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## Competition For the Cedar Potting Table

A cedar potting table is one of every savvy gardener's best kept secrets. Even if cedar, or wood in general is not your medium of choice, potting benches are still a great buy. And cedar is especially favored for its enviable qualities such as its aromatic aroma. So what exactly are people buying these days? Of the many models of potting benches on the market today, many come with special features and are built with a bevy of materials.

### Setup

The general form of a cedar potting table and other potting benches is basically the same. You start with a table, waist-height and attach to it a lower shelf with a taller back wall. This back wall is there for support, but also to provide extra shelving for storage if need be, or for tools to be hung using a pegboard or lattice framework. Additionally, most tables come with a lipped edge to prevent loose soil from falling, along with a catch tray. More ornate varieties have slight modifications, including sliding trays, extra storage spaces and wheels on one or all four corners for easier moving. The

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nice thing about a cedar potting table is that it isn't overly heavy, so you can move it where you need it to be.

### **Cedar**

You might be wondering what is so special about cedar in particular. Besides famously being the building material for King Solomon's Temple, cedar is a naturally durable and aromatic, scented tree whose lumber is easy to work with, weather-resistant and repels moths. Don't forget, also, that characteristic rich brown hue not often found in other woods. A cedar potting table is one of the better hardwoods in the conifer family, and a solid investment for outdoor furniture that will last well into the years to come.

### **Plastics**

There are of course other choices besides cedar, or even wood. Two of these alternatives are resin and vinyl, both types of synthetic plastic. These materials are lightweight and much cheaper than the competition. And because they are manmade, resin and vinyl can be molded into many designs, forms, shapes and colors to match your décor. As an added bonus, much of the resin used nowadays is recycled from milk containers and other similar plastics. The problem with these materials is that you get what you pay for, i.e. a slightly flimsier version. This

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can be compounded by the added danger of cracking as a cause of pressure, heat or weight. Also, sharp tools may damage the surface and cause chipping.

### **Metal**

Another alternative to wood is metal in its various forms, especially galvanized metal. Wrought iron is a classic and elegant choice, while lighter and more modern aluminum is rising in popularity. While metal is outwardly durable, it does pose some unique problems of its own. For starters, no matter how rust-resistant a metal claims to be, after a time even the strongest of them will show signs of wear and rust.

Next, if you leave your metal potting bench out in a sunny area, logic would follow that it will heat up, causing an uncomfortably hot workspace. Finally, metal is notoriously heavy and cumbersome to move.

### **Innovations**

In addition to newer building materials, there have been some interesting developments as to the form of potting tables that will have the cedar potting table running to catch up. As one example, portable potting tables are great for the gardener who needs to move around a lot, or for those folks with less

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space. They are absolutely ideal for someone living in a big city or those individuals with apartments and miniature or indoor garden setups. Many of these models fit smartly onto tabletops, and though much simpler and slightly more cramped as far as room to work, carry out the same basic function you will need. Add to this innovation folding benches, which can actually be made from multiple materials, especially wood. A lot of people even opt to make their own, as it's a relatively simple project that requires a basic hinge mechanism. These are as the term would connote foldable, meaning they tuck up and out of the way when you're finished working so you have more space on your deck or patio.

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