



Kimbriki Wicking Beds Garden Kit

Kimbriki Eco House & Garden

What's in the Kimbriki Wicking Bed Garden Kit?

- 1 x Kimbriki Wicking Bed raised garden frame (external 1.7m long x 1m wide x 0.54m high) - Code KWB1
- 1 x water reservoir (black) - KWB2
- 1 x water overflow pipe fitting - KWB3
- 8 x WaterUps® wicking cells - KWB4
- 1 x water inlet pipe - KWB5
- 3 x X-shaped plastic tab joiners (to connect wicking cells) - KWB6
- 1 x 100 litre bag of perlite - KWB7
- 1 x Geotech fabric (1m x 2m) - KWB8
- 1 x dipstick - KWB9

How to set up your exciting new Kimbriki Wicking Bed (KWB) Garden

1. Level the ground where you wish to position your KWB. This is very important to **ensure your KWB water holding reservoir is level** and holds its maximum capacity of water (use a spirit level).
2. **Position** the KWB **raised garden frame (KWB1)** on your level surface.
Tip: Place a large piece of carpet or thick plastic down on the ground that the frame can sit on. Ensure that nothing sharp in the ground will push up through the water reservoir.
3. Carefully **unfold** the black **water reservoir (KWB2)** and click/push through the special tabs on **each corner** to create the three-dimensional water reservoir.
Note: A wicking bed will only work if your water reservoir holds water. **BE VERY GENTLE WITH THE BLACK WATER RESERVOIR.** Don't tread on it or treat it roughly! Only open it out ONCE when you are ready to construct your KWB. Too many **OPENINGS and CLOSINGS** could create a crack or hole in your water reservoir.
4. Gently push the water reservoir down inside the KWB raised garden frame to sit on your level, smooth surface.
5. Install your **water overflow pipe fitting (KWB3)** by pushing the white nylon threaded pipe through the round hole in the top edge of the water reservoir and then through the round hole cut in the metal KWB raised garden frame. Then **thread the NUT onto the outside** of the threaded nylon pipe on the outside of the garden frame. Note: **Do this up nice and tight, but NOT with excessive pressure or you could ruin the thread.**
6. Position the **water inlet pipe (KWB5)** into the cell (with the round hole cut into it) by pushing the inlet pipe down firmly to click the three tabs into the three small holes at the edge of the large hole.
7. Now start positioning the **8 WaterUps® wicking cells (KWB4)** inside the water reservoir. Remember to be gentle with the reservoir liner.
Note: Get the WaterUps® cell which you have just inserted the inlet pipe into and put this one into the reservoir **FIRST**, at the **OPPOSITE END** to the water overflow pipe.

These 'cells' are quite a snug fit inside the metal garden walls. It works well to do two at a time. Make sure the outer edges touch the walls down low inside the water reservoir, and then the two edges in the centre touching each other will be raised up like an arch in the centre.

Next, carefully push down the centre of the arch of the two cells to make them sit flat in the bottom of the water reservoir. Note: Always stand **OUTSIDE** of the KWB raised garden frame. Never stand in or put any pressure on the water reservoir as you could damage it.

8. Repeat this process of putting in two more WaterUps® wicking cells at a time, until all 8 cells are covering the entire surface of the water reservoir.
9. Take the 3 small **X-shaped plastic tab joiners (KWB6)** and push them down into the corner holes of the WaterUps® wicking cells (where each four corners meet down the centre). These special joiners help hold the 8 cells in position.
10. Now it is time to add the **perlite granules (the wick) (KWB7)**. Pour the perlite carefully on top of the WaterUps® wicking cells, **ensuring that all the 'drop-down-wick-holes' in the cells are full** of perlite. Finish with a 1-2cm layer of perlite granules, over the entire surface of the WaterUps® wicking cells. Note: The **perlite is quite dusty when dry**. To reduce the dust when pouring it, **we recommend you pour plenty of water into the top of the perlite bag before you start pouring it**.
11. Place the large piece of **Geotech fabric (1m x 2m) (KWB8)** over the entire surface of the perlite layer. **Cut a small hole** in the Geotech fabric to stretch over and slide down over the water inlet pipe.
12. Fill up the rest of the wicking bed to 2cm or so below the top of the tin with potting mix, manures and your own home compost and worm castings. Note: Be **CAREFUL NOT to allow soil** into your wicking/water zone. Tip: use a high-quality potting mix (coconut fibre based) combined with some rich soil, compost, worm castings, manures, etc. We recommend ANL's "Premium Potting Mix" with "ANL Super 6" (**mix these in ratio of 4 parts potting mix to 1 part Super 6**). These bagged products are available at Australian Native Landscapes, Terrey Hills. You will need approximately 16 bags in total (approx. half a cubic metre). Then use your own compost/worm castings to plant into (see over for more info).
13. Filling the water reservoir (step 3). Pour water into the water inlet pipe until water is coming out of the water overflow pipe. Your reservoir is now full.
14. Place the **dipstick (KWB9)** into the water inlet pipe, leave it for a couple of seconds and then take it out. You can make a mark on the dip stick to indicate the 'full' level. Note: This is how you keep a check on the water level in your wicking bed reservoir. **NEVER LET IT DRY OUT**. Keep it topped up like your car.
15. Place a cup cover over the water inlet pipe to ensure no foreign matter gets into the water reservoir. This also stops mosquitos breeding in the water reservoir.

Extra ideas to consider for your KWB garden - recommended (but not essential)

- **Oil** the timber legs on each corner to make them more resistant to water soakage and rotting.
- Make a **seat around the top edge** of your KWB garden using timber (see photo).
- **Paint or decorate** the exterior of the metal sides, or even treat it with a product called Penetrol to reduce rusting. It is a clear finish and available at hardware stores.

Planting a Wicking Bed

1. Plant seeds or seedlings as you would in any new garden bed. Tip: plant seedlings roughly 8-10cm apart.
Thin these out later and eat the young plants you thin out.
2. **Water** in well after planting.
3. Apply a thin layer of **mulch** to the surface, e.g. sugar cane, lucerne, etc.

4. Water plants from the **TOP for the first week** or so after planting, until the plants are 'standing up' and looking vibrant.
5. **REDUCE watering from the TOP** to encourage the plants to send their roots down to the moisture, which is 'wicking-up' from the water tank.
6. Now water from the **BOTTOM**. Check the water level in the tank regularly, **especially in hot weather**. Fill up the tank as required, until water is flowing out your overflow pipe.
7. It is **okay to water from the top** if your plants seem stressed on very hot days, and it is ok if rain falls on your wicking bed, but as your main practice – keep your plants watered from the **BOTTOM!**

Managing Plant Health and Harvesting

1. Always **take out or cut off any dead leaves or sick-looking** plants (daily or weekly).
2. Use a **FOLIAR FERTILISER** every 10-14 days e.g. liquid seaweed and liquid fish products mixed at correct rates. Foliar feeding refers to feeding plants by spraying liquid fertiliser onto the foliage (leaves) of the plants. You can also apply with a watering can. Note: usually wait 24 hours after spraying, before eating produce.
3. Train your climbing plants as they grow, e.g. cucumbers, beans, peas, etc.
4. Harvest leafy annual plants by taking off the **OUTSIDE** leaves to eat. The new leaves in the **CENTRE** of the plant will then grow quickly, and then a week or more later you will be able to again harvest more **OUTSIDE** leaves to eat (silverbeet, spinach, non-hearting lettuces, parsley, coriander, etc.).

Maintenance In-between Crops

1. Take out dead plant and root material.
2. **Dig and 'fluff-up'** the soil to depth of 10-20 cm. Note: be careful **NOT** to dig into your wick zone.
3. Add some more worm castings, or mature home compost, or Super 6, or cow manure, or a combination of these. Mix these into the top 10-20 cm.
4. Water in.
5. Add some fresh mulch to the surface.
6. **Let the soil 'rest' for a few days (recommended).**
7. Plant new seedlings or seeds - following "planting a wicking bed" points (above).

For more information
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