

Useful Reusing

- How to make a bike-wheel trellis



Bike wheels need to be replaced fairly frequently as they wear out in use, but when they are finished with, they are still usually quite strong and that makes them a potentially useful resource for the gardener that likes to reuse things.

We have found that most bike repair shops are happy to provide us with old wheels. We got these ones from “The Bike Club” in Bulwell (details here - <http://tinyurl.com/q46bcnq>). With cycling becoming more popular, we reckon that sources aren't likely to run out any time soon!

We borrowed the idea for this from someone who did it quite differently to us, so don't let our example crush your creativity! Our top tip though is to make sure you put some inner tube between the wheels where they would otherwise touch. If you don't do that, you may find you've accidentally made a “musical” sculpture that needs tuning!



To make a trellis like ours, you will need:

2 sturdy tanned timber posts

- ours are 10x10cm square posts, 2.5m long, but round ones should do fine.

A tape measure

Strong scissors

Strong thin rope

6 bicycle wheels of a similar size

Several old inner tubes

Post-level or spirit level

5 bags of postcrete + water.

How To:

1. Measure the width of your bicycle wheels and use that to mark out where your posts need to be placed on the ground so you dig your holes in the right place.
2. Dig holes with vertical sides about 60cm deep and 30cm wide.
3. Place the first post, level it and make sure its sides are true, then pour in the recommended amount of water (see postcrete packaging) and fill the hole with postcrete. Make sure someone is holding the post as you work, or use some batons to hold it in place. Check with a level again. Leave to set until the post feels firm - sometimes only a few minutes with postcrete.
4. Place the next post, check the distance is a centimetre or two more than the width of 2 wheels, and repeat the process, checking with a level as you go.
5. Once the posts are fixed, level the ground between the posts, and begin to place the wheels. It works best if you put a few bricks or a bit of wood on the ground first to support the wheels so they don't rest on the ground when you have finished.
6. Tie the first wheel firmly to one of the supports with rope or other tie that doesn't stretch much, then a second wheel to the other post.
7. Cut a piece of inner-tube in half lengthways, and slide this in between the wheels. Now wind it through the rim of one wheel, cross over in between, and thread it back through the other wheel, in a figure of eight. Repeat, then tie firmly.
8. Repeat stage 7 with the next 2 wheels, but this time, lay some inner tube between these wheels and the first set and tie there too.
9. Repeat stage 8 again for the final set.
10. Cultivate the soil under the trellis and plant something to climb under it. We planted runner beans, which seemed to find it really easy to climb.

Enjoy your trellis!

