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Wed, 08/06/2008 - 07:28 -- Kitchy

Question:

What kind of fence will keep all the local critters out of my garden?

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Answer::

In a smaller garden -- 60' x 40'/18.3 x 12.2 m -- a 3'/.9 m-tall fence will keep deer at bay, since they don't like to jump into a confined area. Ordinary snow fencing works fine for this purpose. If your garden is larger, for a single fence to be effective, it needs to be 8'/2.4 m tall to prevent deer from jumping over it. Or consider installing two shorter fences, which actually are quite effective because deer find it difficult to jump both fences. Try a 4'/1.2 m-tall chicken-wire or wire mesh fence with a single strand of electric fencing located 2 1/2'/.76 m off the ground and 3 feet (.9 m) outside the first fence. (To prevent raccoons, use a three-strand electric fence, with strands separated 3"-4'/7.6-10.2 cm, and the lowest strand 3"/7.5 cm off the

ground.) Electrified-netting portable fence, which comes in a roll with posts installed in the netting, is another easy solution for keeping a wide range of critters at bay. They're also easy to take down at the end of the season for garden cleanup. Since rabbits and groundhogs tend to dig under fences, install the fence with an underground extension or dig a trench around the base of an existing fence and line it with chicken wire. Bend the lower edge of the chicken wire out at a 90-degree angle. You can also reinforce an ordinary picket fence with chicken wire if rabbits are your primary pests: Attach a 2'-3'/.6 or .9 m-wide section to the base of the fence, and ideally, use it to line a trench dug along the base of the fence. Reprinted from *The Veggie Gardener's Answer Book* Copyright 2008 by Barbara W. Ellis, with permission from Storey Publishing. Creative Commons photo credit: Caterjk

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