

BAMBOO



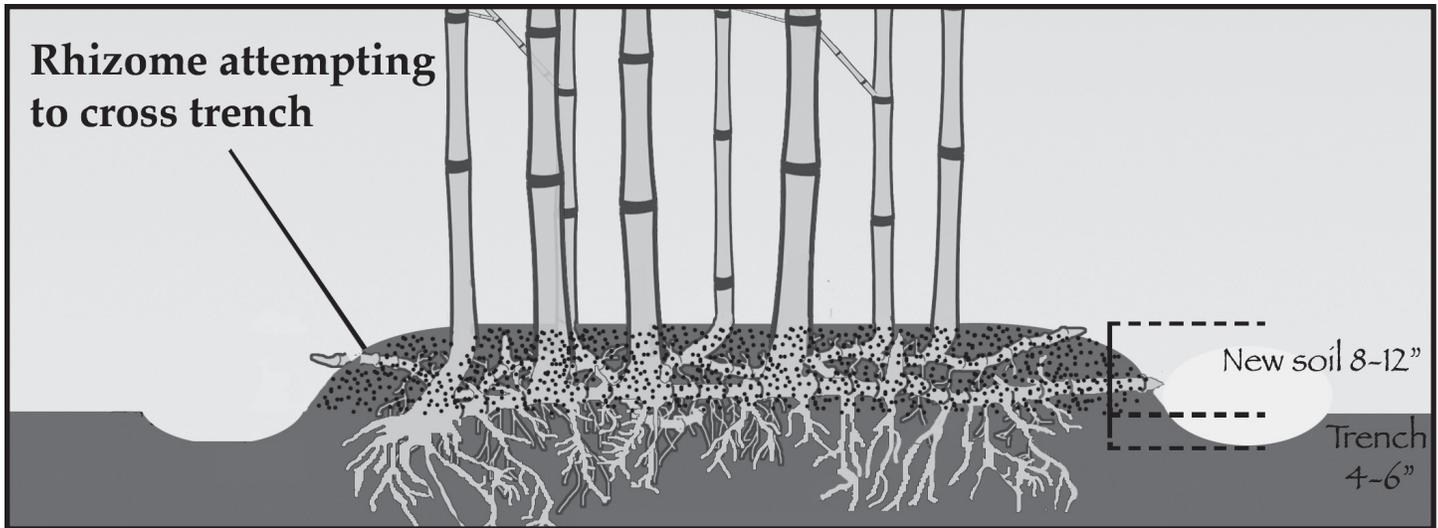
GARDEN

Options for Maintaining Running Bamboo

www.bamboogarden.com • email: bamboo@bamboogarden.com

503-647-2700 • 18900 NW Collins Rd, North Plains, OR, 97133

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 9:00 am to 4:00 PM



Raised Bed for Rhizome Pruning

Controlling the Spread of Bamboo

The key to successful bamboo control is learning how to prune the rhizomes. Removing shoots and canes above ground level merely hides the evidence; it does not prevent spreading. Although plastic Rhizome Barrier is now used extensively and sold by many vendors, including us, we believe root pruning should be the first option. Any bamboo grower should familiarize themselves with basic root pruning techniques, even if using barrier. Providing a thorough education is one of our top priorities. We believe anyone who sells bamboo has an obligation to give clear and accurate information about the nature of bamboo and how to master it. Consider the following proactive methods for taming bamboo.

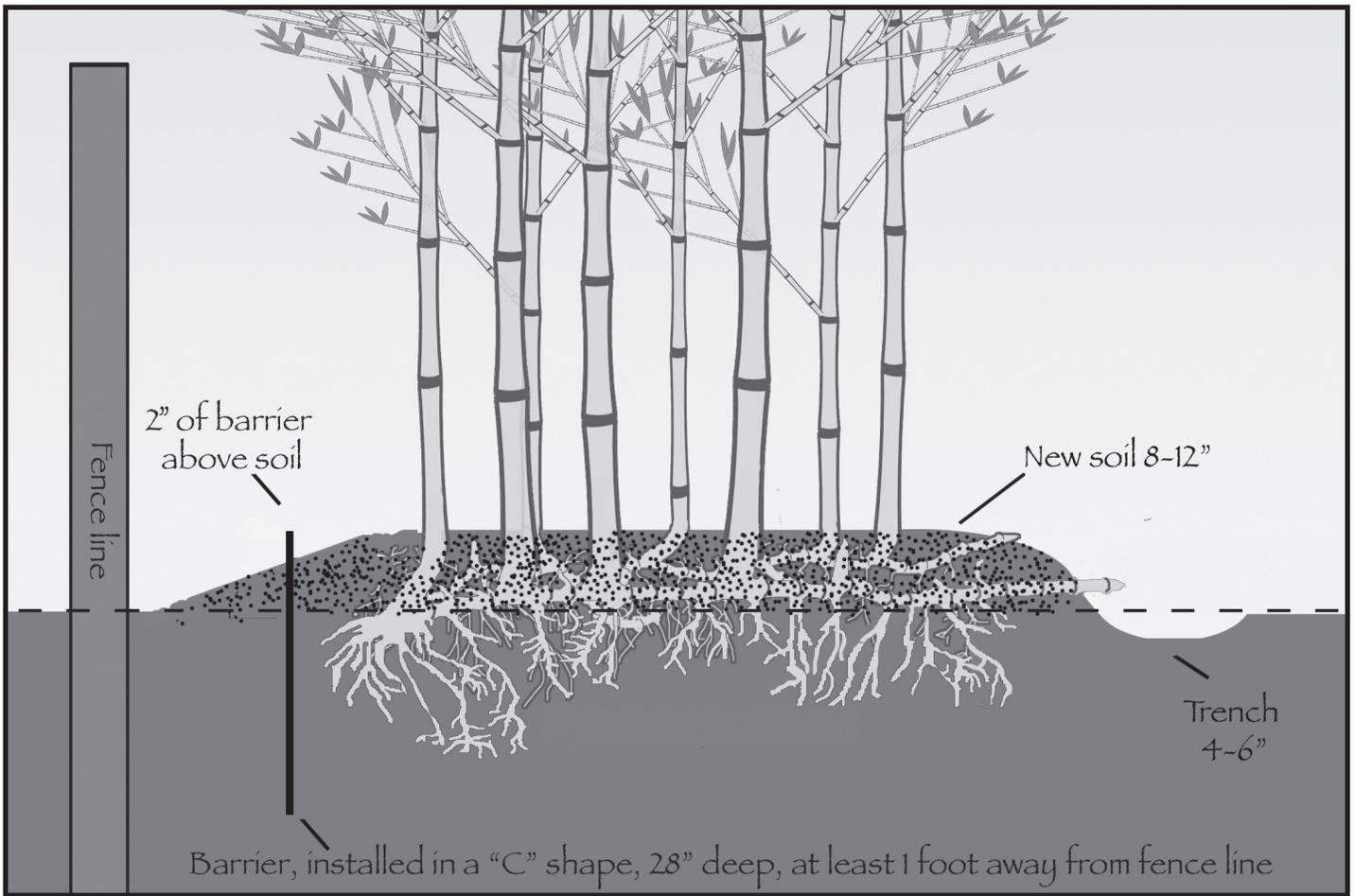
Bi-annual root pruning around the edge of a running bamboo is the most effective way to achieve long-term control. Fortunately, rhizomes are usually shallow rooted and prefer to grow in loose topsoil 2-5 inches beneath the surface. Root pruning is achieved by working around the bamboo with a sharp spade, driving it into the ground and removing the wayward rhizome. One can generally feel the rhizome as the spade cuts it. The rhizome can be cut back to about two feet from the parent plant, or to wherever bamboo growth is desired. It is necessary to leave some rhizome attached so that the bamboo can produce healthy new shoots in the spring. Cut off and completely remove the rhizomes that are discovered outside of their designated area. Small segments of rhizomes can rejuvenate so make sure to be thorough. The smaller, leftover feeder-roots will not grow into new bamboo plants. For edging long distances, a tractor with a small plow is very effective. Although digging rhizomes seems challenging, with careful planning, conditions can be created that simplify this task.

The Berm and Trench Method

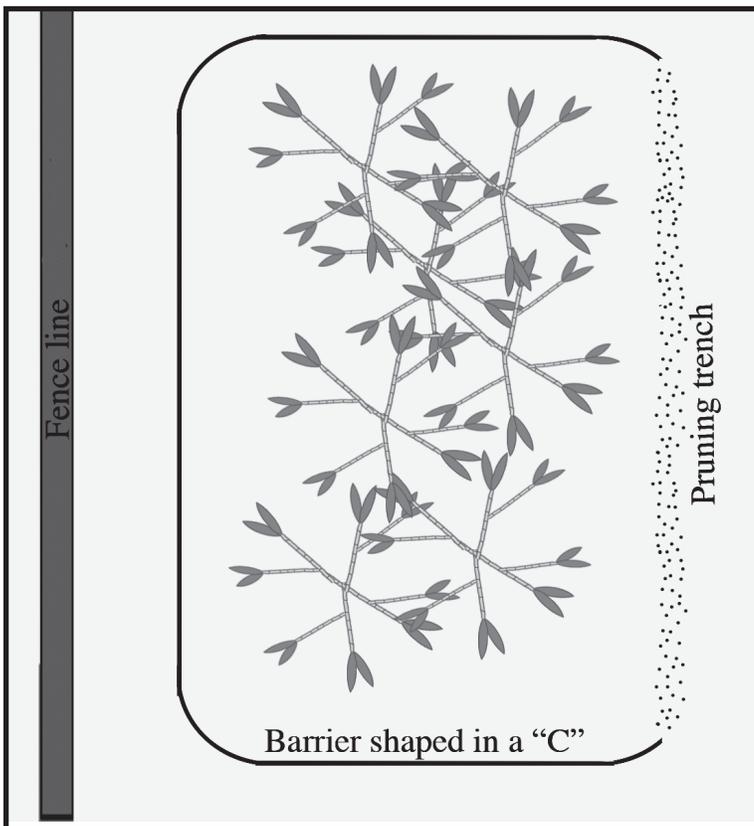
Planting bamboo on berms or in raised beds is useful because the loose, rich topsoil provides a healthy growing area and the rhizome can predictably be found in the upper layer. Once the rhizome comes out of the edge of the berm it can be easily found and cut. Loose topsoil makes it easy to remove long runners. Bamboo has difficulty running down a slope or over a ledge and often exposes itself in the process.

A shallow trench can be created and maintained around the desired perimeter (see above ill.) to control the spread of rhizomes. Check for creeping rhizomes a couple of times in the summer and fall to see if any of them have tried to cross the trench. If so, cut and remove them. After doing this a few times one learns where the rhizomes are most likely to be, and therefore, where to check more frequently. Because rhizomes are shallow, they often poke out the side of the trench. If a trench is impractical for the area, it can be filled with a loose media, such as sand, which is easy to dig into for rhizome cutting.

Well thought maintenance plans are often a combination of these techniques. For instance, creating a raised berm, trenching around the bamboo, and then root pruning is more effective than only trenching or root pruning. Combining and mastering different techniques will give you the most experience and control over your bamboo.



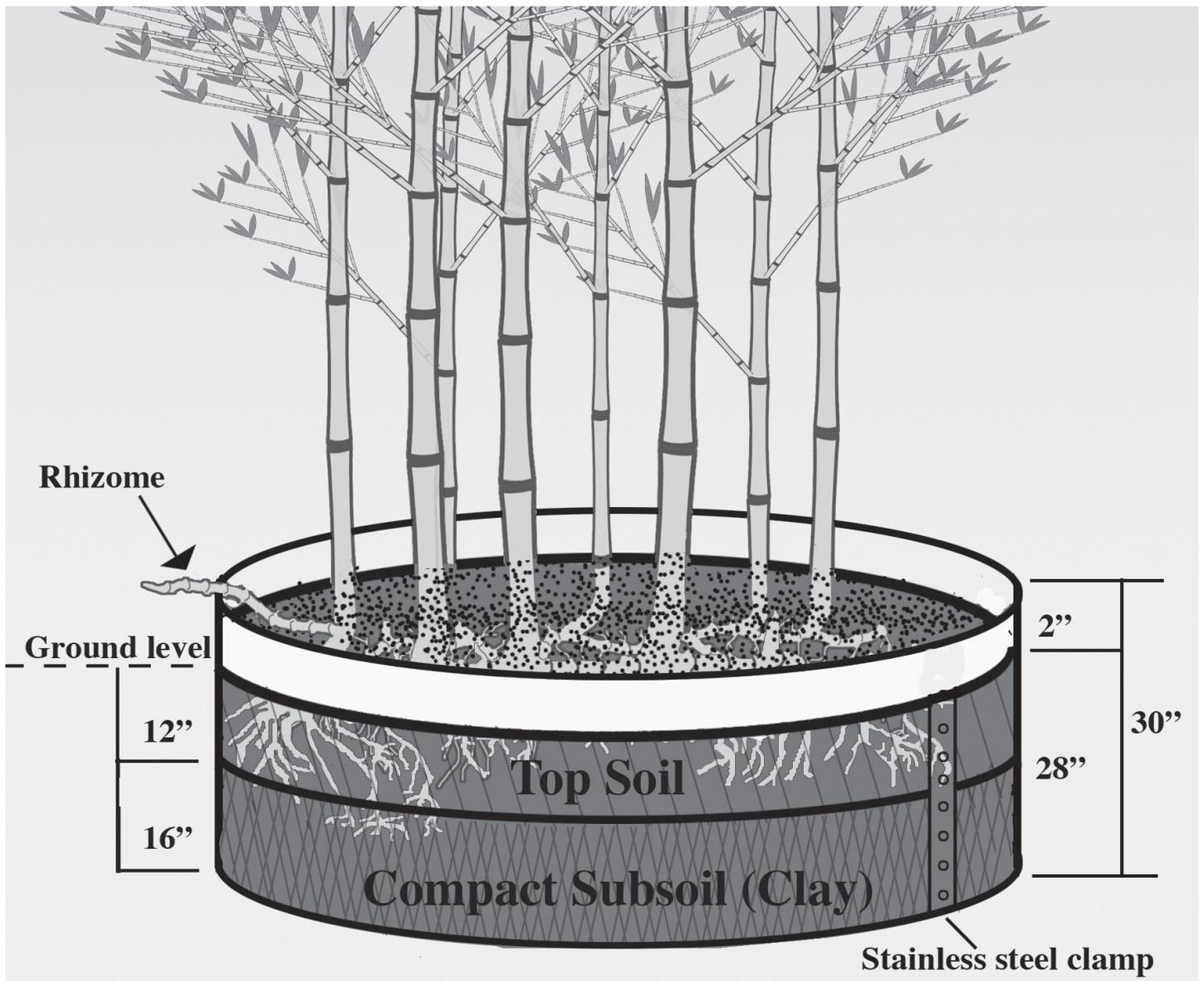
Above: Three sided barrier with pruning trench
 Below: Overhead view of three sided barrier with pruning trench



The Barrier and Trench Method

Rhizome Barrier is effective when used to create a border along a fence line or property line if the main concern is preventing bamboo from creeping into a neighboring property. The barrier and trench method is a combination of rhizome barrier installed on three sides in a C-shape and a pruning trench on the 4th side. The barrier (in a half circle or C-shape) will direct the rhizomes toward the pruning trench, where they can be root pruned bi-annually. This is a good technique to use for small areas (less than 30 feet total circumference), or if you are planning to dig from the original plant at a future date.

There are several advantages compared to a fully enclosed bamboo. A stainless steel clamp is not needed for these applications. The planting area will have better drainage, the root mass can be easily pruned to prevent overgrowth, and it requires less material and labor to install. An open sided barrier will also prevent the rhizomes from circling around the edge of the barrier, gradually increasing pressure and stress on the material until a breaking point is reached. Please see barrier installation instructions on page 4.



Enclosed Barrier Method

Bamboo Barrier

We don't suggest completely enclosing your bamboo in barrier in most cases. If you are going to completely enclose the barrier we recommend a minimum circumference of 30 feet, otherwise the pressure of the rhizomes could burst through the barrier in just a few years.

We sell 60 mil. thick (.06 of an inch, about the thickness of a house key) by 30 inches deep HDPE (high density polyethylene) Rhizome Barrier. We also sell 80 mil. barrier (.08 of an inch, about the thickness of a nickle) for large timber bamboo. It is a type of very dense plastic material that is sunk into the ground, either on one side or completely encircling the bamboo, and contains bamboo rhizomes by blocking their path. We can custom cut any length of Rhizome Barrier for specific bamboo projects. For securing the ends of the barrier, we sell clamp sets: 2, 28-inch long stainless steel strips with a set of nuts and bolts.

We also carry bulk rolls of 100 lb (133 linear feet) and 150lb (200 linear feet), which are significantly discounted. Other thicknesses and widths are available by special order. Orders over 1,000 lbs. are further discounted. The lead time for very large orders may be 4 to 8 weeks.

Standard 60 mil barrier

\$2.00 per foot custom cut to any length under 100'
 100 lb roll (133') for \$230 (1.75 per foot)
 150 lb roll (200') for \$350 (1.75 per foot)

80 mil barrier for large timber bamboo

\$3.25 per foot custom cut to any length
 Contact us for bulk prices on 80 ml
Stainless steel clamps 15\$

Installing bamboo and bamboo barrier can be a physical challenge, but proper installation can reap long term rewards. However, bamboo within barrier still requires annual maintenance to effectively control it. Please contact us if you would like assistance with barrier or bamboo installation.

Installation instructions for Bamboo Rhizome Barrier

- 1.** Dig a trench 26 to 28 inches deep around the proposed site, removing first the topsoil, then the heavier sub-soil. Pile these separately, if possible. If the site is very narrow, it may be easier to remove all of the soil rather than digging a trench. Avoid creating creases in tight corners, which put stress on the barrier material and may cause it to fail. For larger *Phyllostachys* (Timber Bamboo), the total enclosure should have a circumference of at least 30 feet for the bamboo to reach its full potential. 80 mil. barrier is recommended for large Timber Bamboo and also is added insurance for small enclosures, tight corners, or areas where rhizome pruning is not possible (see “Maintaining the Enclosed Bamboo”).
- 2.** Place the barrier into the trench. Being 30 inches tall, the barrier should stand proud of the soil by 2 to 4 inches. This stops rhizomes from escaping over the top of the barrier without being detected.
- 3.** If making a complete enclosure, secure the overlapping ends of the barrier with the stainless steel clamp. Align the two clamp strips on the inside and the outside of the overlapping barrier. Use a drill to make holes in a barrier, fasten with the nuts and bolts. It is not necessary to overlap the barrier more than a few inches. The end of the material within the barrier enclosure should not extend more than an inch beyond the clamp. The strips are 28 inches tall (the same as the depth of the trench) and should not protrude above ground. Overlapping the ends of the plastic without securing them will not stop the escape of the rhizomes.
- 4.** First backfill the trench with the sub-soil. Compact this layer of soil to drive out all air pockets. Complete backfilling the trench with the topsoil and pack that tight too. At all times, make sure no sharp objects (loose stones, glass, metal, or tree roots in the backfill soil) come into contact with the barrier. If the backfilled soil is loose, the rhizomes may be able to travel down along the edge and escape beneath the barrier, undetected. After the bamboo is planted, cover the soil surface inside the barrier with a 2 to 5 inch layer of bark mulch or a mixture of compost and mulch, which will encourage the rhizomes to stay near the surface. For more detailed pictures and instructions please see our page entitled “Bamboo rhizome barrier” at www.bamboogarden.com.

Maintaining the Enclosed Bamboo

Bamboo enclosed inside a barrier still needs annual maintenance for long-term health and control. Pruning the underground rhizomes around the perimeter of the barrier is the best way to assure the bamboo will not escape. When a rhizome encounters an obstruction, such as a barrier or the side of a pot, it will turn and try to hop over the top or burrow deeper. Twice per year, in August through October, check around the perimeter of the barrier and clip back any rhizomes trying to escape over the top. Carefully remove any rhizomes growing along the edge of the barrier. Use care when digging too close to the barrier with a sharp tool or anything that could damage the plastic, and never allow a mower or any other machinery to damage the protruding edges. Rhizome Barrier does not stop the bamboo from growing, rather, it forces the rhizomes to grow in a certain direction. Bamboo is an incredibly strong plant and, when desperate for escape, is capable of amazing feats. If completely root bound inside a plastic or thin metal barrier, it may gradually stretch out the material to its breaking point, eventually splitting through, or growing over the edge like an overflowing cup of water. Combining root-pruning techniques with the use of barrier is one of the methods highly recommended for effective control. For further questions please call us at 503-647-2700 and we can advise you.

Removing Bamboo

Digging bamboo completely out of the ground is the only fail proof way to eradicate it in a timely and environmentally responsible manner. This is best done in the spring when the ground is soft and wet. Sharp root cutting shovels, axes, grub hoes, and even stump grinders are useful tools for removing bamboo. We distribute a high quality root cutting spade appropriately called the “King Of Spades™”. Inquire for current prices. Once the top layer of rhizomes are cut through, one can dig beneath the root ball and force it out of the ground by pulling on the cane and prying with a strong shovel. Roundup and weed killers will harm bamboo to an extent but are not an effective means of control or eradication. Excessive amounts of salt will kill a bamboo, but it will also prevent most things from growing in the area afterward. Never dump rock, asphalt, or concrete on bamboo, it will lurk beneath the surface and rise like a phoenix from the ashes, the debris making it more difficult to dig out. In areas where digging is not possible, bamboo can be cut to the ground. It will regrow quickly, but continual, rigorous removal of the new canes will eventually cause the root mass to lose energy and rot. This technique for removal takes two to four years to complete, depending on the size of the bamboo. **See www.bamboogarden.com for more information, including a step by step photo illustration of barrier installation and rhizome pruning.**