

DIY Garden Obelisk

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Growing plants vertically is the ideal way to make the most of small spaces.



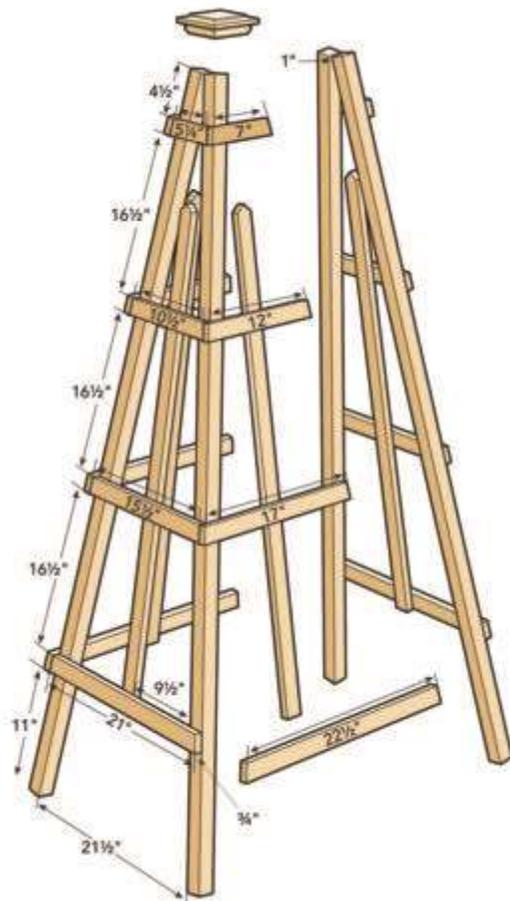
Traditionally found in formal gardens, obelisks are fancy plant supports that have four sides and a pyramid-shaped top. In ancient times, obelisks were impressive structures made of stone. These days, they're usually made out of wood or metal.

Obelisks are visually interesting, and I'm a bit obsessed with them. They're elegant features that add lots of interest and artistic appeal, as well as structure, to a garden. Obelisks can be found in a wide range of shapes and sizes, and they look just as nice without anything growing on them as they do covered with vining crops.

This version of the classic obelisk is 6 feet tall and extremely sturdy. Set it on a level spot, or sink it a few inches into the ground to ensure

that it's stable, and then use it to grow vining crops, such as cucamelons, cucumbers, small gourds, or mini-melons.

Let the wood age naturally to give the obelisk a more rustic feel, or paint the wood to keep the formal look and to add extra color to your vegetable garden. To make it even more classic, you can add a decorative finial on top, if desired.



Tools, Materials, and Cut List

Tools

- Drill
- Miter saw
- Ladder
- Eye and ear protection

- Work gloves
- Tape measure
- Pencil

Materials

- 2x2s, 8 feet long (4)
- 1x2s, 8 feet long (5)
- #8x1-1/4-inch screws (44)
- #8x2-inch screws (4)
- Wood post cap (1)

Cut List

Part	Dimensions	Pieces	Mat
Legs	6 feet	4	2x2
Bottom horizontal bands (outside)*	22-1/2 inches	2	1x2
Bottom horizontal bands (inside)*	21 inches	2	1x2
Second horizontal bands (outside)*	17 inches	2	1x2
Second horizontal bands (inside)*	15-1/2 inches	2	1x2
Third horizontal bands (outside)*	12 inches	2	1x2
Third horizontal bands (inside)*	10-1/2 inches	2	1x2
Fourth horizontal bands (outside)*	7 inches	2	1x2
Fourth horizontal bands (inside)*	5-1/4 inches	2	1x2
Center decorative pieces*	4 feet	4	1x2

Note: Make angle on bands 11-1/2 degrees, and angle on decorative pieces 45 degrees on top.

*All measurements are prior to the angle; they're the longest point of the wood piece.

Building Instructions

1. Measure and cut the wood for the obelisk using a miter saw, and then cut 11-1/2-degree angles at both ends of each of the bands. Use a miter saw to cut two 45-degree angles at one end of each of the four vertical decorative pieces, creating a point.



2. Lay two of the 2×2 leg pieces down on a flat surface. Angle them so the tops of the two leg pieces are spaced 1 inch apart and the bottoms are spaced 21-1/2 inches apart. Position one of the 21-inch bands 11 inches up from the bottom of the legs, and lay it across the 2×2s. Ensure that the band is straight and that the angled ends of the band are flush with the outsides of each of the legs. Predrill pilot holes through each end of the band into the legs. Drive a 1-1/4-inch screw into each of the pilot holes to secure the band to both of the legs. Position one of the 15-1/2-inch bands 16-1/2 inches up from the top of the first band, and repeat the steps to secure the band to the legs. Repeat again to secure one of the 10-1/2-inch bands and then one of the 5-1/4-inch bands to the legs, each spaced 16-1/2 inches apart. Repeat Step 2 to assemble the opposite side of the obelisk (see the illustration above).



3. To attach the two sides of the obelisk together, stand both sides up and position them so they're leaning into each other (the bands should be facing out). Angle the two pieces so the tops are spaced 1 inch apart and the bottoms are spaced 21 1/2 inches apart. Position one of the 22-1/2-inch bands so it sits perpendicular to the bottom bands on both halves of the obelisk, and the ends of each band are lined up with the ends of the bands that are already attached to the obelisk. The outside band should overlap the legs by 3/4 inch to line up with the inside bands. Predrill pilot holes through each end of the outside band into both of the legs, and drive a 1-1/4-inch screw into each hole to attach the band to both legs.



4. Working from the top of the obelisk to the bottom, follow the instructions in Step 3 to attach the remaining three outside bands to the obelisk, starting with the 7-inch band at the top, then the 12-inch band, and finally the 17-inch band. Carefully flip the obelisk over and repeat Steps 3 and 4 to secure the fourth side.



5. Stand the obelisk on its feet, and place the cap over the top of all four 2×2s. Pre-drill pilot holes through the cap and into each of the 2×2s, then drive a 2-inch screw into each pilot hole to secure the cap to the obelisk.



6. Starting with one side of the obelisk, position one of the vertical decorative pieces so it's centered between the legs on the inside of the horizontal bands. The flat end of the decorative piece should be lined up with the bottom edge of the longest horizontal band (the bottom band), and the pointed end of the decorative piece should be facing up. Ensure the decorative piece is centered and straight, then predrill pilot holes through each of the three horizontal bands into the vertical decorative piece, and drive 1-1/4-inch screws into the pilot holes to attach the vertical decorative piece to the frame. Repeat Step 6 to attach the remaining three decorative pieces to the frame.



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