



How to Build a Low Tunnel

Step 1: Order row cover if you need it.

There are different weights of row cover. The heavier they get the more temperature protection they provide, but the less light gets through. This isn't a big deal in the winter when we're not expecting any plant growth, but in spring you want as much light to get through as possible while still protecting the plants. So, keep this in mind when ordering. What times of year are you going to use it? You may want two different weights.

Agribon-19: protection down to 28, 90% light transmission

Agribon-30: protection down to 26, 70% light transmission

Agribon-24: protection down to 24, 50% light transmission

Agribon-70: protection down to 24 and below, 30% light transmission

Make sure you order a 10 ft. wide piece of row cover so it fits over your 10 ft. long PVC. You can cut it down to whatever length you need. I order my row cover from Johnny's Selected Seeds.

Step 2: Calculate how many PVC pieces you need.

I buy 1/2 inch 10 ft. long PVC. I space mine between 3 and 5 ft. depending on how long my garden bed is. If you don't want them to be tall, you can cut down the PVC.

Step 3: How are you going to stabilize your hoops?

The options are: Use a stud bar or something else to make deep holes in the soil so you can get the PVC in deeper. Buy short pieces of rebar and hammer them into the ground. Attach plumbing straps to the inside of your raised bed. The first two options will allow you to easily move your low tunnel from year to year.

Step 4: Bend the PVC over the garden bed.

Optional step: Strengthen your low tunnel if you live in an area of heavy snow and you want to keep it up as long as possible.

Step 5: Stretch the row cover over the hoops and secure the whole perimeter.

You can use pins, rocks, t-posts, logs or anything else you have around.

You can leave the row cover on continuously now. Sunlight and water can get through so you only need to open it when harvesting.

Ta-daa!