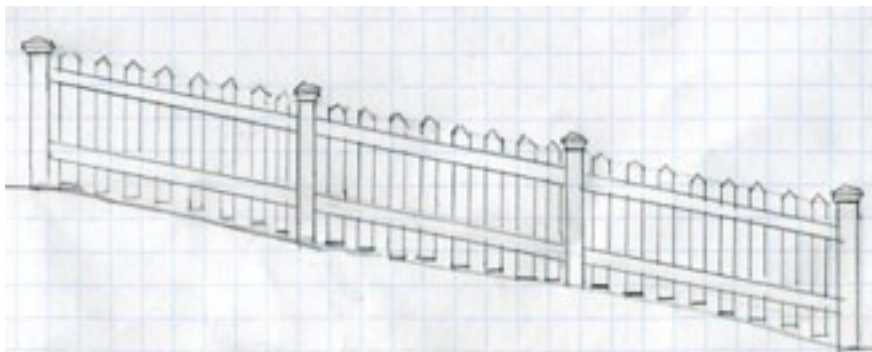
The soil that you pull out of a hole is typically the soil that goes back into the hole, tamped tightly, around the post. However, it is OK to mix in some gravel or sand with the soil to help improve drainage around the post

### Part 3 - Types of Fence Installations

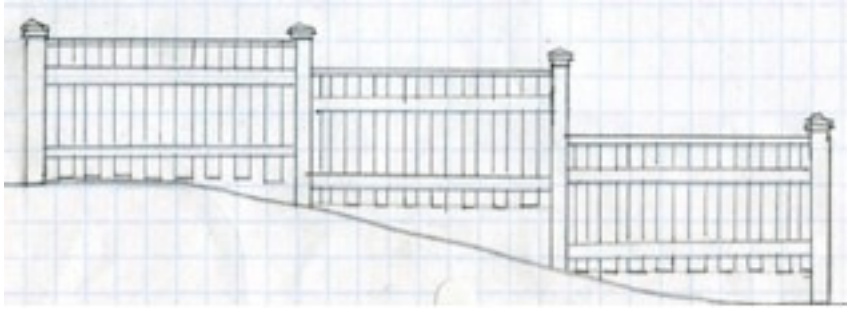
**Level fence** – the ground is generally level and thus the top of the fence is level



**Racked fence** – follows a sloped terrain and the top of the fence is not always level



**Stepped fence** – steps up or down on a sloped terrain and the top of the fence is always level



**Level Fence Installation** –This is the most common installation. With a level fence the posts and pickets are vertically level and the backing rails horizontally level.

1. Tightly string a line about 5" above the ground for the entire fence line. Each post will be installed 1" in front of this line.
2. Dig your first hole to the proper depth so that the bottoms of the pickets will be 2" to 3" off the ground. Put the dirt on a tarp to keep the area clean.
3. Drop your first post in the hole and slowly backfill and tamp. Use a standard level on two adjacent sides of the post to make sure the post is plumb (vertically level). Continue checking for level as you backfill the hole.
4. Insert top and bottom rails of each section into mortised holes in post and determine location of next post. It is helpful to have some wood around to help shim the fence to level.
5. Continue with other sections as in earlier steps.
6. When your fence is complete and you are happy with the results, nail or screw through the back of each post and into the top and bottom rails to secure the section.
7. Install post caps with small galvanized finish nails through the post collar with 2" 4d galvanized nails. Drill pilot holes so the cap edge does not split.
8. Touch up fence with stain as needed.

**Racked Fence Installation** –With a racked fence the posts and the pickets are always vertically level and the top and bottom rails follow the slope of the ground. Many jobs are a combination of level and racked.

1. Steps 1 – 3 are the same as Level Fence. Make sure you work down hill!

4. When you put the fence rails into the post hole openings, nail from the back of the post into each top and bottom rail to hold the fence in place. Put the nail in partially, as you may need to pull it out later.
5. Grab the end of the fence opposite the set post and pull it down very hard (this is called "racking") until the bottom of the pickets are the proper distance off the ground as they follow the sloped grade. Done properly, the backing rails will pivot on the picket nails; the posts and pickets will be plumb, with the top and bottom of the pickets along with the backing rails following the grade of the land.
6. Continue with other sections as in earlier steps.
7. When your fence is complete and you are happy with the results, nail or screw through the back of each post and into the top and bottom rails to secure the section.
8. Install post caps with small galvanized finish nails through the post collar with 2" 4d galvanized nails. Drill pilot holes so the cap edge does not split.
9. Touch up fence with stain as needed.

**Stepped Fence Installation** - This type of installation can be done when the grade slopes and you want the top of the fence to always be horizontally level. Stepping (looks like stair steps) looks best when the fence style has a horizontal top cap like our Cape Cod Picket.

It is important that you let us know early in the process (before we bore the posts!) that you want to step your fence as the posts need to be bored differently and longer than in a level or racked installation. We suggest using all blank posts and screwing the rails to the posts on a stepped fence install.

1. Steps 1 – 3 are the same as Level Fence. Make sure you work downhill.
4. Line up the section to the post and screw through the rails to the post. Leave some of the screw out until the job is done and all is plumb
5. Determine location of next post and dig hole.
6. Shim up the fence section so it is horizontally level. Set the post so it is the proper height, screw the rails to the post and continue on.
7. Continue with other sections as in earlier steps.
8. When your fence is complete and you are happy with the results, nail or screw through the back of each post and into the top and bottom rails to secure the section.
9. Install post caps with small galvanized finish nails through the post collar with 2" 4d galvanized nails. Drill pilot holes so the cap edge does not split.
10. Touch up fence with stain as needed.