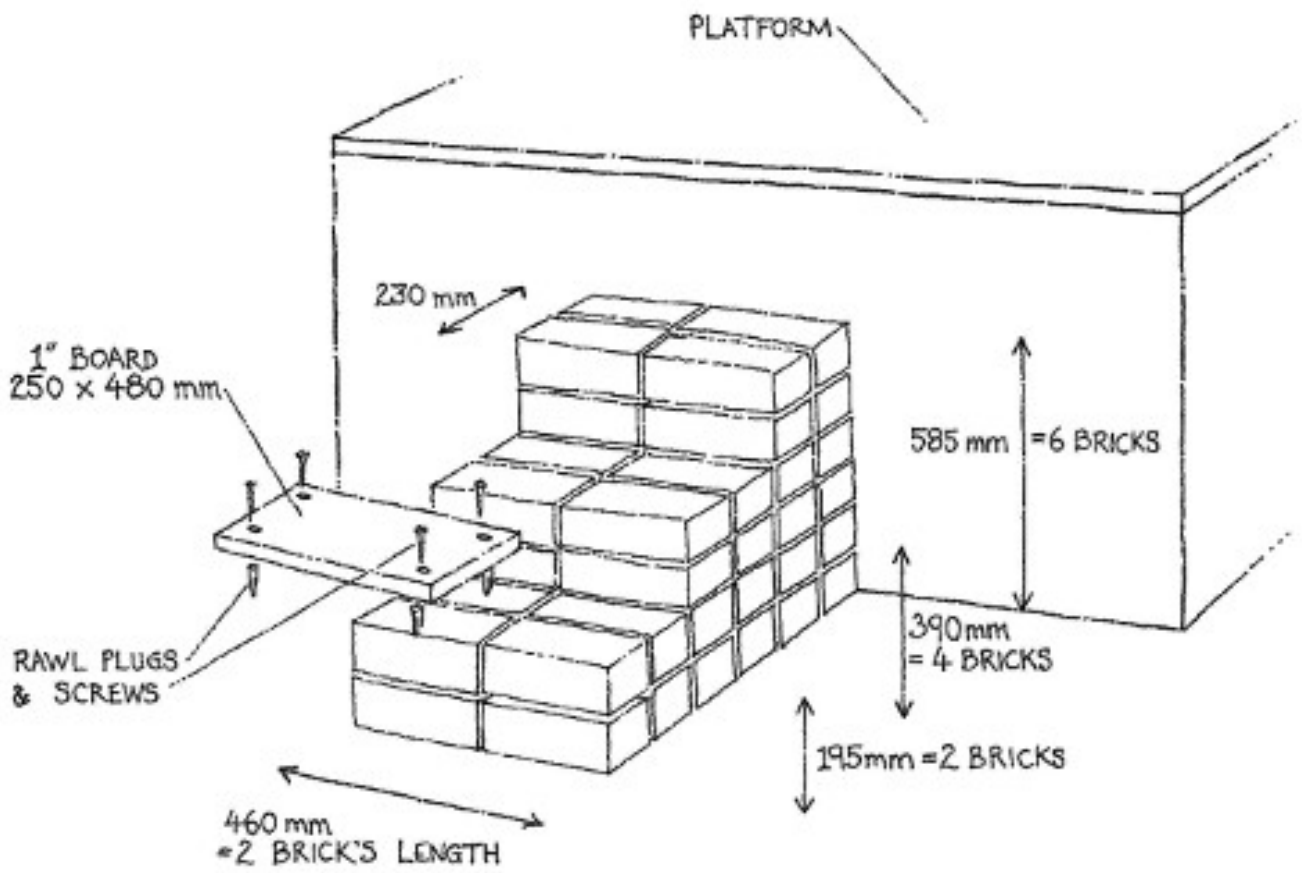


steps & platform

If your chamber is directly under the seat, you will need steps up to the platform. We found that a brick structure with wooden treads works well – see diagram for dimensions. Alternatively you could make wooden steps, or use part of an old stepladder.



These steps are made from bricks with recycled timber treads. We calculated the optimum dimensions for people to be able to step up to the platform comfortably (see drawing). The bricks were laid with lime mortar and painted with a lime wash.



Plans for the construction of the steps up to the platform of one of the chambers.

supports for platform

You need some way to support the platform on top of the chamber. A good way is to use 4"x2" timbers (four by twos), which can easily be bought second-hand from salvage yards. If the chamber is brick (or some other material) on all sides, then the timbers can sit on top of this. It's a good idea when laying the bricks to leave gaps to accommodate these timbers.

If the chamber is built using existing walls for the sides of the chamber, then you will have to fix some 4x2 to the walls to support the cross-timbers. Measure and mark the correct height, pre-drill the 4x2, mark and drill the wall, and fit expansion bolts (bolts with special housings that expand when tightened and pull the timbers tightly to the wall). You then sit the cross-timbers onto the timbers you fixed to the wall, and you can fix more 4x2 between the cross-pieces to secure them in the right place (see diagram).

You must remember to then apply bituminous paint to all the timbers – any exposed wood inside the chamber will rot very quickly.

sawdust in chamber

Now is the time to put a layer of sawdust in the chamber – around 4" (100mm) will do. If you want your finished compost to be organic, make sure the sawdust comes from the sawing of natural timber, and not from plywood or sterling board, or from treated timber. The wood-preserving treatment involves highly toxic substances such as arsenic, and plywood etc. contains formaldehyde and other substances that you don't want to add to your soil.

platform

The platform can be made from ¾" ply, cut to size; cut a hole for the seat, bitumen the underside, and screw to bricks (masonry drill and rawl plugs), and / or to supports. Apply silicon sealant around the edges of the platform before placing onto the supports and screwing into place.

You can lay some sort of floor covering on top of the platform. Cork tiles are good – they are attractive, hard-wearing and natural.