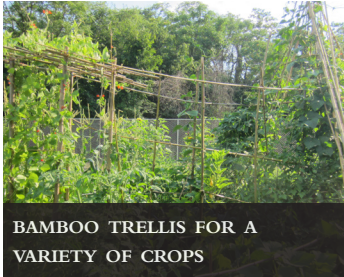


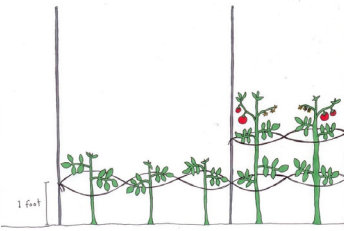


How-To: TRELLISING CROPS

Some crops grow and produce best when they are given a structure to climb. Trellising keeps vigorous plants from sprawling, reduces disease problems, saves space, and makes harvesting easier.



BAMBOO TRELLIS FOR A VARIETY OF CROPS



HOW TO BASKET-WEAVE TOMATOES



PEAS GROW ON POSTS AND GARDEN TRELLIS

SHOULD I TRELLIS MY CROPS?

Trellising has many benefits, and several crops make great candidates for trellising. These crops in particular are generally most healthy and productive when they're trellised:

- Beans – any pole varieties. Bush varieties do not need trellising.
- Cucumbers – these are “reluctant climbers,” so train them and attach them to the trellis as they grow.
- Flowers – vining types.
- Peas – any pole varieties. Bush varieties do not need trellising.
- Tomatoes – particularly indeterminate varieties. Determinate varieties do not need extensive trellising but can benefit from cages.

Winter squash, watermelons, and vining summer squash can also be trellised, although it is not necessary. Large pepper plants sometimes need support.

MATERIALS

- Bamboo poles
- Cages – Small tomato cages for determinate varieties – for indeterminate varieties, the largest you can find
- Polypropylene garden trellis (looks like a grid)
- Posts – 6' metal U- or T-posts, hardwood stakes, or rebar
- Wire fencing or concrete reinforcement

Along with structural materials, these items can be handy for trellising:

- Bamboo pole connectors
- Soft ties, made from Velcro, wire encased in foam, or rags cut into strips
- Small stakes or landscape staples for securing trellises to the ground
- Sturdy jute or polypropylene twine for lashing trellis materials or tying up straggling vines
- Tomato clips to protect vines while attaching them to a supportive string

METHODS

There's no wrong way to build a trellis, as long as it's sturdy enough to support the plant's growth through the season. Here are some ideas for structures, and the plants they hold up well.

INDIVIDUAL PLANTS

- *Small purchased tomato cages* Great for supporting determinate tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers.



How-To: TRELLISING CROPS



TOMATO CAGE MADE FROM CONCRETE REINFORCEMENT



TRELLISING TOMATOES MAKES HARVESTING AND MAINTAINING WALKWAYS EASIER

- **Handmade tomato cages** Bend wire fencing or concrete reinforcement into circular cages. Choose 5 or 6' fencing for indeterminate tomatoes, and make sure that the holes are large enough to reach through to harvest.
- **Post and tie** Sink individual posts beside each plant. As it grows, attach the plant to the stake using soft ties.
- **Strings** Attach a long piece of jute or polypropylene twine to an existing structure near the plant. Attach the other end to the ground, using a staple or stake. As the plant grows, wind the string around it.

CROPS IN ROWS

- **Cages** Work well in rows as well as for individual plants. Please see specs (above) for each type of cage.
- **Fencing tunnels** For low-growing, vining crops, make low tunnels from metal fencing or concrete reinforcement. Place these tunnels over the crops and allow them to grow through the fencing. The tunnel keeps fruits and vines off the ground and makes them easier to harvest.
- **Posts and basket weave*** Sink a post every few feet in the row (if staking tomatoes, place a post after every two plants). If possible, place posts when plants are small, to avoid disturbing their roots. Tie a piece of twine on the outermost post and weave it around each plant, holding the twine very taut. Wrap the string around each post you encounter. At the end of the row, tie off the string, and weave back to the first post, placing the string on the opposite side of each plant.
- **Posts and garden trellis*** Sink a post every few feet in the row. Attach bamboo poles to the tops of the posts, parallel to the ground (optional). Attach polypropylene garden trellis to the posts and/or bamboo poles, so the bottom just touches the ground.
- **Posts with horizontal bar and strings*** Sink a post every few feet in the row. Attach bamboo or wooden poles to the tops of the posts, parallel to the ground. Attach strings from the cross bar, to the ground, at each plant (stake string to the ground if desired). Use tomato clips to attach plants to the strings.
- **Pole tipi** Connect the tops of bamboo poles, to form a tipi. Set the tipi over the crop or set the teepee in the garden and seed around each pole. Secure the plants to the poles as necessary.

*When using posts for row crops, sink one post deeply at each end of the row, at a slight angle away from the row, as an anchor for the posts in the rows.

BEST TRELLIS BY CROP

Crop	Cage (sm)	Cage (lg)	Fencing Tunnel	Pole Tipi	Post & Basket Weave	Post & Garden Trellis	Post with Crossbar	Post & Tie	Strings
BEANS (POLE)				X		X	X		X
CUCUMBERS	X		X			X	X	X	X
FLOWERS				X					
PEAS (POLE)				X		X	X		X
PEPPERS	X							X	
TOMATOES (DETERMINATE)	X		X					X	
TOMATOES (INDETERMINATE)		X			X		X		X