

# Used Tired Raised Garden & Tree Ring

by [auntwrenny](#) on June 18, 2009

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## **intro:** Used Tired Raised Garden & Tree Ring

*Ever wonder what to do with those old tires? Do you want to have a garden without the need to till soil? We have found that used tires make GREAT raised garden beds!*

**Caution!**  
Please note that we are using some serious saws to cut the tire. It's important that you are familiar with and comfortable using power tools to make these projects. While the cuts are not difficult, the tires do have steel wires in the sidewall that can be resistant to sawing initially. BE CAREFUL AND WATCH WHERE YOU PLACE YOUR HANDS/FINGERS!



### **step 1: MATERIALS:**

#### **- Used tires:**

We saved our tires when we replaced them. This actually saved us the cost of the disposal fee! We also asked a couple of friends to save their tires for us as well since we knew we'd need several for various gardens.

#### **- Sharp Knife:**

You will want to use a sharp knife but not one that would bother you if it's used in your garden.

#### **- Jig Saw:**

This saw is used to cut the side off the tire.

#### **- Dual Saw:**

This is the saw we used to cut a slit in the side of the tire. It cuts through the steel bands easily. Again, BE CAREFUL!

#### **- Landscape Fabric:**

You could also use several layers of newspaper to create a weed/grass block.

#### **- Garden Soil:**

You can purchase garden soil, compost material, or find a friend/acquaintance who needs to have soil hauled away.

## step 2: Preparing to remove sidewall

All you really need to do in this step is make a "hole" to put the jig saw blade into.



### Image Notes

1. Note that the knife is placed just inside of the "tread". We are going to cut off the sidewall only.

## step 3: Cutting Away the Sidewall with Jigsaw

Now all you have to do is cut around the tire! We didn't use a special blade. The general purpose blade works just fine.

You should also note that it isn't necessary to remove both sidewalls. We've tried this both ways and have found that the tire is much more stable if you only remove one side. Also, you have a trough that allows a little water to pool into a reservoir which helps with fluid retention and watering. Another benefit is the way this second sidewall will hold the landscape fabric and soil without allowing it to run out the bottom.



## step 4: The Sidewall is Removed!

This is what you're left with after removing the sidewall.

Since I believe you're intelligent enough to figure out where to put the soil and landscape fabric, I'm not showing photos of that step. All you need to do is, PLACE THE TIRE WHERE YOU WANT IT SINCE THERE WILL BE NO WAY YOU CAN MOVE IT ONCE THE SOIL IS IN. Once you have the tire in place you will need to line it with the landscape fabric. Then fill the tire with soil and plant!

Now wasn't that easy???

Now for your BONUS PROJECT! THE TREE RING!



### step 5: Splitting the Tree Ring

This step is optional depending on the size of your tree or shrub. If the plant is too large for the ring to go over it then you will need to cut the split.

Again I'd like to caution you about where your hands and fingers are placed. Make sure that you have the tree ring placed on a safe surface with an adequate work surface for cutting. Take time to make sure the electrical cord isn't in the way of your blade!

You will need to use a Dual Saw for cutting through the steel belting. It's usually a very narrow band of metal that requires cutting. Be prepared to feel a give and easier cutting after you get through the metal band. The most difficult part of cutting is the curvature of the sidewall. We suggest using a cutting surface that you can cut into.



### step 6: Now you've made two projects out of one tire!

This picture shows a tree ring in place around a small shrub. We didn't need to cut this ring because the ring was so small.

Our rings have stayed in place through several mowings without any pinning or stakes. However, it would be easy enough to drill some holes to drive stakes into for holding the ring in place. We have also filled in some tree rings with mulch now and it stays put really well.

\*Additional tip for "lawn stakes":

Everyone I know has more wire hangers than any reasonable person could sanely use. (I say sanely because I find it insanity inducing to untangle the tangle of wire hangers when doing laundry!) Wire hangers make GREAT lawn stakes. We've used them for years and since you will typically pick these up for free, they are also CHEAP! (That's one of my favorite words!)



## Related Instructables



**Save Tires and make a Garden !**  
by arylc



**How to Update Your Garden Annually for Flowers, Veggies, or Vines** by Mr. Right  
It



**Build an Amazing Garden** by midsun183



**Hydroponic Bog Garden (Water Recycling)** by Biotank



**Have shower...Water garden** by bauble



**How to inflate a wheelbarrow (video)** by bmerritt5



**How to plug a hole in a radial tubeless tire (video)** by bmerritt5



**Home Composting** by Boring\_Jester

## Comments

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**thepelton** says:

I recall reading about something like this in Mother Earth News about 30 years ago. The man that posted it was wheelchair bound, and was growing potatoes in stacks of tires. He harvested his potatoes by knocking over the stacks and pulling the potatoes out of the tires.

Jun 22, 2009. 9:42 AM [REPLY](#)



**auntwrenny** says:

My husband would love to see that article. Considering both of us were in Junior High School then we were more interested in kissing the opposite sex than gardening. LOL ;-)

Jun 22, 2009. 10:06 AM [REPLY](#)



**Goodhart** says:

GREAT instructable!, and very detailed explanation.

Jun 22, 2009. 7:37 AM [REPLY](#)

I had only one bit of trouble though. I was not familiar with a *dual saw*, so naturally, I Googled it, and most of the entries I came up with were a specialized saw that was a bit out of my price range ( as noted here ).

Is this what you mean by a *dual saw* or is it something else?

<http://www.instructables.com/id/Used-Tired-Raised-Garden-amp-Tree-Ring/>



**auntwrenny** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 9:02 AM [REPLY](#)

I wanted to let you and everyone else know the actual dual saw we used for this project.

The Craftsman Twin Cutter (#26829) is now available and retails for \$179.99. Become a Craftsman Club member and you will likely get discounts that will help in your tool purchasing.



**auntwrenny** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 8:10 AM [REPLY](#)

Yes, Dual Saws are a bit pricey. We bought ours from Craftsman using some discount coupons we had.

The advantage of a Dual Saw over other metal cutting saws is that it doesn't have the vibration of say a reciprocating saw. We've used it frequently since we got it a couple of months ago. You might want to look into it if you're doing any serious yard work, welding (which is an interest of my husband), or sawing through tougher items.

You could probably gnaw your way through the tire with a large metal cutter/lopper or a hack saw but it will take you some time. Also, I really try to investigate what is the best tool for any given project. Since Shannon and I do a lot of "junking" we have accumulated quite a few tools and I will admit we probably have more tools than the average couple.



**Goodhart** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 8:36 AM [REPLY](#)

Yeah, I have been forced, by lack of finances, to be a lot more eclectic, sadly; since many times that means it takes a lot longer. :-)) but I understand what you mean.



**auntwrenny** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 9:08 AM [REPLY](#)

Something you may want to keep in mind is that you may not even need the saw. You only need to cut it IF the tree is too large to slip the ring over. You could also bind the branches together on a short tree/shrub so it's easier to slip the ring over. Most of the rings we used never had to be cut.



**gsport george** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 7:53 AM [REPLY](#)

Nice work, but...

In areas with a decent amount of rainfall it might be an idea to add some gravel or other drainage layer in the dip in the lower sidewall before putting the soil on top, I can imagine that area becoming waterlogged and leading to problems.



**auntwrenny** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 8:17 AM [REPLY](#)

Actually it's been a VERY wet year in Iowa. We put several tires in what we fondly call our Flood Plain and the plants are thriving.

We have this area sitting on top of a second layer of fabric so we can check the water level and seepage better. So far there hasn't been a bunch of runoff and the soil isn't runny. The plants seem to be thriving, especially the tomatoes and squash which, as you probably know, need a lot of water to do well and increase yield.



**NotACat** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 1:20 AM [REPLY](#)

It might seem obvious, but it took me a couple of goes to realise that the "tree-ring" in Step 5 is made from that first side-wall you cut off in Step 3. At first I thought you'd made it from a second tyre turned inside-out somehow.

Maybe for those of us stricken with the Monday-morning thick, you could make this more explicit?



**auntwrenny** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 6:55 AM [REPLY](#)

Thank you for your input. I'll look over the instructions and see where is the best place to fit that in.



**jessyratfink** says:

Jun 22, 2009. 6:09 AM [REPLY](#)

Great job! I'd seen people do this before, but they didn't cut off the side wall. Doing that gives so much more room and makes it look really clean. :)



**mothflavour2** says:

Jun 21, 2009. 11:17 PM [REPLY](#)

wow, this is so simple, yet so useful! I always love the Instructables which make you say, "why didn't I think of that?"