

LAYING DOMESTIC BLOCK PAVING

Site Preparation: All block paving should be laid on a firm, level and well-drained base to ensure long term service and stability - getting the ground work right is essential.

If you are re-laying an existing domestic driveway the underlying concrete or asphalt can be incorporated as part of the sub-base if the surface is still intact and the finished block paving level will be 150mm below the damp proof course.

Vegetation and top soil should be removed to an approximate depth of 200mm across the area to be paved. Compact the area with a vibrating plate compactor (available from any tool hire shop) and then dig out any soft spots, filling them with the sub-base material. Compact again if necessary. Ensure that you allow a fall of 1:60 away from any buildings and walls for surface drainage. Also make sure that the finished block paving surface level is at least 150mm (two brick courses) below the level of any damp proof course.

Set up restraining edges around the intended area to be paved (these can include existing walls) using block paving, kerbs or decorative concrete edging and bed these in 100mm concrete to the correct levels with a 45 degree "haunch" up the side of at least half the block or kerb height. This is essential to prevent the blocks and the sand on which they are laid from moving. Underground drainage, drainage gratings or recessed manhole covers should be installed at this stage if required.

Lay a minimum of 100mm granular sub-base material Type 1 (available from your local builders' merchant) within the edge restraints and compact firmly with the plate vibrator.

It is important that the sub-base is firm with no voids; to achieve this you may need to compact the area several times.

Lay slightly damp sand to a depth of 50mm over the sub-base, compact it with the plate vibrator and spread a further 15mm of sharp sand over the area as a loose screed. Level the screed with a straight piece of timber drawn along the guide levels. The laying course is now complete and at this stage should not be walked on at any time prior to or during block laying.

Laying: Working from several packs at a time to ensure even distribution of colours and texture, lay the blocks on the sand, hand tight, in your desired laying pattern. If possible start from the longest edge restraint outwards or at the bottom if there is a slope.

After all the full blocks have been laid, use a mechanical cutter if required to cut the blocks for any infill pieces up to the retaining or boundary edges.

Pieces smaller than one quarter of a full block are best avoided. Sweep the area after the whole area has been paved and compact the area with two or three passes of the plate vibrator.

Jointing: In dry weather and when the block paving is dry, brush fine kiln dried sand across the entire area, working the sand into the full depth of the joints. Use the plate vibrator on the whole area again to force down the jointing sand, and then fill any gaps which appear in the joints. Sweep off the surface and re-sand if necessary. You may find that you occasionally have to top up the sand in the joints for the first few months.

StoneFlair's concrete block paving is suitable for domestic driveway and garden use only.

Photography

Left to right
Site preparation

Site preparation

Laying block paving

