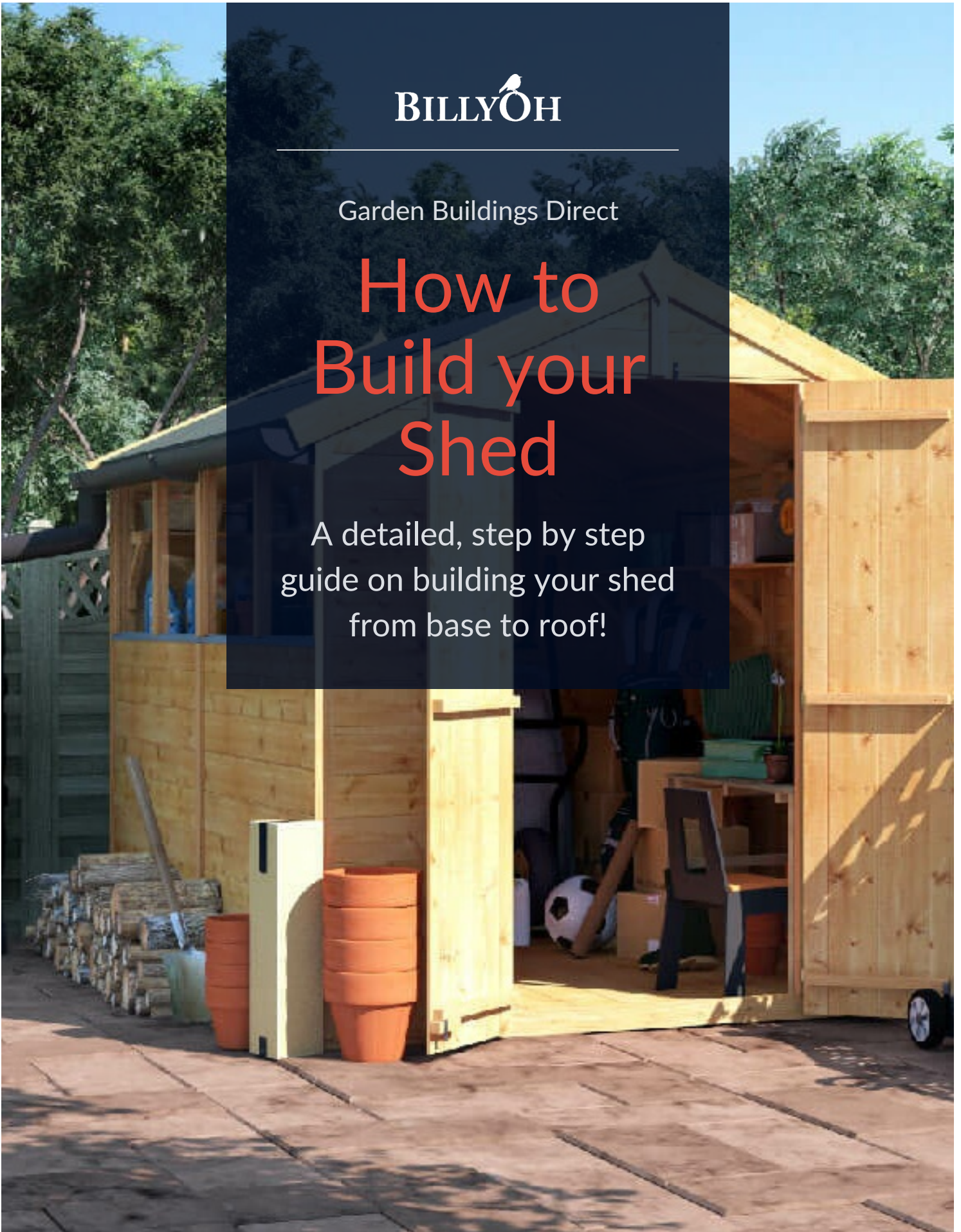




Garden Buildings Direct

How to Build your Shed

A detailed, step by step
guide on building your shed
from base to roof!



1: Plan where the shed will be located

Before starting any building work, you should always plan where the garden building is going to be located.

There are a number of factors which are important to consider for the location, before actually getting started on constructing the build itself.

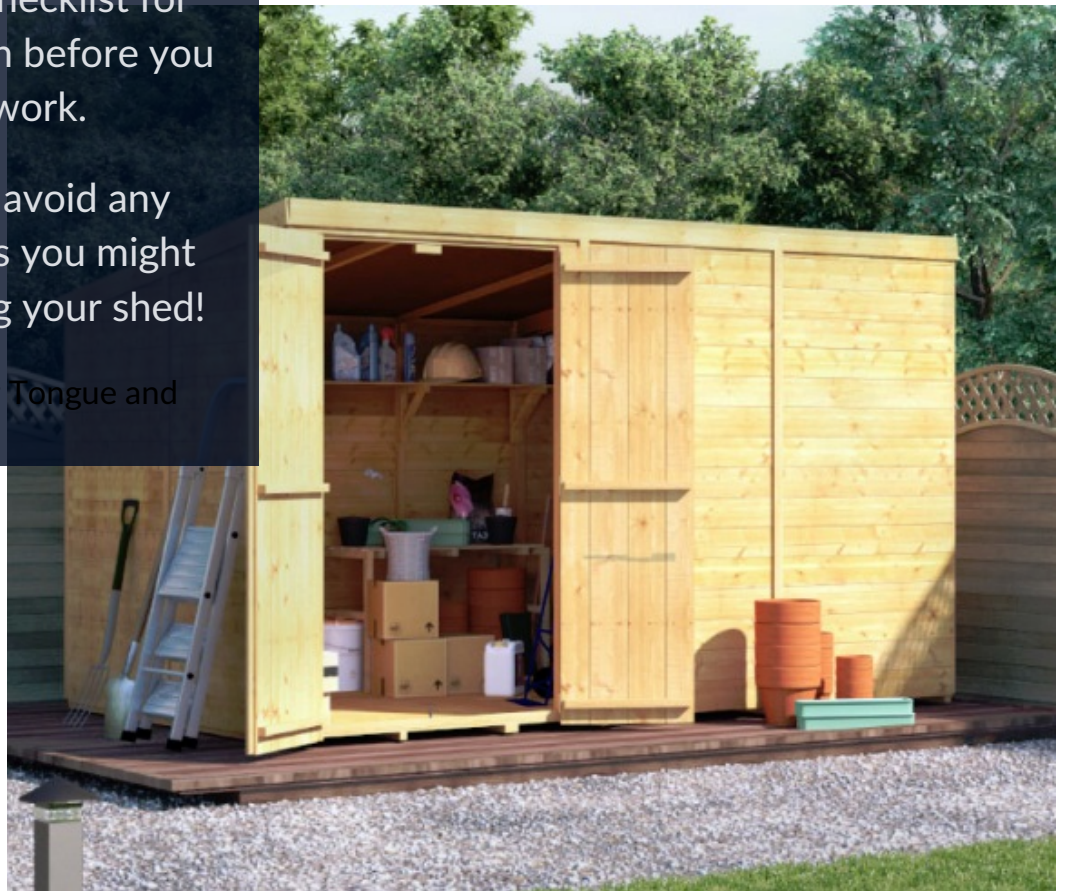
We've created a checklist for you to run through before you start the building work.

This way, you can avoid any potential problems you might face when building your shed!

Image: BillyOh Master Tongue and Groove Pent Shed

You should check to ensure:

- Access for delivery and all sides of the build for maintenance and applying wood treatments.
- You are happy with the view of your garden from the planned area.
- Whether you intend to run an electrical supply to the building.
- Natural light, a well-lit area is best if the building is to be used as a workshop for example.
- There is no surrounding foliage or young trees that may grow in the future.



2: Building the shed base

A shed base is an essential part of the building which will provide a solid foundation for the unit.

Building the base might seem like a daunting task at first, but, by following these simple steps, it should actually be an easy and straightforward process, so your new shed will be up in no time at all.

There are a variety of shed bases you can build for your shed, we've covered how to build a timber base, plastic base, sub-base, constructing form-work and how to lay concrete, so you can choose which you would prefer!



How to build a plastic shed base

For a quick and easy installation, an interlocking plastic shed base is the perfect option.

This base fits and locks together to form the base and the advantages of a plastic shed base is that it can be built onto level concrete slabs or a patio.

You will need:

- Plastic shed base kit
- Pegs, pins and string
- Spade
- Spirit level
- Tape measure
- Retractable knife

1: Firstly, measure out the site and hammer a peg into each of the four corners. It's a good idea to make it larger than the base of your shed to aid drainage.

2: Run a builders line from each of the four pegs. Use an edger to cut into the lawn for a straight cut, and then use a spade to remove the turf.

3: Use a spirit level on top to check that the whole area is level, and level out any slight unevenness in the ground.

4: Once the site is prepared, lay down the membrane. In windy conditions, peg or weigh down the membrane and lay out the required number of plastic grids.

5. Remove the locking pins from the grids and clip them together. Once all grids have been clipped together, insert the locking pins into the centre of the grids.

6: Lastly, with all the grids in place, the base is now ready for your shed floor. When your shed is in place, trim any excess membrane with a knife.

How to build a timber shed base

A timber shed base, or portabase, is made from pressure-treated timber and comes with metal spikes which are hammered into the ground to keep the shed base in place.

These can be installed on a level lawn or the frame can be placed onto a patio using the metal L-shaped legs (supplied with the kit) to help keep it level.

You will need:

- Timber shed base
- Power drill
- Club hammer
- Tape measure
- Spirit level
- Rigger gloves

1: Place the timbers where you would like your shed to be located.

2: Make two pencil marks on each end of the frame's two longer beams. The marks are where the screws will go. Align the marks with the center of the adjoining shorter beams. Line up the adjoining beams and drill a pilot hole through the center of the recess, from the longer beam into the adjoining shorter beam.

3: With the pilot holes drilled, it's now time to fit the two screws. Use a drill to tighten the screws into place. Once the frame is assembled, evenly space out the remaining short beams down the frame and fix these into position.

4: With the frame in the final position, fix the L-shaped feet to the inside of the frame. Drill pilot holes with a 2mm drill bit.. Screw the round head screws into the pilot holes to secure the L-shaped feet. Position the feet so that the base is firm and level in all directions.

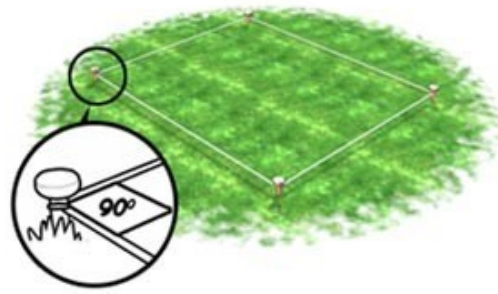
5: To secure the base to soft ground, hammer in the spikes at each corner until they are level with the top of the base. Drill pilot holes using a 2mm drill bit and then secure the screws into the pilot holes. The shed floor can now be positioned onto the base.

How to build a sub-base

Concrete shed bases require the support of a sub-base. The base will be about 15cm deep and needs to be installed well in advance to ensure that it's had enough time to set properly before you start building the shed!

You will need:

- 50 x 50 timber
- Type 1 hardcore
- Spade
- Edger
- Club hammer
- Builders line
- Saw
- Tape measure
- Spirit level
- Garden rake
- Square



1: Measure out the site for your sub-base and hammer a peg into each of the four corners and run a builders line from each of the four pegs. Use a square to make sure the corners are square before you start excavating.

2: Use an edger to cut into the lawn for a straight cut, and then use a spade to cut the turf into strips, then roll it up and remove.

3: Dig the area to the correct depth and use wooden marker pegs to mark the finished hardcore level. Hammer the pegs into the area until they're flush with the edge of the ground.

4: Tip in enough hardcore to fill your sub-base to just above the top of the pegs and Compact the hardcore with an earth rammer or a vibrating plate compactor.

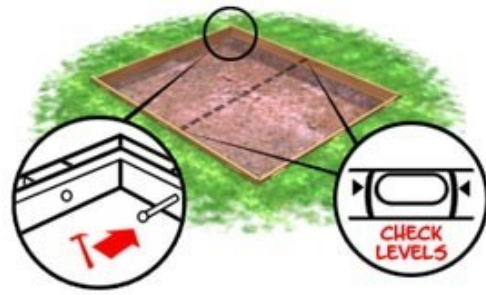
5: Cover the surface with a thin coat of sharp sand or ballast and rake it level.

Constructing basic form-work

Concrete has to be supported by a frame or edging, known as form-work, until it's set. The form-work is constructed directly on a prepared sub-base.

You will need:

- 50 x 50mm timber
- Timber planks
- 50mm nails
- Pins and pegs
- Claw hammer
- Saw
- Spirit level
- Tape measure and pencil
- Square



1: Create the wooden pegs by cutting one end of 50 x 50mm pieces of timber into sharp points using a panel saw. Hammer two wooden pegs into the ground at each corner of the site, a short distance from the base area. .

2: Run a builders line from each peg to its opposite and tie it taut. The lines should mark the edges of the concrete which will be on the inside of the form-work.

3: Hammer a wooden peg into the sub-base at each end, outside the area to be concreted. Do so until the pegs are flush with the top of the plank. Make sure the plank is even with a spirit level and then secure each end of the plank to the wooden pegs with the nails.

4: Attach the last plank and complete the square or rectangle. Make sure that there are pegs at the corners and that the corners are tight-fitting by nailing the planks together.

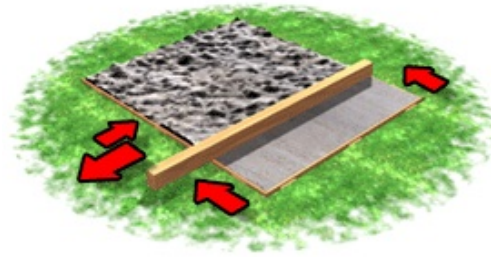
5: Hammer in pegs at roughly 1m intervals along the outside of the form-work. The structure must be solid as it's very difficult to alter it once you begin concreting!

How to lay concrete

Once you've constructed the basic form-work, you can get to work on laying the concrete base for your shed. If done correctly, the result is a smooth, sound, level base. The perfect foundation for the construction of a garden shed!

You will need:

- Pegs and string
- Building sand
- Standard cement (all-in ballast, cement & water)
- Tape measure
- Spade
- Sweeping brush



1. Start off by spreading a layer of well compacted hardcore and cover with a liberal amount of sand. This needs to be well compacted and flattened down, preferably with a compacting tool or roller.

2. Mix concrete using one part cement to five parts all-in one ballast, or use bags of dry-mixed concrete and just add water. Remember small amounts of water should be added at a time and mixed into the concrete. Be careful as excessive amounts may make the cement too sloppy and it needs to stay reasonably dry.

3. Spread the concrete evenly and slightly above the formwork. This can be then levelled off with a long straight edge of timber resting on the formwork using a sawing motion slowly (as shown above).

Tips: If wet weather is forecast, cover the concrete with polythene for 24-hours. In warm weather, cover the base with damp sacks and sprinkle them with water over the 24-hour period, this will ensure the drying concrete will not shrink and crack.

3: Flooring for a Shed

There are a number of flooring options available for your garden shed and each of the flooring types can provide a different levels of protection.

Standard flooring options include solid sheet or OSB flooring. Whereas, more premium and heavy duty options include T&G floors.

The flooring is an integral part of the build which requires the right assembly to enable the shed for domestic use. Depending on the function of your garden shed, you can opt for standard or premium flooring.



Materials for the floor

The materials for your shed floor vary depending on your preference of flooring.

Here are your options:

- Timber: Tongue and Groove
- Plywood
- OSB (oriented strand board)
- Solid Sheet

Timber floor boards are normally tongue and grooved. Then interlocking construction of the tongue and groove is makes the adjoining boards hold in place and creates a strong and sturdy floor base for your shed.

If you are using sheet materials such as plywood or OSB, more than likely the boards will be square edged. To make the floor work efficiently, you should support the edges where two boards meet.

Also remember when using plywood or OSB that they have a strong and weak direction. With plywood make sure that the face grain is at right angles to the floor joists. With OSB, sheets, the strong direction is the long direction.

For fixing the floorboards to the joists beneath use a nail which has a good pull-out resistance. The length of the nail should be about 2.5 times the thickness of the floor board.

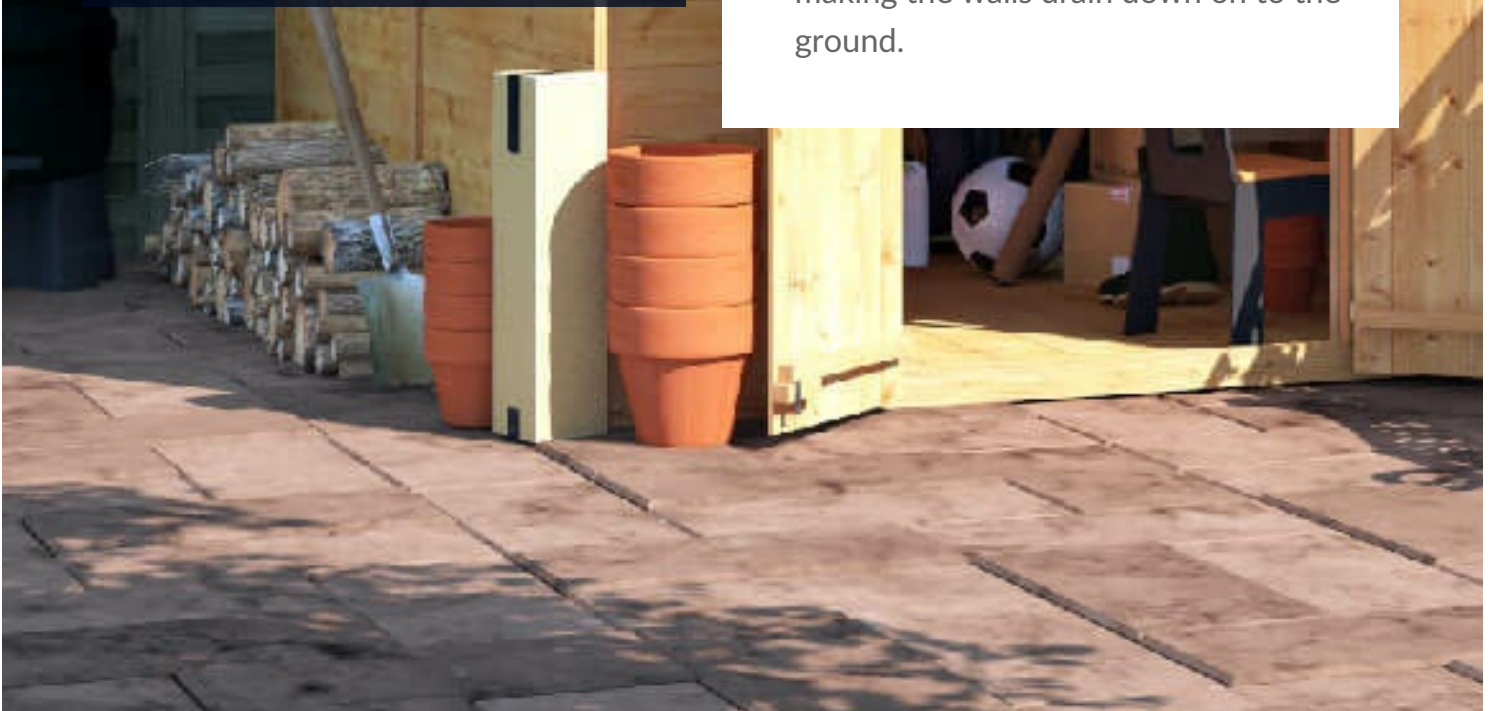


Tips for keeping the floor dry

When designing the floor for your shed, it's important to remember the enemy of your shed floor is water and this should be the top priority to consider when constructing the floor.

Anything you can do during planning to stop water getting in to the shed floor from the ground below, or from rain coming in from above the shed, the better.

- A polythene vapour barrier weighted down with stone or concrete beneath the shed will provide a barrier to moisture and also prevent plant growth beneath the shed.
- Good ventilation beneath the shed will help any damp air disperse and keep the timbers dry. Most often for sheds, the underside can be left completely open to the atmosphere so damp air cannot accumulate.
- Another tip to protect the floor joists is to put some Damp Proof Membrane, beneath the supports of the floor joists. This provides yet another barrier to moisture working its way up from the ground into the floor.
- Stop moisture getting in from above by using large eaves and gutters and making the walls drain down on to the ground.



4: Building the floor and sides of the shed

After you have completed building your shed base and it has been left to set (if needed), the next step in erecting your shed is by building the floor and sides up. Here's how...

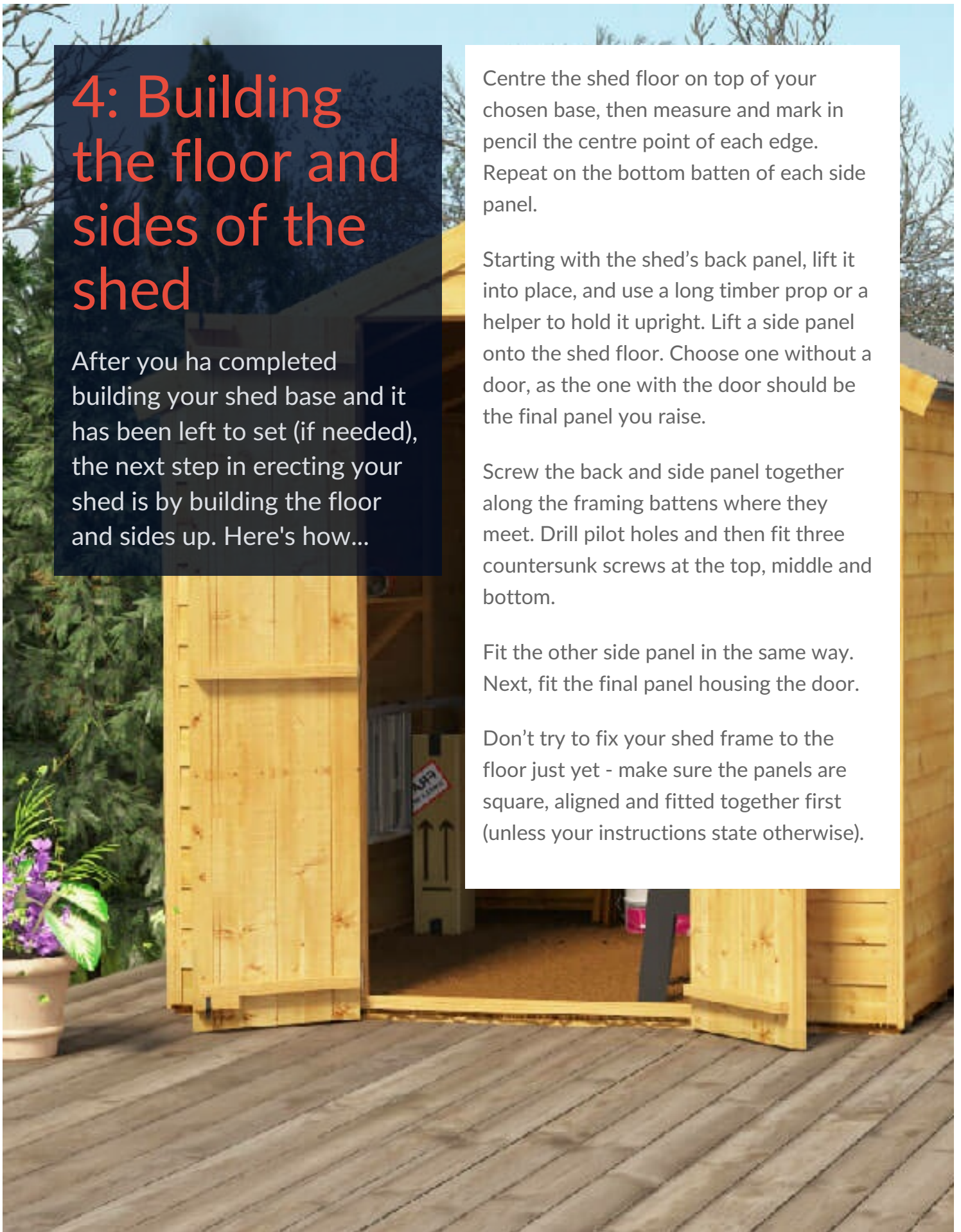
Centre the shed floor on top of your chosen base, then measure and mark in pencil the centre point of each edge. Repeat on the bottom batten of each side panel.

Starting with the shed's back panel, lift it into place, and use a long timber prop or a helper to hold it upright. Lift a side panel onto the shed floor. Choose one without a door, as the one with the door should be the final panel you raise.

Screw the back and side panel together along the framing battens where they meet. Drill pilot holes and then fit three countersunk screws at the top, middle and bottom.

Fit the other side panel in the same way. Next, fit the final panel housing the door.

Don't try to fix your shed frame to the floor just yet - make sure the panels are square, aligned and fitted together first (unless your instructions state otherwise).



5: Building the Shed Roof

To make your shed complete, the final step is building the shed roof. As with flooring, you have a number of roof options, with standard to premium levels of protection from the elements.

For heavy duty roofing, you may want to opt for a 11mm tongue and groove roof, additional roof trusses can offer even more support for your shed roof. These are generally more expensive options but guarantee added strength for the unit.

However, if you only need intermediate levels of protection, a solid sheet could be the right choice for you. For an inexpensive, value option 9mm OSB can be used for your garden shed roof.

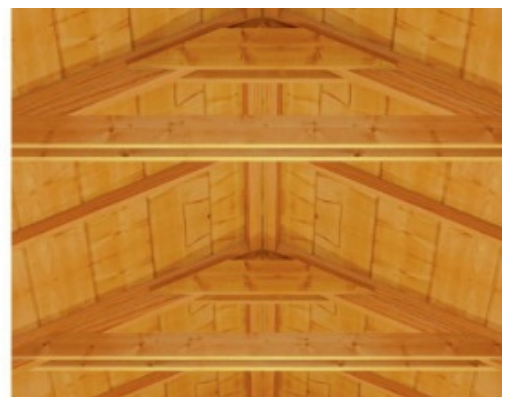
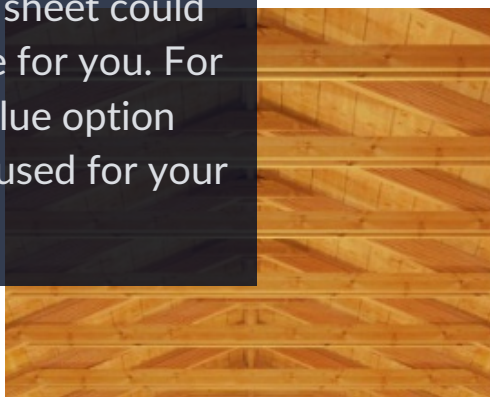
Start by fitting the beam across the top of the shed, slotting it into the pre-cut grooves at the top of the two pointed ends on an apex shed (known as the gable ends). Fix the beam to each gable end through an L-shaped metal bracket.

Lay the roof panels on the ground, one at a time, with the eave sections (wooden strips) positioned underneath, flush with the bottom edge of the panel. Measure and mark evenly spaced fixing positions.

Drill pilot holes and then hammer in the screws to attach the eave sections to the roof panels. Lift the roof panels into position, one at a time, ensuring everything is level and aligned.

Secure the roof panels to the shed and along the inner support beam. A work platform will come in useful when fitting the roof!

Check again that the shed is square on the shed floor and base before finally screwing the sides and gable ends to the floor.



How to Add Roofing Felt

Adding roofing felt to your shed is a great way of providing complete protection from the harsh elements and to stop rainwater from entering your shed.

There are different qualities of roofing felt which will give different levels of protection. For a value roofing felt that will provide a standard level of protection, you can opt for a sand felt roof. However, for a more premium and secure roofing felt, you should opt for a green mineral felt.

1. Start by unrolling the felt and then measure and cut the required amount of pieces depending on the size of the shed roof.

2. Lay the first piece of felt over one side panel, leaving a 50mm overhang at the eave. Nail it along the top edge with felt tacks in the shed about 300mm apart. Then, fix it down along the gable ends and eave with the felt tacks at 100mm intervals.

3. Repeat on the other side. Place the top strip of felt over the top of the roof and nail it along each edge at 100mm intervals.

4. Where the gable end felt meets and overhangs the front eave, hold a piece of timber beneath the felt and using a knife, carefully make a straight cut from the corner of the roof to the edge of the felt.

5. Screw or hammer the roof fascia in place using screws or nails and position this over the felt on the front and back gable ends.

6. Finish the fascia by adding the diamond-shaped wood finials (if provided) to the apex of the shed roof. Secure each corner trim with evenly spaced nails or screws as instructed.



6: How to Build a Metal Shed

Top tips:

- You will at a minimum need a drill, measuring tape, and ladder to erect a metal shed.
- Make sure the surface/foundation is flat and level. The holes won't line up during assembly if you don't and it can lead to water entering the shed.
- If water enters your shed after installation, it's because something has not been put together properly!

Install the frame: The floor frame is where all of the wall panels slot in. So after you have built your foundation, this is your first job.

Make sure that it is square by measuring diagonally from corner to corner. The measurements should be the same for the frame to be square. You can then fix the floor frame into your foundation.

Erect the walls and secure them: Put the walls up and secure them together. This can be fiddly because the panels are flimsy until they are all held together. It does help to have another person help you with this. There will be braces that secure the walls so they stay together. This includes the door trim which will make the area around the door much stronger.

Add the roof: Install the gables (which are at the front and back of the shed), then install the roof beams. The roof beams will give you a strong foundation to install the roof panels on. They are also where you will screw your roof panels into.

Install the doors and windows: The last task to complete your metal shed, is to install the doors and windows.



Thanks for reading! We
hope this helps you to
build your garden shed!

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