

# How to Build a Mini-Greenhouse

## Materials

- 4 – 6 mil plastic sheeting
- *Heavy* weights to anchor plastic: bricks, 2 x 4s, water-filled gallon jugs, etc.
- Strong cord for venting cover on sunny days

For each bed-spanning support, you need:

- Rebar, 3/8-inch x 2 feet: 2
- Pipe:
  - 1/2-inch flexible PVC pipe: 5 – 10 feet (depends on how high you want your hoops)

**Or**

10 feet of 1/2-inch schedule 40\* pipe and  
3 x 45° angle pipe connectors



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\*I was unable to find the flexible pipe last time I went looking.

## Directions

For garden beds 4 feet wide, place supports every 4 feet along the length of the bed. A bed 12 feet long would have 4 supports, one at each end, plus one 1/3, and one 2/3 of the way down the bed.

Pound 2 lengths of rebar at least 6 inches, and up to 12 inches, into the ground across from each other, on opposite sides of the bed. If you are using flexible pipe, just slide the ends over each of the 2 rebar rods.

If you are using schedule 40 pipe, cut the 10-foot length into two 2-foot lengths and two 3-foot lengths. Build the support by using the pipe connectors to join each 3-foot length of pipe to a 2-foot length. Then connect the two 2-foot lengths together. This forms a roughly U-shaped support with a peak in the middle, like a house. Slide the open ends of the 3-foot pipes over the rebar rods.

When all the supports are installed, drape the plastic over the top, allowing enough length to reach the ground on the ends as well as the sides. Be sure to leave plenty of plastic for the anchors to sit on. Trim off any excess plastic at the end. Place the weights on the plastic, folding the corner flaps under at the ends. The plastic is slippery, and strong winds are common in the spring, so use a lot of weights.

It is vital to vent the cover on sunny days, as temperature can easily climb to lethal levels. One way to allow air circulation is to remove the weights and loop a piece of strong cord over the top of the plastic, tying it to the supports on either side, with the plastic underneath. Slide the strong and plastic up the support to let air enter on either side. Another option is to furl the plastic on either end, similar to a Conestoga wagon. Use weights to hold the plastic in place.

Be sure to remove the covers when the weather warms; plants suffering from overheating may look lush and green, but they won't produce a crop. High temperatures prevent pollination. The frames may be easily disassembled and stored until fall or next spring.