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The WaterUps® Cell

When planning your new garden think about the benefits of using WaterUps® and incorporate wicking systems into your design

WaterUps® cells can easily be added to most planter tubs to create a wicking system.

## Things you will need

### Materials:

- Pond liner;
- Geotec fabric;
- “Builder’s bog”, “No More Gaps” or similar to seal existing drainage hole;
- Adhesive/sealer;
- Bag of Perlite;
- Corflute for filling gaps around the perimeter of the cells; and
- Staples.

### Tools:

- Power drill and small drill bit;
- 22mm hole saw;
- Staple gun and/gaffer tape.

### Sealing the old drainage hole

Like pots, most planter tubs come with a hole in the base so that water can drain out. This is clearly not what you want for a wicking bed, so the hole must be blocked up and sealed. You can do this quite easily.

1. Cover a thin piece of timber, fibro or tile with a sheet of plastic, and place under the planter where the hole is located;

2. Fill the hole with “builder’s bog” or similar adhesive.
3. Make sure that you end up with a reasonable flat surface.
4. Leave 24 hours to set.

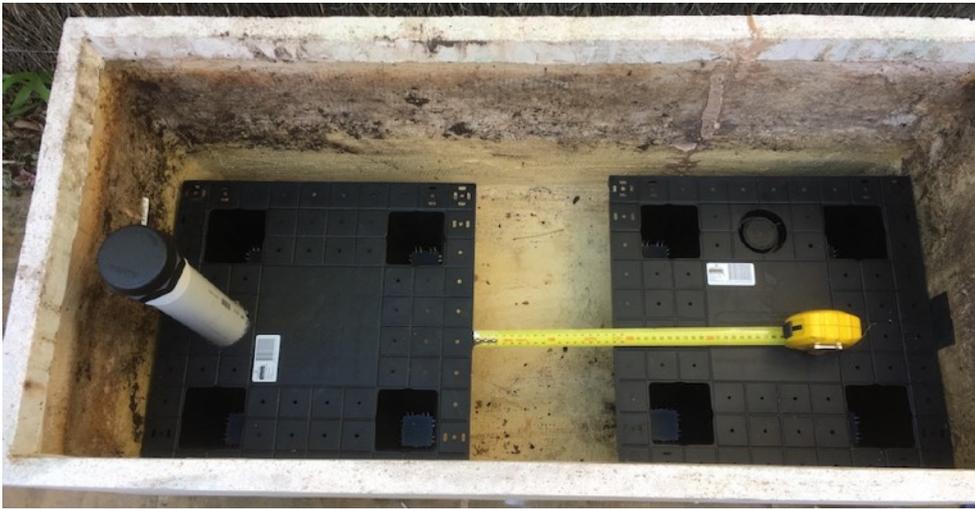


### Planning the cell layout

Most planter tubs are less than 500mm wide and can be up to 2000mm long.

Therefore, you will need to work out how best to fit your WaterUps® cells. Place as many cells as you can into the base of your planter and see what gaps are left.

In my planter I could fit 2 cells reasonably well but there was a gap of about 180mm length-wise and about 30mm on the sides. Refer photo at the top page 2.



To fill this gap, and complete the wicking base for our bed, we need to:

1. Cut a WaterUps® cell to fit, which is easily done with a hand saw; and
2. Cover gap on the sides. However, given the gap in our planter is larger than 15mm the best solution is to cut a couple of pieces of Corflute about 40mm wide. Refer photo
3. Once you have worked out how the cells will fit and the gaps covered, take the cells out.



**Hint:** If the gap was less than 15mm then you could centre the cells and just lay some Geotec fabric around the edge. This would be sufficient to stop soil getting into the water reservoir.



### Attaching the inlet pipe

There is a marked circle on each cell for the inlet pipe.

1. Make sure that you only cut out the inner circle.
2. Before inserting the inlet pipe add adhesive to the bottom of the pipe and at the insertion point.
3. Insert the pipe and glue the pipe in position.

**TIP:** The inlet pipe should be glued into position, ideally the day before installation, to allow time for the glue to set and harden.

### Drilling the overflow hole

To locate the precise position for the overflow hole:

1. Check the underside of the WaterUps® cell for the semi circle that has been

moulded to fit the overflow pipe and attached to the pipe with cable ties;

2. Now place the cell in the base of the planter with the overflow pipe touching the side wall;
3. Trace the outline of the pipe, and mark the centre;
4. Drill a small hole in the planter wall at the centre mark, using a 5mm bit; and
5. Finally, use the 22mm hole saw to drill the hole for the overflow pipe.

**Hint:** Drill carefully from both sides to ensure the you don't damage the planter.

### Adding the Pond Liner

Before adding the pond liner you will need to measure how much you will need:

1. Measure the length and width of the base and the walls so that the pond liner will cover the internal dimensions of the planter. For a planter which is 1000mm (L) x 450mm (W) x 450mm (H), you will need a piece pond liner 1900mm x 1350mm;
2. Now place the pond liner into the planter so that it fits to the top on all sides;
3. Find the position where the pond liner abuts the hole for the overflow pipe and mark this; then
4. Remove the pond liner and trace the outline of the overflow pipe to mark a circle where the overflow pipe will go. Cut out the marked circle in the pond liner so that it is just large enough for the overflow pipe.

### Adding the cells

Before adding the WaterUps® cells, place the pond liner back in the planter so that the overflow pipe holes align:

1. On the corners take care to fold the pond liner diagonally, to ensure that it sits neatly to the edge of the base and up the wall;
2. Next add the WaterUps® cell with the overflow pipe and place it in position;
3. Add the remaining cells; and
4. Tape the pond liner to the top of the planter to keep it in the correct position.

**Hint:** Do not pull the liner too tight as its needs to cover the entire base right into the corners.

## Covering the gap around cells

Given that the internal width of our plater is about 40mm larger than the WaterUps® cell width, we need to cover this to prevent soil from penetrating the water reservoir:

1. Centre the cells so that the gap is evenly distributed;
2. Place the pieces of Corflute that we cut earlier along the sides; and
3. Push against the pond liner and staple or tape to the top of the cells.

Refer photo below.



## Adding your soil mix

**TIP:** Before adding any potting mix spray water over the WaterUps® cells. This will help combine any dry particles of soil and prevent them from contaminating the water reservoir below.

In order to achieve the most efficient wicking outcome, we suggest:

1. That your soil/potting mix should contain a good amount of composted material and organic matter, together with some coarse sand.

2. Mix your soil/potting mix with Perlite (50/50), and then add this to the wicks, which are the 4 feet at the base of each cell, and push down.
3. Adding Perlite to the “wicks” will improve airflow through to the soil.



4. Give the top of the bed a light spray of water. This will help compact the potting mix in the feet.
5. Then, add potting mix evenly across the top of the wicking cell platform to a depth of around 10cm. Once this base level has been established give the mix another light spray to assist the compaction. Continue filling the bed with potting mix in layers, giving each layer a light spray of water.

**TIP:** For the right choice of soil/potting mix we suggest that you speak to a local nursery or landscape supply company to discuss your plans and to get their input on your requirements.

Further information about how to calculate the amount of potting mix required, etc are included in the FAQs on our website. [www.waterups.com.au](http://www.waterups.com.au)

## Watering your wicking bed

1. Give the bed a final soak and then insert the hose into the filler pipe and fill with water until you observe the overflow pipe discharging water, which indicates the reservoir is full. Then place the cap on the inlet pipe (lightly) to prevent insects or other debris entering the reservoir.
2. Ideally, allow 24 hours for the soil to ‘wick’ water up into the bed and then fill the reservoir again via the inlet pipe. The wicking bed is now ready to use. If planting small seedlings, the bed will need surface watering until their roots develop to reach the wicking beds moist soil.



My wicking bed of 1000mm x 450mm with 2 and a half WaterUps® cells, will hold about 54 litres of water.