

How deep do you dig in your bamboo barrier?

That was the question on Facebook.

John Kohler of Chester County Bamboo replied:

- 30" x 80 mil., 27"-28" deep.
- Do not slant outward. Trench is vertical. Slanting barrier allows for voids or creases, creating weak spots.
- Many ordinances in our area stipulate that barriers should be slanted. I have documented several examples of slanted barriers that have failed after 5-10 years.
- Having installed/repaired/replaced literal miles of root barriers, this should be the industry standard.

Bamboo Root Barrier Installations:

Use high quality HDPE barriers that are specifically designed for bamboo. The barrier acts to deflect the rhizomes, preventing the bamboo from spreading into unwanted locations.

Our company only uses 80mil HDPE barriers. The less expensive 60 mil material has far less puncture resistance.

Carefully measure the depth of the trench as we go and then thoroughly dry fit the barrier to make sure that the height above ground is consistent and level.

Inspect the side wall for any roots or sharp rocks that could puncture the barrier overtime.

Back fill the trench, taking time to ensure that the barrier sits straight without twists and curves.

Proper compaction both mechanically and manually is the only way to prevent settlement and or erosion caused by voids left on either side of the barrier.

Single Sided Bamboo Barrier:

There are many situations that only require the bamboo to be controlled on one side. A single sides barrier is best for a larger yard, where the area in front of the bamboo can be mowed or edged to keep it within the desired area.

Rhizomes can easily spread 20'-40' from the original planting. By mowing the new growth, the rhizomes remain viable underground. Therefore, if your vegetable garden is only 10' from the bamboo, you would need to edge the rhizomes, to prevent them from sneaking into that area.

This method does have a few long-term benefits, since the bamboo will be less congested and better able to release energy.

Double Sided Bamboo Barrier:

A double sided barrier completely surrounds the bamboo and is bolted together at the seam. Double sided barriers are the best option for smaller planting areas. Since the bamboo is contained to a predetermined area, it is more likely to become congested. This can take years to happen, but should be noted as nothing is truly maintenance free.

Note: Over the years, people have come up with some creative barriers. The simple fact is that most materials break down quickly when buried in the ground. Any seam or crack that the bamboo comes across, it will find a way through. This is why we strongly advise against the use of other materials. Metal rusts, concrete cracks, rigid panels have seams.

<http://www.ccbamboo.com/bamboo-containment.html>