



DIY Guide

Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs)



Installing WaterUps® in Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs).

WaterUps® Wicking Cells can easily be added to Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs) to create an efficient wicking system.

QUICK TIP

As IBCs are used as a storage/ transport device for a range of liquids, you should check what the IBC has been used for and if possible secure a food grade IBC.

Cutting the IBC into two halves.

In order to cut your IBC into two halves you will need to:

1. Remove the metal cage. To do this you will need to firstly remove the top bars using a T30 head bit
2. Remove the metal frame and place the plastic tank upright (so that the screw top is at the top) on a flat surface.
3. Measure and mark a line around the plastic tank at the vertical halfway point.
4. Now lay your IBC on its side.
5. Cut your IBC in half. This will give you a depth of approximately 500mm. Given that efficient wicking will occur up to a height of around 350mm, you can adjust your soil depth (from the base of your WaterUps® wicking cell) based on what you are planting. Remember you will need to allow for 50mm of mulch on the top and the sand in the base. For example, if you are intending planting deeper rooting plants, such as a lemon tree, then you could use the full depth of your IBC.

Cutting the IBC frame.

You will now need to cut the metal frame of your IBC in half for the inserts, that you have cut, to sit in.

Note: You will need an angle grinder to do this.

Positioning the WaterUps® cells.

Your IBC will be approximately 1000mm x 1200mm. Therefore, you will need nine WaterUps® Cells. The cell configuration will be three cells down each side of the 1200mm section and then three half cells down the middle.

It is important that you have a level base for your IBC to sit on. We suggest that you use a spirit level to check. Given that the floor of your IBC will not be completely even, add a layer of coarse sand to the floor of your IBC so that the WaterUps® cells have an even base to sit on. You will need about four buckets of sand or gravel.



On top of the sand, it is recommended that you add a layer of GeoTec fabric or corflute sheet to ensure that the WaterUps® cell base remains even and stable over time.

Cutting the cells.

Firstly you will need to cut a diagonal off one corner of four WaterUps® cells, so that they fit snugly into the round corners of the IBC.

After positioning the four corner cells and the middle cells along the 1200mm sides, measure the gap in the centre – this should be slightly less than 200mm. You will need to cut two cells so that you are left with three pieces of that width, so that the cell base fits closely to the edges and evenly in the centre. This can be easily done with a handsaw or a jigsaw.



Drilling the overflow hole.

To locate the the precise position for the overflow hole:

- Check the underside of the WaterUps® cell for the semi circle that has been moulded to fit the WaterUps® overflow pipe and attach it by clicking it into position;
- Now place the cell on top of the GeoTec/Corflute sheet that covers the level sand/gravel base of the IBC so that the overflow pipe touches the side wall;
- Trace the outline of the pipe, and mark the centre; and
- Finally, use the 18mm hole saw to drill the hole for the overflow pipe.

Covering the gap around the cells.

Given that the internal width of the IBC will probably not fit the WaterUps® cells exactly, you will need to cover any small gaps to prevent soil from penetrating the water reservoir. This can be easily done by running a piece of GeoTec fabric around the inside perimeter, overlapping the top of the cells. A strip about 300mm wide would be ideal. You can secure the GeoTec to the walls of the container using Duct tape.



Adding inlet and overflow pipes.

Now add the rest of the cells including the one for the inlet pipe. On that cell cut out the circle for the inlet pipe and insert it by aligning the three lugs at the base of the pipe with the holes in the cell.

Final steps.

Now fill the four wicks of each cell with perlite and then add your potting mix, compost and plants.



Further Information

Click here to go to our Getting Started page where you will find lots of resources to help you with your build including our FAQs, the WaterUps® installation guide, and our Soil considerations guide.

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