

How to Fix a fence post.

Tools and materials you'll need for this project

Tools:

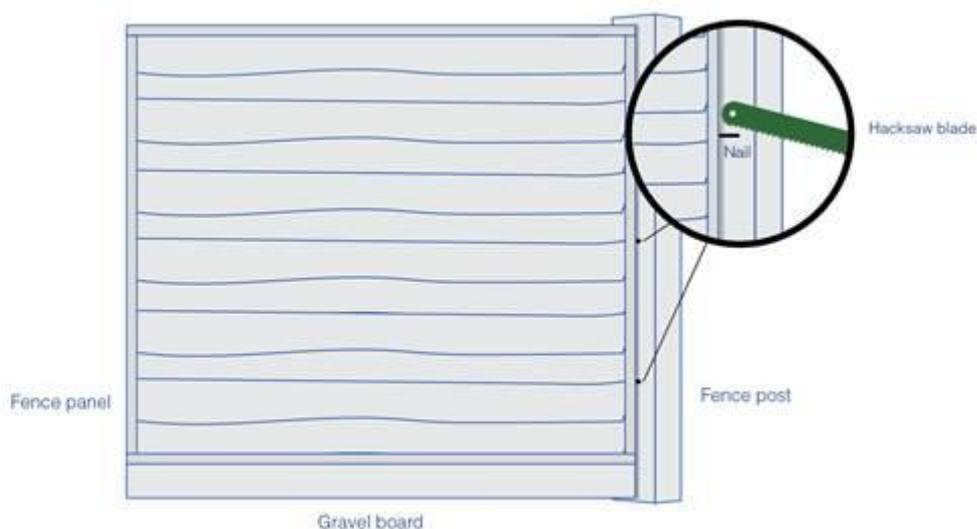
- Cordless screwdriver
- Hacksaw blade
- String
- Bucket
- Spirit level
- Tape measure
- Builder's spade
- Rubber mallet
- Post hole digger
- Hammer
- Nail bar
- Gloves
- Face mask
- Goggles

Materials:

- Fence post
- Post caps
- Gravel board
- Post mix
- Screws
- 2 by 1 off cuts

When purchasing your fence post make sure it is two feet longer than the height of your fence panels and your gravel board (if you have one).

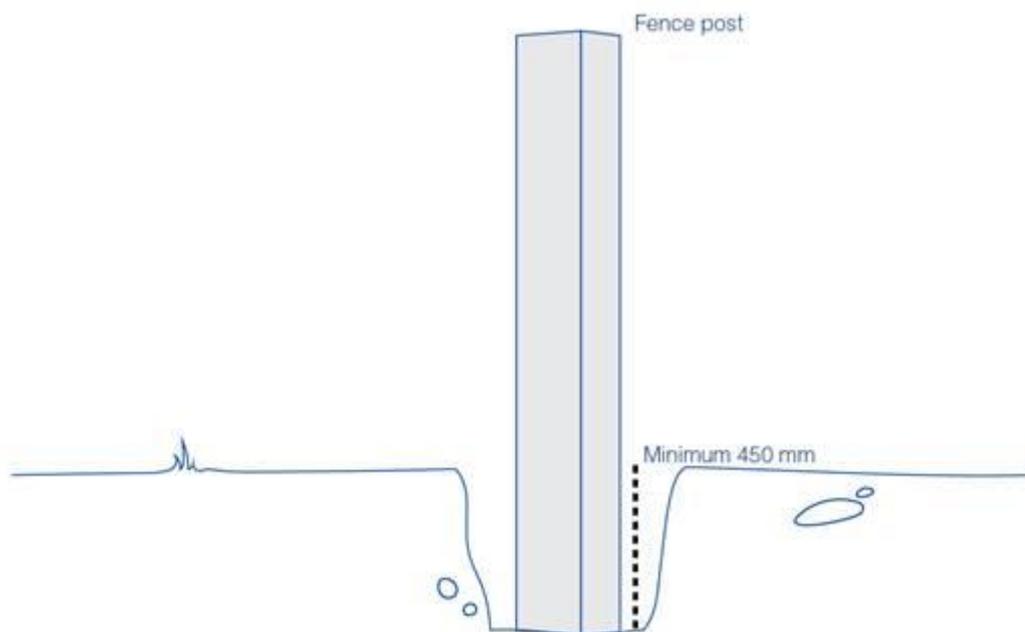
Start by detaching the fence panels from the damaged post. If these are nailed in you can use your hammer or a nail bar to pry them loose. However, this method could damage your panels if not done carefully. Should you wish to retain your existing panels you can use a hacksaw blade to cut the nails, then hammer them flat for safety.



Always remembering to wear gloves and adequate protective clothing whilst doing so. If you have a gravel board, this might be screwed in, if so simply unscrew the supports and pull it away. Should the gravel board be nailed in, repeat the process you used for removing the panel.

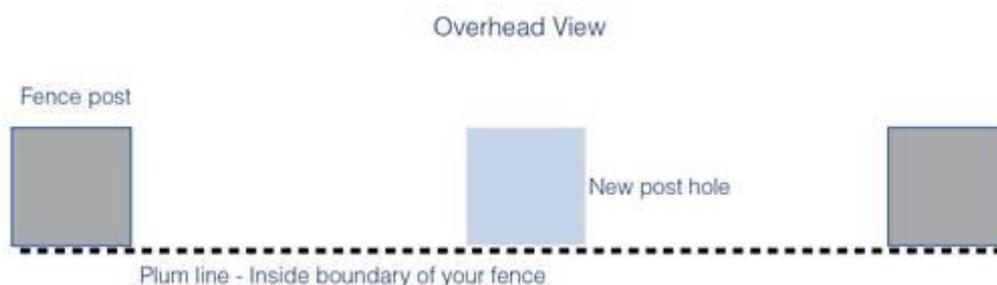
Once the panels have been moved aside, you can begin digging out the damaged post. Use your builder's spade to dig around the existing post and its concrete plug. Then rock the post side to side until it is free enough to pull out.

After removing the damaged post use your tape measure and check the depth of your hole. Often the cause for a listing fence is a fence post dug too shallow into the ground; For a six foot post a minimum of 450mm for the depth of the hole is recommended.

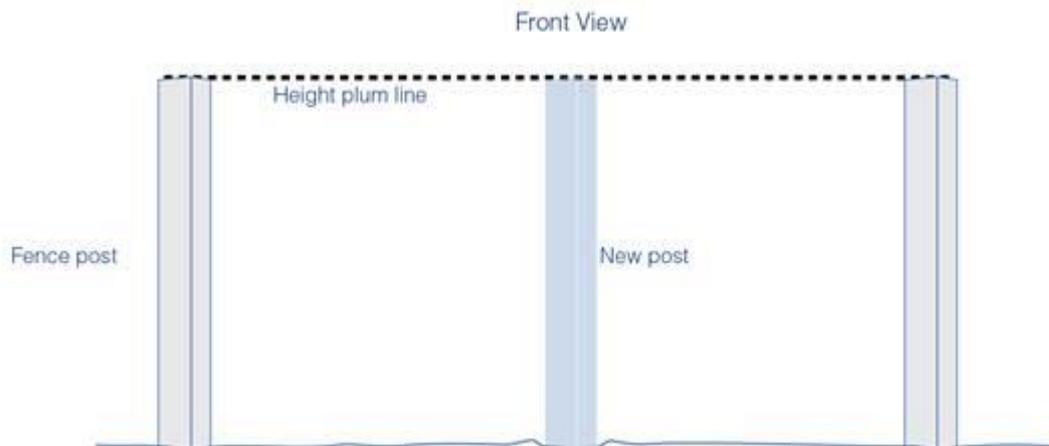


Should you need to dig a deeper hole a *post hole digger* is a great tool for making light work of this task.

Before putting in the new post you need to lay down two plum lines in order to ensure your new post is set to the correct height and in line with the rest of your fence. To set the first line in place fix a piece of string close to the ground and to the front of your posts, stretching across the gap where your new post will go.

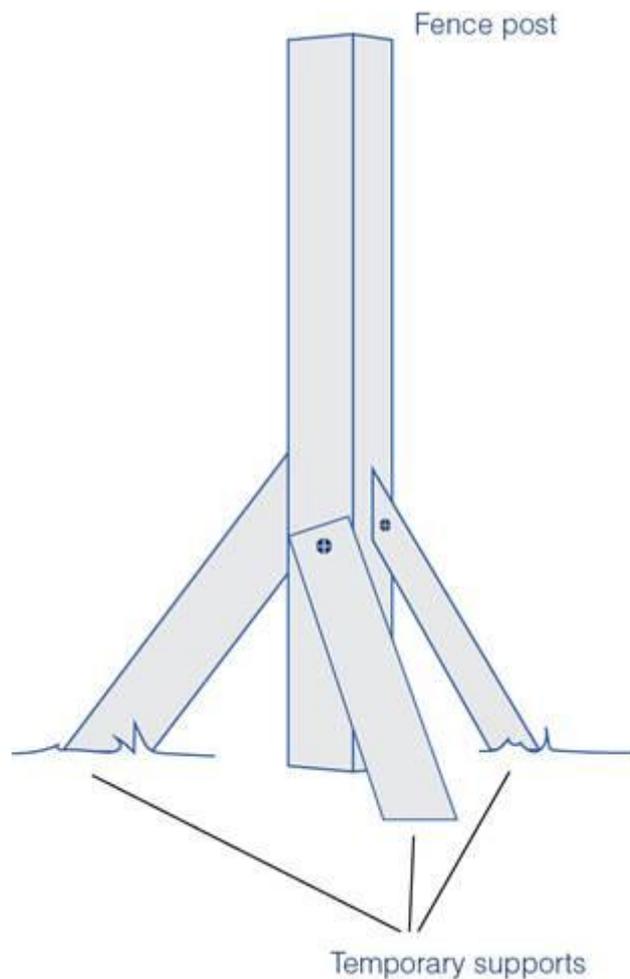


This line will mark the inside boundary of your fence and will keep everything inline. The second line is fixed across the top of your posts and will give you the guide needed to set your new post to the same height as the rest.



With these guides sorted put the new post in place. Check with the top line that your height is correct. If it's not at the same height as the other posts you will need to dig or fill your hole as needed until the post sits at the same height. Next using the second plum line check the post is correctly aligned, remembering to use your spirit level to ensure the post is standing up straight in the centre of the hole.

Once you are happy with the new posts positioning you will need to attach three supports to it, so that it will stand upright without your assistance. Using three lengths of timber angled outwards towards the ground, fix the post off in an upright position.



Use the spirit level to check the post is vertical and upright, the wooden props will help keep the post upright while the post mix is poured into the hole.

Before using the post mix we recommend you use a mask, goggles and a pair of gloves.

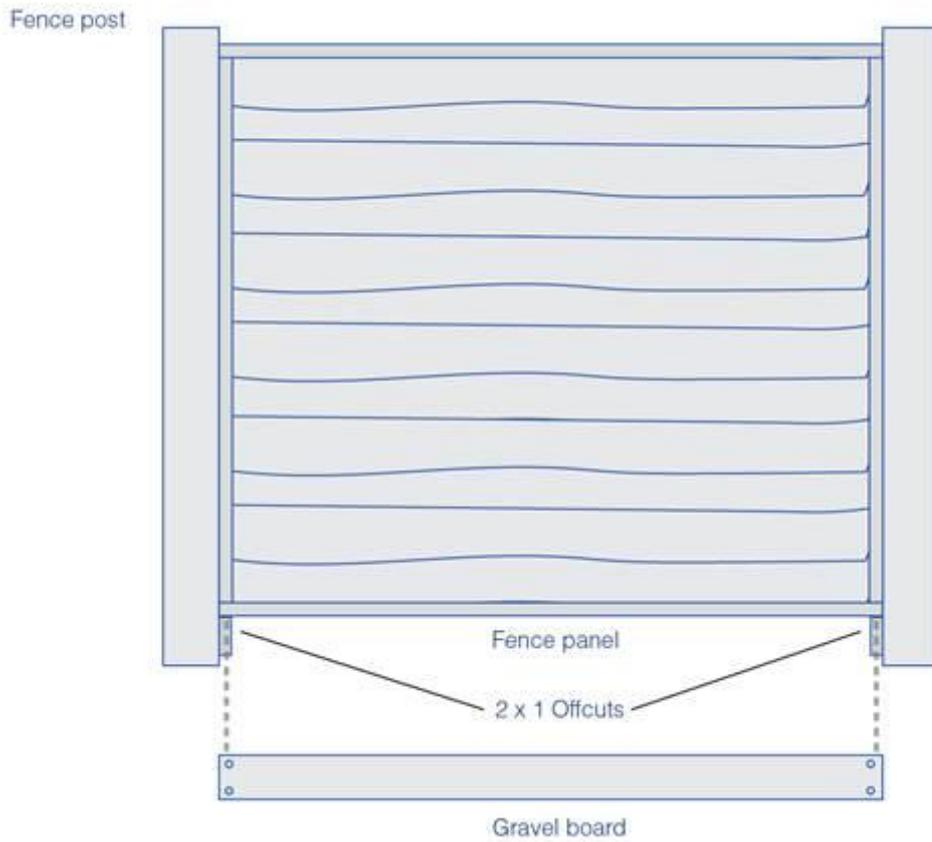
Half fill the hole with water, then top up with the post mix until you're almost at soil level. Post mix comes ready to use and there is no mixing required plus it dries quicker than concrete. While the mix is still wet, use your spirit level to check the post is still vertical. You should use approximately two bags of post mix per post.

Lay a length of timber across the tops of two consecutive posts and use your spirit level to check the tops are level.

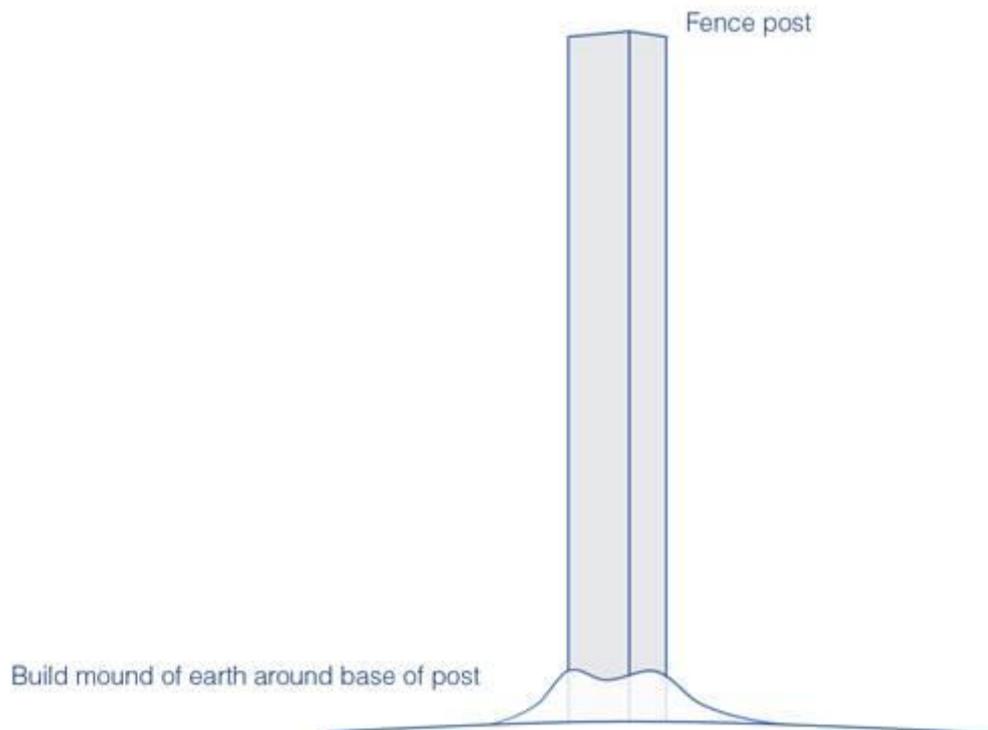
Once the post mix has set (look on the packaging as different manufacturers may vary), you can nail your panels back to the posts, or you can use a bracket and screw method. These are exterior grade. If you position them eight inches from the top, eight inches from the bottom and one in the centre, you'll have a secure panel.

Before lifting the panel back into place, a couple of off cuts of gravel board are perfect spacers to lift it off the ground to the right height. Hold the panel in position against the first post and screw the panel into place.

And finally it's time to fit the gravel board onto the bottom of the panel, using two off cuts of exterior grade two by one.



As a final tip, cover the cement plug with earth, forming it into a mound around the base of the new post. This will aid in natural water/rain drainage, taking moisture away from the post and helping to prevent rot.



It's a good idea to finish the job with post caps. They look good and help prolong the life of the post.