



EPISODE #3030 **YOU CAN'T CHOOSE YOUR NEIGHBORS**

Building a Fence

Building a fence includes the following steps

- Dig holes for posts
- Place 4 x 4 posts in the holes
- Pour concrete in the holes
- Attach rails between the posts
- Add siding (or filler) to the rails

Take a trip to a building supply centre to get some tips about different and new fencing products. There are a few choices for the 4 x 4 posts

- Pressure treated
- Cedar
- Aluminium

We chose The Aluminium Post System. Why?

- Because aluminum posts are four times stronger than wood, they can support more weight, and therefore can be placed further apart - every 10 feet, rather than every 8 feet for wood. This means less digging!
- Aluminum is strong and doesn't rust, rot or split.
- Aluminum lasts for a very long time. The product that we chose from Prestige Fence, from The Home Depot, comes with a 20-year guarantee.
- Aluminum Posts are 100% recyclable when you are finished with them.

Before You Start

Demolish and remove the existing fence. We saved some old fence material to make a jig for our rail assembly (later on in the episode).

Locate your property line.

- Mark 6" away from the line with spikes and a string. Unless you've worked it out with your neighbour in advance, make sure your post holes are clearly within your property line. (see Fig. A)

Call the municipal office and utility companies SIX WEEKS before you dig!

- They will check for and mark the location of buried pipes and wires.

Mark out the locations of the fence post holes.



A. Laying out the fence line.



B. Using a plumb bob.



C. Planting a spike.



D. Using a Manual Post Hole Digger.



EPISODE #3030 **YOU CAN'T CHOOSE YOUR NEIGHBORS**

- The posts will be 10 feet apart, plus the width of the posts which are 3 ½ x 3 ½ (4 x 4s). Therefore the spacing is 10' 3 ½" from centre to centre.
- Measure from the first spike 10' 3 ½" along the string.
- Drop a plumb bob down to the ground, and plant the spike. (see Figs. B & C)
- Repeat for the length of the string.

Dig the Holes

Remember to call the municipality and the utilities before you dig!

Use a Post Hole digger to dig the post holes

- They can be rented from any building supply centre.
- Manual Post Hole Diggers are inexpensive and versatile, with an adjustable "bite" to set the size of the hole to be dug. (see Fig. D)
- Set the manual post hole digger on the ground, turn and push down at the same time.
- As you dig down, pull the post hole digger out to clear the hole of dirt and debris.
- It is very labour intensive and time consuming, but very cheap.
- *Note from the boys: This manual post hole digger worked surprisingly well!

The alternative is to use a *Gas Powered Post Hole Digger, a.k.a. Gas Auger (Tool of the day)* (see Figs. E & F)

- They can also be rented from any building supply centre.
- They are very heavy, and require two people to operate. But they are usually worth the extra expense, if you have someone to help.
- Just like any power tool machine, safety is a priority:
 - Wear gloves, long pants, eye and ear protection at all times.
 - They are prone to kicking back if they hit a solid obstruction, such as a root or a rock, so be prepared!
- Dig down 18 inches for each post hole. Some local building codes may vary.

Mix the concrete in a wheelbarrow or rent a cement mixer from your local home repair store. (see Fig. G)

- Keep the mix super thick; this will save you from having to support the posts as the cement dries!
- Pour some cement into the hole. (see Fig. H)

Add the Aluminum post to the hole

- Make sure it's plumb!



E. Gas Powered Post Hole Digger.



F. This isn't solo work!



G. Getting ready to mix concrete.



H. Shovelling cement into the post hole.