

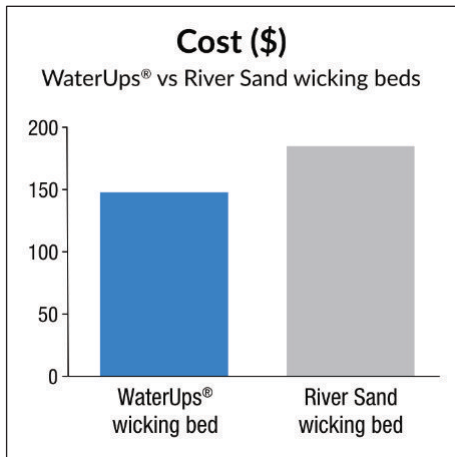
Comparison between WaterUps® and River Sand wicking beds

Wicking bed construction

Wicking beds (or self-watering garden beds) are extremely popular as they minimise water waste and significantly reduce the amount of time and water required to keep plants healthy. We decided to look at some of the key aspects of building a wicking bed and to see how WaterUps® compare.

Wicking beds come in all shapes and sizes so we picked an indicative sized bed of 2m x 1.2m to allow for a quick and easy comparison.

Cost



When costing the bed, both use similar materials such as the bed frame, potting mix, pond liner, GeoTec fabric or similar and inlet/overflow pipes.

For the WaterUps® bed you will then require the WaterUps® wicking cells. The other bed will need Ag pipe (or similar) and a wicking medium (River Sand, scoria or similar).

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Cost - WaterUps®

For our test bed the WaterUps® products would cost around \$148 (15 wicking cells). This includes free freight to Sydney Metropolitan, Wollongong and NSW Central Coast addresses.

The bed using River Sand will require between 330kg & 495kg of sand (dependant on whether the wicking depth is 100mm or 150mm). A 20kg bag costs approximately \$6 and the Ag pipe (approx. 10m to 12m of 65mm pipe) will cost approximately \$60.

Cost - River Sand

For our test bed, the cost of the River Sand and Ag pipe product would be between \$160 & \$210 for the parts (Freight and labour to transport sand is NOT included).

Weight and installation time

As mentioned above the WaterUps® bed will need 15 WaterUps® wicking cells.

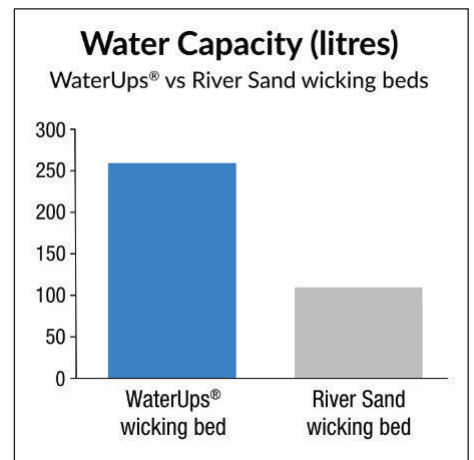
15 WaterUps® cells weigh approximately 12kg. The River Sand will weigh between 330kg & 495kg.

Remember also that, as most soil and landscape suppliers won't deliver smaller loads, you'll need to collect and load/unload the 17 to 25 bags, each weighing 20kg.

Installation

WaterUps® are modular in nature so are simply laid flat on the base of the bed like floor tiles. The time and energy needed to add and level the River Sand will take considerably longer and will require more effort.

Water capacity



A key reason to use a wicking bed is to utilise the self-watering capability of the reservoir below.

A wicking medium such as River Sand will generally hold around 30% of its volume in moisture.

Our River Sand test bed would hold between 90 litres & 130 litres of water (assuming that the Ag pipe occupies 10% of the volume of the water held in the reservoir). The WaterUps® bed will hold about 260 litres of water.

OVERVIEW

WaterUps® wicking beds are more cost effective, are quicker and easier to install and allow longer lasting watering capacity to help your garden grow

Published: 9 February 2020