

WIRE-MESH HOLDING UNIT

A wire-mesh holding unit is inexpensive and easy to build out of either galvanized chicken wire or hardware cloth. (Nongalvanized chicken wire can also be used, but will not last very long.) Posts provide more stability for a chicken wire bin, but make the bin difficult to move. A wire-mesh bin made without posts is easy to lift, and provides access to the compost that is already "done" at the bottom of the pile while the compost at the top of the pile is still decomposing.

Materials

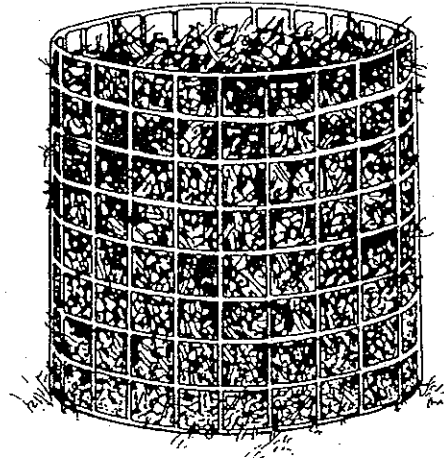
- at least a 10-foot length of 36-inch-wide 1-inch galvanized chicken wire
- or
- at least a 10-foot length of 1/2-inch-wide hardware cloth (Note: The maximum bin diameter for a given length of chicken wire is the length of chicken wire divided by 3.14.)
- heavy wire for ties
- three or four 4-foot-tall wooden or metal posts (for chicken wire bin.)

Optional material for lid

- at least a 3-foot additional length of 36-inch-wide, 1/2-inch hardware cloth

Tools

- heavy-duty wire or tin snips
- pliers
- hammer (for chicken wire bin)
- metal file (for hardware cloth bin)
- work gloves



Building a Wire-Mesh Holding Unit Using Chicken Wire

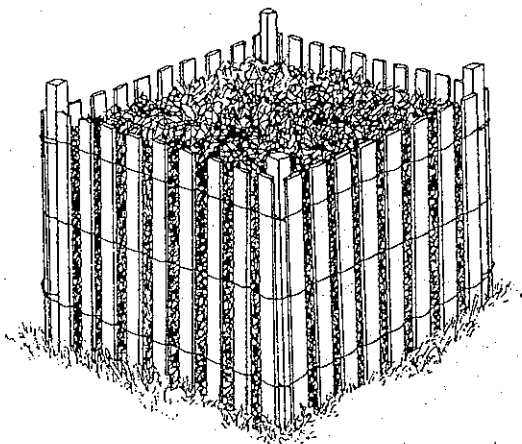
1. Fold back 3 to 4 inches of wire at each end of the cut piece to provide a strong, clean edge that will not poke or snag, and that will be easy to latch.
2. Stand the wire in a circle and set it in place for the compost pile.
3. Cut the heavy wire into lengths for ties. Attach the ends of the chicken wire together with the wire ties, using pliers.
4. Space wood or metal posts around the inside of the chicken-wire circle. Holding the posts tightly against the wire, pound them firmly into the ground to provide support.

Building a Wire-Mesh Holding Unit Using Hardware Cloth

1. Trim the ends of the hardware cloth so that the wires are flush with a cross wire to get rid of edges that could poke or scratch hands. Lightly file each wire along the cut edge to ensure safe handling when opening and closing the bin.
2. Bend the hardware cloth into a circle, and stand it in place for the compost pile.
3. Cut the heavy wire into lengths for ties. Attach the ends of the hardware cloth together with the wire ties, using pliers.

SNOW-FENCE HOLDING UNIT

A snow-fence holding unit is simple to make. It works best with four posts pounded into the ground for support.



Building a Snow-Fence Holding Unit

1. Choose a 3-foot-square site for your holding unit, and pound the four wooden or metal posts into the ground 3 feet apart, at the corners of the square.
2. Cut the heavy wire into lengths for ties. Attach the snow fence to the outside of the posts with the wire ties, using pliers.
3. Attach the ends of the snow fence together in the same way, forming a 3-foot-square enclosure.

Materials

- four wooden or metal posts, 4-5 feet long (Use pressure-treated lumber for the wooden posts.)
- heavy wire for ties
- a 13-foot length of snow fencing, at least 3 feet tall (a 16-foot length with optional top)

Tools

- heavy-duty wire or tin snips
- pliers
- sledge hammer
- work gloves