Guide to...
featheredge fencing

For those of you who want to erect your own featheredge fencing but just need a few hints and tips on how to go about it, this guide is for you!

Featheredge fencing consists of posts, post supports, rails, gravel boards and featheredge boards. The rails are available in 3.6m lengths. Although sections of fencing can be any distance apart it is recommended to work in 1.8m runs particularly in exposed, windy areas. This gives a shorter span between the posts and ensures durability.

The featheredge boarding is available in 1.8m lengths x 150mm wide and are sold separately.

Use 100mm x 100mm fence posts set 600mm into the ground. The posts should be tall enough to cope with the height of the gravel board (150mm) and the featheredge boarding.

Making your own fencing

1 Put the first three posts in their holes and prop each one up with temporary supports. Attach one end of the upper rail onto the first post and the other end onto the third post. Check the rail is level and mark and saw off any excess: the end of the rail should reach exactly half-way across the third post. Nail it in place using 75mm galvanised nails and fit the lower rail in the same way. Keep checking both are level.

2 The joins in the rail sections need to be staggered for added strength. Therefore measure and cut the central rail to the distance from the outer edge of the first post to the midpoint of the second.

For fences 1.8m high, four rails are required.

3 Nail the central rail into position using galvanised nails. The next section of the central rail should be a standard two-post width.

Safety first

Wear strong gloves to protect your hands from splinters. Take particular care when applying wood preservative, and wear safety goggles if recommended by the manufacturer.

4 Continue fitting posts and rails to create your skeleton fence, supporting it with timber props as you go. Checking again that each post is vertical, concrete them into the ground and leave to set for 48 hours. Slope the concrete away from the post to drain off rainwater.

5 Fit gravel boards horizontally to the front of the posts across the base of the fence. Drill pilot holes for the nails before attaching the board to prevent the wood from splitting.

Attaching the boards

1 The first featheredge board is fitted with its thicker edge aligned to the outer edge of the first post and the bottom standing on the gravel board. Cut all the boards to the correct length before you begin and treat the cut ends with wood preservative. The boards should stand 25mm taller than the fence posts.

2 Using 38mm galvanised nails, nail the centre of the first board to the upper rail. Check the board is vertical before nailing it to the bottom rail and finally the central rail. To maintain an identical overlap between all the boards, a spacer should be used. Make a spacer by cutting an off-cut of timber to 20mm less than the width of a featheredge board. Align this to the thicker edge of the first board. Butt the second board up against it and fix in the same way.

3 Continue fitting boards, using the spacer to maintain an identical overlap; checking each is vertical with a spirit level. When you are six boards from the last post, measure how much space you have left and increase or decrease the overlap of the last few boards so that you meet the outer edge of the post neatly.

4 Run the capping strip across the top of the featheredge boards. Nail it in place using galvanised nails, if you find the wood is splitting, drill pilot holes before nailing.

Post cement

Secure your posts with post cement. It sets in about ten minutes and one 20kg bag should be enough for each post.

Post supports

Post spikes are an alternative to setting fence posts in concrete, provided the ground is firm.

We stock a wide range of nails, tools, post fixings and cement; see in-store for everything you need to complete your fencing project!