

Laying a Brick Walkway or Patio

OVERVIEW



Introduction

The durability and aesthetic characteristics of brick patios and walkways make for the foundation of great spaces around your home. While installing brick walks and patios is not a difficult task, it may be rather time consuming depending on the size of the patio or walkway. When laying brick that will be walked on it is necessary to use paving quality bricks. These bricks are generally fired longer and at a higher temperature making them more suitable for a variety of weather conditions and more durable to wear and tear. Be sure that you have all the materials necessary for your project before you begin. You may want to have the materials delivered to your home to minimize wear and tear on your vehicle, and on your back!

BEFORE YOU START...

SKILL LEVEL & TIME TO COMPLETE

- Beginner - This is a project for all skill levels. Time invol
- Intermediate - This is a project for all skill levels. Time invol
- Advanced - This is a project for all skill levels. Time invol

! CAUTION Be careful when lifting and transferring bricks. Be sure that you use proper lifting techniques. You may want to use a back brace as lifting and carrying bricks can strain your back.

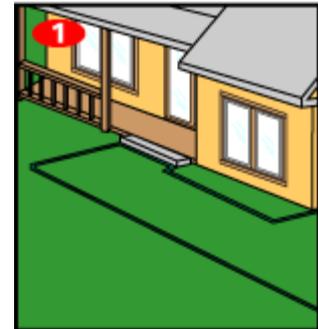
✓ HELPFUL TIP Map out where you want your patio or walkway using a garden hose. This will allow you to visualize a variety of designs before you begin.

✓ HELPFUL TIP If you live in the north where winter means snow and ice, you will want to use SW (severe weather) rated bricks. These bricks cost more but will resist cracking under cold weather conditions.

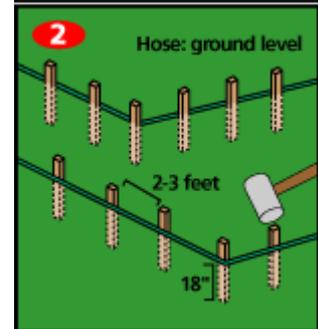
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STEPS

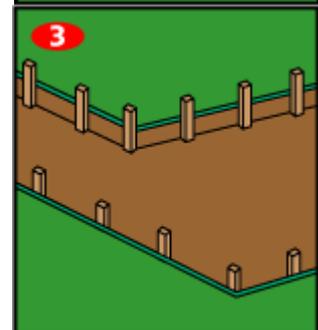
1. Lay out the area in which you want to install bricks for your patio or walkway. Use a household hose -- it is a great tool to lay out the area.



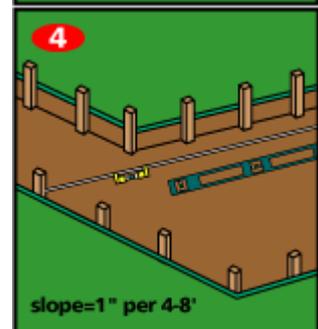
2. Drive wooden stakes about 18 inches into the ground every 2-3 feet around the perimeter of the planned patio or walkway. These stakes will outline the area that you will dig out for your new patio or walkway and be used to line up your bricks.



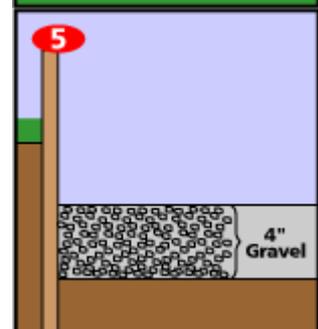
3. Remove the grass and dirt making the edges completely vertical. You should dig down about eight inches to assure that you have room for the base layers upon which your bricks will lie.



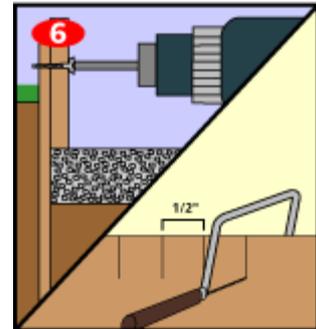
4. Be sure that the dirt is leveled appropriately for your project. Walkways should be level across the walk, and have a gentle slope. Patios should be nearly level in all directions. You should round out your brickwork slightly so that water runs off the edge of it instead of puddling in the middle. You should create a slope of about 1" for every 4-8 feet. Use a 4-foot level or a string level and make any adjustments as needed. As you add new layers to the dirt, confirm that your slope is maintained throughout.



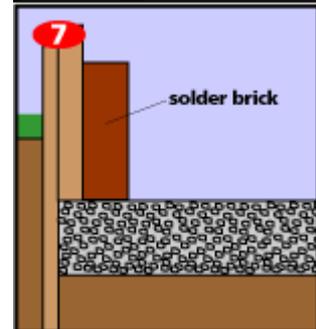
5. Put a layer of gravel about 4 inches thick in the bed and tamp it down. Again, be sure that the level of the gravel is even as appropriate to your project.



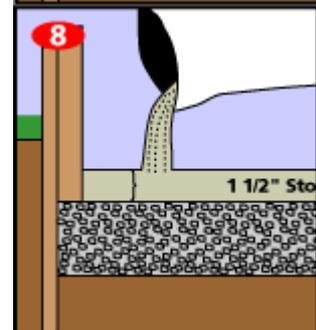
6. Secure the wooden strapping to the stakes using wood screws to define the edges of the walkway or patio. If there are curves in the border of the patio or walkway you will need to kerf the strapping. This is accomplished by sawing part way through the wood against the grain about every 1/2-inch. This will allow you to bend the strapping to fit the desired curve. Alternately, there are now plastic forms available to define the edge of your bricks. These stay in the ground and act as a permanent lateral support for the bricks.



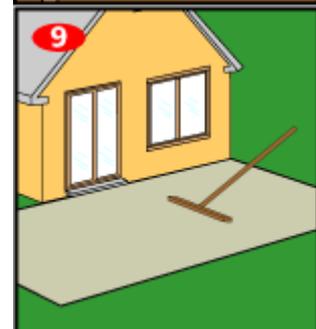
7. If you want to border the patio or walkway with soldier bricks (bricks standing on end face to face) put them in place now along the edge of the strapping.



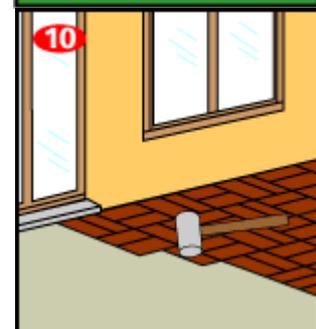
8. Fill the bed with about 1-1/2 inches of stone dust. Stone dust is an excellent underlayment to the bricks, as it will act almost as concrete once it has been wet and dried a few times. Be sure that you account for the depth of your bricks and only lay down enough stone dust to be sure that your bricks are level with the surrounding landscape.



9. Tamp the stone dust, and level it using a strip of wood while keeping it moist with water. Check it every few feet with a level to be sure that you maintain the appropriate curve to your patio.



10. Lay the brick over the stone dust, tamping each brick with a rubber mallet. Brick scars easily so do not use a regular hammer. You have a few alternatives to the pattern that you choose. The easiest and most versatile is the basket weave as it is attractive and easily rounds corners.



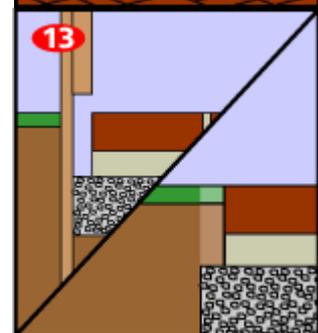
11. Once all of the brick is in place, spread another layer of stone dust over the brick and carefully sweep it into the cracks between the bricks and along the edge.



12. Spray water over the brick to secure them in the stone dust. The stone dust will harden much like concrete over time.



13. Leave the wooden strapping in place for at least a week to allow the walkway or patio time to settle. Carefully remove the strapping by pulling it straight out. Fill in the hole with topsoil and seed to replenish the grass next to the brick.



SHOP LIST

Materials List

Bricks
Wooden stakes - 2 feet long
1x3 wooden strapping
Drywall screws
Gravel Stone dust

Tools List

Shovel (flat edged shovel is best)
Hand saw
Broom
Level
Garden hose
Tamper
Rubber mallet
Screw gun