Emphasise the Posts

Fix the rails between the posts and set them higher than the surrounding pickets. A simple groove cut into the top of the posts as a shadow line can provide decoration. Post caps that fix to the top of the fence. Posts are also available in a range of styles.

Variations

While this brochure provides construction details for a simple picket fence, there are many variations to this design. Here are a couple of suggestions.

Illustration 4: Use the thickness of one picket to space the pickets.

At a corner, set out the pickets as shown in Illustration 5.

Illustration 5: Corner post

Illustration 7: Pickets set between featured posts

Illustration 8: Post caps in a variety of styles are available

Maintenance

Left unpainted or unsealed, your new picket fence will change colour to a silver-grey, and may appear darker with time due to natural mould growth. Periodic light water blasting will restore some natural colouring. Painted or stained fences will require recoating with time. When painting apply at least one coat to posts and pickets before fixing. That way no unpainted areas will show up when the timber naturally shrinks in summer.

Please Note: As with all fences, check with your local council if it borders council property, find out about any height restrictions, and speak with any neighbours the fence will affect.

Illustration 8: Pickets trimmed to give a curving profile

Illustration 6: Pickets trimmed to give a curving profile

Illustration 4: Use the thickness of one picket to space the pickets.

Note

To stop the pickets or the rails from splitting, ensure that the nails are not too close together, or at the edge of the timber. Predrilling holes will also prevent them from splitting.

Illustration 5: Corner post
GETTING STARTED

These instructions show you how to build a basic 1.0m high picket fence. If you’re using pickets of a different length, adjust these instructions to suit.

This brochure will show you how to fix the pickets to a completed post and rail structure. To get to this stage, follow the instructions for constructing the post and rail section of the fence in our Installing Posts and Rails, brochure. Note, the length of the post that is buried into the ground for this fence is only 650mm.

First up, complete the planning section in this brochure. Then you can order the materials required.

Tools
- Handsaw
- Stringline
- Tape Measure
- Hammer

Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIALS REQUIRED</th>
<th>Quantity required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 x 70mm Radiata H4 Treated Posts</td>
<td>Number plus 1 at 1.5m long each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 x 45mm Radiata H3.2 Treated Rails</td>
<td>Number x 4 multiples of 2.1m lengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 x 19mm Radiata H3.2 Treated Pickets</td>
<td>Number x 24 pickets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100mm Hot-dipped Galvanised Jolt Head Nails</td>
<td>Number x 4 posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60mm Hot-dipped Galvanised Jolt Head Nails</td>
<td>Number x 4 500gm bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10mm Hot-dipped Galvanised Coach Bolts with Nuts &amp; Washers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dricon Concrete</td>
<td>5.65 bags 25kg bags/post hole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builders Mix BM20</td>
<td>Number = 50 + 1 x 0.75 cubic metres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement</td>
<td>Number = 1 + 2 40kg bags</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example
- Length of fence divided by 2.1

16.5m

answear =

786

Round up to next full number

8

Tools
- Spirit level
- Square
- Pencil
- Spade / Post Hole Borer

PLANNING YOUR FENCE

Measure the total length of the proposed fence, and use that measurement in the chart provided.

Take the rounded up number and use it in the ‘Materials Required’ chart to work out the total amount of materials required to build your fence. Don’t forget to allow extra material if you want to make gates to match your fence.

Illustration 1 shows the heights for setting posts and rails when using 1.0m long pickets. Adjust these figures up or down if your pickets are a different length. The height from the bottom edge of the picket to the ground can also be adjusted to suit your requirements, but the pickets should not touch the ground.

Illustration 2 shows a completed section of a picket fence. The posts are placed 2.1m apart measured from the centre of one post to the centre of the next. This spacing between the posts is then 2.030m (2030mm).

Post Height: 850mm
Post Spacing: 2030mm

Fixing Rails

The fence rails are fixed to the face of the posts using 100mm hot-dipped galvanised jolt head nails or 10mm hot-dipped galvanised bolts.

The bottom rail is approximately 250mm from ground level and the top rails fixed about 70mm down from the top of the post (see Illustration 1). For taller fences and for extra strength, you can add a middle rail.

Once you have completed fixing the rail to the post you can begin fixing the pickets to the fence.

You may also want to paint the posts, rails and pickets before you start this final stage. You will get a much better paint finish on your fence if you paint it before installing the pickets.

For greater strength and cleaner looks, you could choose to check the rails into the post.

Fixing the Pickets to the Rails

1. Fix a picket at one end of the fence and tack or temporarily fix another picket at the other end, ensuring that both of the pickets are fixed at the correct height.

2. Run a stringline across the top of the two pickets, and pack it with a small 20mm block above the top of the picket. If the fence length is long, it would be necessary to temporarily fix the picket at the intermediate points, to eliminate any sag in the line.

3. Fix the pickets to the rails (but don’t drive the nails in completely), use a spare picket as a spacer to evenly separate the pickets by the required distance, fix a 20mm spacer at the top of the picket to maintain the level along the fence (see Illustration 4).

4. Use your level to ensure that the picket is vertical.

5. Check the position of the picket and then hammer the nails in completely.

6. The picket should be fixed with 60mm hot-dipped galvanised jolt head nails. 2 nails into each rail, skewed, driven at an angle to prevent the picket from pulling away from the rail.