

Choosing Where to Grow

Growing area	Pros	Cons
Pots and containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can grow something even if you don't have garden Can make use of patios, steps, path as a growing area Can recycle containers No digging required Adding to your growing space is easy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pots and containers need to be found Growing medium needed to fill pots and containers Require watering every day during dry periods Drying out can be disastrous Growing medium will need replacing every season and feeding regularly throughout growth period
Raised beds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher beds can be good for reducing the need to bend, if there are back or mobility problems The soil warms up quicker at the beginning of the year than ground level beds Improved drainage if the ground soil is wet No compaction of soil Soil nutrients and structure can be improved in a focused area Can be easier to keep on top of weeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upfront costs to build a raised bed Soil or other growing medium needed to fill the bed A tonne bag of soil fills approx. 3m² at a depth of 30cm. The soil will settle (so multiply your bed volume by 1.6 to give enough spare to refill when needed). The deeper the bed, the more soil you'll need to fill it (and shift to put it in) Wheelbarrowing and shovelling soil of soil required to fill the bed Raised beds can reduce your overall growing space. Paths are necessary between the beds for walking and wheelbarrow access. 1m is good and works well at a height of 30cm, but the higher the bed the wider the path will need to be for wheelbarrows to get through The soil will dry out more easily and quickly than ground level beds More watering will be required, the higher the bed less likely plants will be able to access ground water Beds can be cooler or more prone to freezing in the winter
Ground level beds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing area can be maximized No need to build beds Soil directly available More consistent soil microbes Good access to ground water Less watering required Easier to grow crops requiring large land use (e.g. brassicas) or bigger areas of crops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor results if soil is shallow, wet or stoney Bending required to reach bed Longer to warm at the beginning of the season Wetter through the winter Can become compacted Weeds encroach from surrounding area more readily