

The Anna Ryder Richardson

# Good Fence Guide



The World of Garden Fences





# “A problem fence won’t go away... but it might just blow away”

It’s been ten years since I regularly graced TV screens helping transform people’s living spaces with MDF and stripped floorboards. Recently it’s been more “celebrity muck out” than “celebrity make-over” as I took up the challenge of owning my own Wildlife Zoo in Tenby.

In this time I’ve come to know one or two things about fences of all descriptions as I’ve endeavoured to keep my animals secure and safe, so when approached to write this guide to the different garden fences available on the market I felt I was more than qualified. I’ve never lost my passion for good design, functionality, and practicality and that applies to outside spaces as well as indoors. Back in the day choices were limited, but now the fence buyer has a number of options.

In this guide I’ll talk you through the options, highlighting some of the key facts I came across as I looked to replace and upgrade my general purpose and domestic fencing. I will also reveal how by choosing carefully you can ditch the preservatives and quit worrying what damage the weather might cause to your fence - once and for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna R Richardson".

Anna Ryder Richardson



A major problem with ignoring wobbly or damaged sections of fence panel is that the problem is guaranteed to get worse. You may ignore it for a while, count on the surrounding greenery to keep it up or patch and brace it but this really only postpones the inevitable. Over time the action of the wind and the stresses and strains placed on your weak or damaged panel are transferred and amplified down the entire length of your fence. One dodgy panel can rapidly become a much bigger problem in the course of one sustained bout of bad weather. In the UK it is generally accepted that the left hand

boundary of your property is your responsibility. It's up to you to look after it, and ensure that it is both safe and secure. You are culpable should your fence cause damage or injury to those around you. Loose panels are surprisingly aerodynamic and can easily be lifted by the wind and sent hurtling when the weather is at its worst. Apologising for flattening a prized plant is one thing, facing the consequences of your fence injuring someone is quite another. Fences don't get better by themselves. So in this guide we look at the pros and cons of some of the most popular fencing options that are available today.



“Don't ever take a fence down until you know why it was put up”

Robert Frost





## Entry Level - The Basic DIY Fence

When it comes to fencing in the garden, the most popular (and cheapest) option is to install standard 6 foot wide lap panels supported by timber or concrete posts.

Widely available, these panels sold by DIY centres are often made with cut-price low grade materials. This keeps the costs down but the sacrifice is quality and longevity - buy too cheap and you are looking at just another temporary fix. Most professional fence installers aren't interested in fitting the cheapest lap panels because the inherent quality issues invariably end up back with them. So if cheap lap panels are what you decide on, it is likely that you will be installing them yourself, or finding a "handyman" to do it for you. Chances are, many of the problems you are having with your fence are because it was just such a DIY effort. Installed with the best of intentions perhaps, but fencing really is

a product where you get what you pay for. Cutting corners just saves up problems.

You'll need some reasonable skills to get a successful DIY effort completed. Shifting six foot square fence panels is not easy - and it's worth having two people on the project as fence posts and panels are quite heavy. It all depends on the size of your garden, of course, but the job could take a weekend to complete if everything goes smoothly.

Once it is up - then of course you have to treat it. Even DIY panels labelled as treated will have only the barest minimum of protection. To stand any chance of the fence lasting you should set aside at least another weekend to coat your panels with an expensive coat of preservative. However the trouble with modern treatments is that they are water based - so from the very start





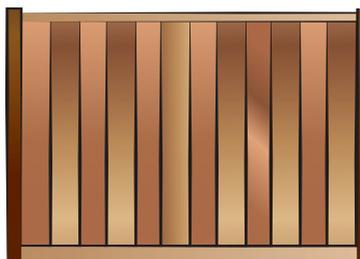
they are not as effective as traditional creosote (which was banned because it contained toxic carcinogenic chemicals). This invariably means they don't last as long and you

will be forced to repeat the process every few years. It's a big job, that suddenly doubles in size when you

realise that you really need to treat **BOTH SIDES** of the fence for the protection to be effective. Trampling over your plants and flower beds in order to treat 'your side' is one thing but accessing your neighbours garden and risking damage to theirs is quite another. It's unlikely you will come up smelling of roses if you damage their plants treating your fence.

## Mid Range - Close Board Fence Systems

Close board (or feather edge fencing) systems are the next step up. They are what most professional fence installers recommend to clients who prefer timber fencing. You could install these fence systems yourself but normally they are only available from specialist suppliers and their erection is not normally considered to be a DIY job. As with anything, however, there is a massive variation in service and standards out there. It pays to be cautious. Find a professional however and you will benefit from their experience of day-in-day-out



fitting fences and remove much of the hassle. Rather than being supplied in complete 6ft wide panels, close board systems utilise better quality vertical boards that are nailed together, board by board, to form the fence on site. As they are made to measure they may be suitable for awkward boundaries. Many companies will treat the wood for you after set up, but going forward that is going to be your ongoing role.

Treated regularly they should last - but there will always be a battle between the elements and the wood and nature has the odds stacked in her favour.

# Battling the weather is a full time job

However you look at it, whatever you paint it with, a wooden fence will struggle to look as good as new even if you use the most expensive

treatments. You can delay the effects of the weather but it will be a constant and potentially expensive time consuming battle.



*It's a battle you can't win.*

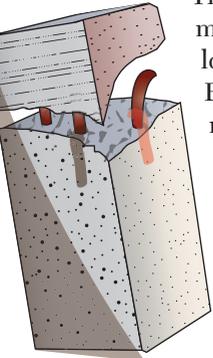
*Wood always rots.*

*& surprisingly so might concrete...*

Concrete posts are often offered as a longer lasting alternative to timber posts in traditional systems.

The truth is, however, they might not actually last as long as you might think.

Exposing concrete with reinforced metal bars inside (as all fence posts do) to the elements will inevitably cause the post then the fence to fail. They won't rot, but they will corrode, as featured recently in The Telegraph...



## The Telegraph

25 Jan 2015

“ The reason reinforced concrete fence posts, lamp-posts and park benches fail is because they are exposed to rainwater. The rain absorbs carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as it falls, thus becoming weak carbonic acid. This soaks into the surface of the concrete and, over the years, this acidity neutralises the alkalinity of the cement and allows the steel to start corroding.

As the steel corrodes, it expands, pushing the face off the concrete and hastening the destruction.”

### The pros of Wood

- Natural appearance
- Value options available
- Versatile - many design & style options
- Can be finished with your choice of stain/paint
- Easy to fix decorations, lights and planters to

### The cons of Wood

- (Annual) maintenance required
- Weathers quickly
- May rot due to moisture
- May warp due to moisture
- Can become infested with destructive beetles and burrowing insects.
- Posts liable to rot undermining the rest of the structure
- Wide variation in quality - of fence materials and installation companies



## Mid Range - PVC 'plastic' fencing

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As you would expect a fence made of plastic is incredibly lightweight. This is great when handling and assembling but perhaps not ideal when you intend that it be a lasting investment. As with timber fences quality varies wildly, some systems are designed to make use of existing concrete posts, whilst others even employ plastic posts. The panels themselves vary - usually supplied in sections moulded to replicate sections of wooden boarding. A single 6 foot panel section may therefore be made from 3-4 strips of this plastic boarding. Some companies use waste plastic to form their 'timber panels' and then let the imitation wood grain surface soften their appearance in your garden. The plastic does not need painting, but will over time suffer exposure to extremes in weather. It's worth considering that long after your fence might have been broken and been cleared away the plastic panels it was made from will still need to be responsibly dealt with and will continue to live on in land fill.

### The pros of PVC

- PVC fences are a low maintenance alternative to wood - you need never paint or stain again
- Wide range of styles, post caps to match, and colours to choose from
- High-quality PVC can resemble traditional wood from a distance
- It's easy to clean; dirt can be washed away using only a sponge and hose (or a pressure washer)

### The cons of PVC

- PVC fencing is tough but it can still crack. A stray football or minor impact can damage it and repair involves filler, sanding and a great deal of effort. Extreme temperatures can make it brittle which again makes it susceptible to damage
- Mold and mildew will thrive on PVC fences
- PVC fences are more expensive than their wooden counterparts. You may save money in the long run, but the upfront costs are greater
- There are very few companies that specialise in fitting PVC fencing - very often it is another DIY option - with the labour down to you



*If you want a fence that lasts,  
that doesn't rot, and won't break the bank  
there is a clear choice...*

## **High Quality -The Colourfence System**

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The Colourfence fence is perhaps the ultimate choice. For the last 10 years it's been widely used across the UK and has steadily gained a reputation for its quality. By using the highest specification Colorbond steel in the fence structure itself, complemented by the highest level of customer service from accredited Franchisees, Colourfence is now regarded by many as the premier fencing solution in the market. It is easy to see why when you also factor in that prices are actually in line with inferior mid-range systems.

Immune to the rot and resistant to the weather that so quickly effects

wooden fences, Colourfence is a remarkable system. It has none of the drawbacks of wood or PVC systems - but all the benefits. What's more it's better value than either of them.

A major benefit of Colourfence is that you can rely upon it to do what it should come wind, rain or shine. It's a level of confidence that can only be experienced, when your product has been exhaustively tested. Tests and cyclonic ratings have proved that when professionally installed Colourfence is capable of withstanding wind gusts of up to 130mph. Once it's up - this is one fence that really does stay up!





Guaranteed not to rot, rust or peel  
 Colourfence is available in a range of  
 colours that last and last. You need  
 never paint it. You need never treat it.

It really is virtually maintenance free.  
 An occasional wash down with a hose  
 is enough to keep it looking in top  
 condition. Owning a Colourfence  
 will therefore not only save you the  
 expense of maintenance, but will also  
 save you time and hassle. Time that  
 can be far better spent 'enjoying' your  
 garden rather than toiling in it.

Colourfence approved installation  
 teams are highly efficient Franchisees  
 that operate with the minimum of

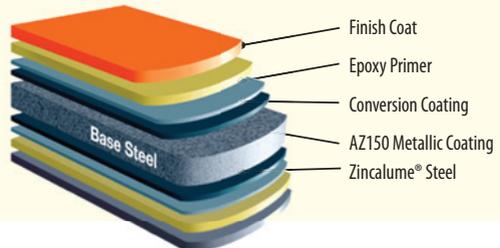
disruption and maximum attention to  
 detail. In no time at all Colourfence  
 can make your fence the envy of the  
 neighbourhood.

Pricing is straightforward and  
 attractive. Starting costs are in line  
 with mid range timber systems but  
 offer the ongoing peace of mind that  
 your investment will continue to save  
 maintenance time and money year  
 after year.

For homeowners across the UK,  
 Colourfence finally offers the promise  
 of a lifetime of hassle-free enjoyment  
 of their gardens.

## The fence that repairs itself

If you scratch or cut Colourfence,  
 the ingenious zinc element in  
 the Zinalume steel reacts with  
 moisture to form a protective  
 barrier to prevent any corrosion  
 with no action needed from you.





“ I honestly believe that Colourfence is the best general purpose fencing product on the market today. Virtually maintenance free; guaranteed; and professionally installed by fully trained Franchisees for total peace of mind. This really is fencing to be proud of. ”

### The pros of Colourfence

- Colourfence is the leading low maintenance fence system
- Constructed from high quality components that can be cut to fit on site to suit any and all garden environments
- Costs in line with inferior mid range systems YET Colourfence is guaranteed† not to rot, warp/peel for 25 years
- Saves time & money required for annual treatment & repairs of timber fencing
- Wide range of colours available - colours which remain fresh & bright year after year
- No-nonsense 'ALL-IN' pricing with NO hidden extras or charges
- Installation undertaken by accredited Franchisees offering consistently high levels of service across the country
- No high pressure sales, the product quality speaks for itself

### The cons of Colourfence

- Not really meant for DIY installation – must be fitted by an accredited Colourfence Franchisee
- Can't be used with any existing posts as these need to be removed to be replaced by stronger Colourfence posts that are guaranteed not to rot or weaken
- You will have to answer lots of questions from admiring friends and neighbours!

 **MADE IN BRITAIN**



**F**or me the decision to replace my fence became an easy one relatively quickly. My research, my conversations with neighbours, my reluctance to be constantly repairing my fence all led in one direction. I wanted quality, I wanted value and I wanted a company that I could trust. With Colourfence I was able to tick all of the boxes and make the process far more stress free then I could have hoped.

It was clear that I was not the only one to think so. The Colourfence system has grown in popularity over the last 10 years and offers a lasting solution to fencing woes. It overcomes the issues with traditional wooden boundaries, had all of the benefits of the PVC system none of the drawbacks and yet still better value! What's more the finish was absolutely first rate - and was guaranteed to stay that way. Looking back now, my only regret is that I waited so long to replace my fence. Wasted hours painting and patching when I could have been enjoying my garden. To find out how Colourfence might help you, I strongly suggest you call 0800 644 4113 and speak to their team.

Anna Ryder Richardson



# The UK's strongest, low maintenance fence system

## *Simply* Fit & Forget - Colourfence is the revolutionary fence that needs no repairs...



**We are really pleased with it!**

“It was all done in a day and a half, they were ever so quick. What's more because we chose a green finish it makes the whole garden look so much bigger.”



**We wanted our fence sorted once & for all!**

“As we are pensioners we were anxious that the fence be low maintenance. And it is. They even cleared the old fence away. I am rather chuffed. Money well spent.”



For more information about the Colourfence system

**FREEPHONE**  
**0800 644 4113**

or visit their website

**[www.colourfence.co.uk](http://www.colourfence.co.uk)**



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