



## Installation Primer - Contemporary Fence



### How to Install Your Contemporary 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. All 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

2 – Clamps

2 “ to 2 ½” stainless steel nails (siding nails)

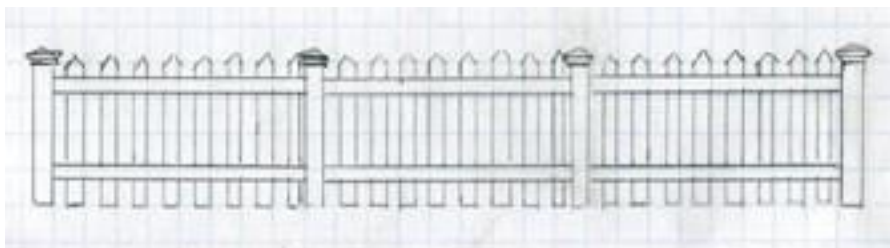
### Tips

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

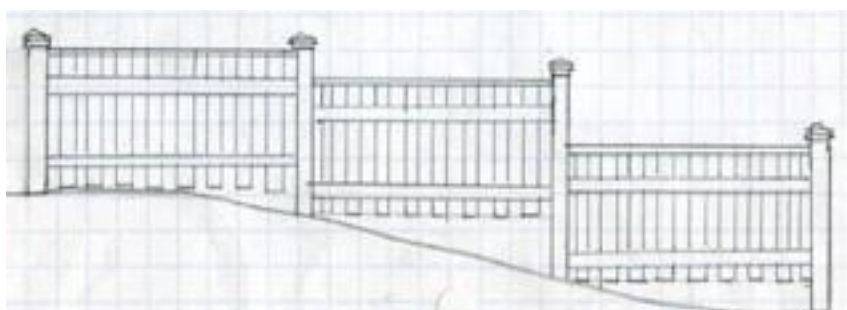
The soil that you pull out of a hole is typically the soil that goes back into the hole, tamped tightly, around the post. However, it is OK to mix in some gravel or sand with the soil to help improve drainage around the post

### Part 3 - Types of Fence Installations



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

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



## Part 4 - Installation

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 and set the posts so they are at least 3" above where the top board will be. You will cut the post to height later.
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 fill and tamp.
4. Determine the length of each board and cut to size. If fence is stained, apply stain to cut end of post. Please note that the boards on an in-line post should not butt up to each other. They should be spaced apart  $\frac{1}{2}$ " for aesthetic reasons.
5. Work from the bottom up. Determine height of the bottom course of boards. You will want them at least 2" off the ground. Nail bottom row of boards using two nails on each end evenly spaced horizontally and vertically.



Shows an end post where the boards go all the way to the end. Note even nail spacing

6. Put in your  $\frac{1}{2}$ " or other size spacers in and nail in the next course. Continue this until they reach the second to last board. Determine where the top board will end, mark that line on the posts and cut the posts down to fit with a circular saw. Nail off the top course and stain, if needed, the top of the post
7. Spines – Spines are the vertical 2 x 2 boards that are centered on the back of the fence. These keep the boards aligned. They are generally needed on all sections over 4' long. Cut the spine to length, which will be the fence height.

Apply the board spacers between each board course. Clamp the spine in place on the top and bottom and nail off.



8. Touch up fence with stain as needed.
9. Grab an alcoholic beverage and admire your work.

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. The key here is the plan the steps so the boards always line up horizontally with their neighbor. If you boards are 5 ½" wide and you plan a step 3" wide, the boards will not line up and it will look awful...



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