



DIY START TO FINISH PATIO CHEATSHEET

**BASED ON
BRITISH PAVING STANDARDS**

DIY
Start to Finish
Patio
Cheat Sheet

for porcelain, sandstone and other natural stone pavings

Introduction

There are endless tutorials available online to teach you how to lay paving slabs as a first timer so it doesn't make any sense to create a thick 100-page detailed e-book to explain you the same things again but there are some absolutely important things that needs to be highlighted separately - like if these these 20% of things done right could bring 80% of the results.

Also, even with all these tutorial videos and articles, at the end of the day, you don't have definitive answers to your questions like how deep to dig out in particular ground conditions, how much sub-base is enough under paving, mortar mix ratio to use, etc. which creates the requirement of something to point you in the right direction.

The main focus of this cheat sheet is to how you can take "belt and braces" approach to give yourself the best chance to get the best outcome off of your DIY project and to make sure it not only looks good from outside but has that stability and strength inside to last for years and years to come.

There are some small things that you won't think of otherwise, which will only do good than harm for you and your project which we'll discuss in this cheat sheet.

Contents

Phase 1. Excavation

- Some things to know about laying patios to better plan the job as DIYer according to your time.
- How to determine the depth of the ground you need to dig?

Phase 2. Sub-base

- Why is the sub-base the most important for a patio?
- Is geotextile membrane really required under sub-base (P.S. It's not to prevent the weeds)?
- Little opportunities we DIYers have throughout the job for better results.
- Right sub-base materials and quantity to order.
- Is 100mm Mot type 1 whacked enough to lay paving on? (P.S. It's not enough for everyone.)
- How to compact the sub-base the right way (even more accurately as a DIYer).

Phase 3. Mixing the mortar

- There isn't the perfect mortar mix but there's something that you should know.
- What you should know about using additives like SBR, plasticiser, washing-up liquid, etc. in your mix.

Phase 4. Laying the slabs

- How to give slabs the best chance to bond to mortar bed?
- Using homemade VS ready-mixed priming slurry (why ready-mix primer is truly a blessing for DIYers?).
- Some things to absolutely know once you lay the slabs.
- How to use sponge and a bucket of water to save yourself from headache.

Phase 5. Grouting and other things

- Major types in grouting options and many things to know.
- To seal or not to seal (why, when and how).

* Useful resources *

Some of the best places online to get direct help for your DIY project literally from experts in the trade.

Phase 1. Excavation

There are certain things that goes under the paving slab for it to last for which the ground needs to be excavated or dug out to maintain the finished height of the patio (which usually is 150mm below DPC).

For DIYers who can't get the job done in one shot (most could not), it's absolutely fine to work only on weekends or in several breaks.

Some things to know so you can better plan the job

You can get the MOT Type 1 down there and compacted now, and choose to lay the slabs much later like after a few weeks or even a month.

This is just to let you know that you don't have wait to see the actual progress for the following reasons. Till the time you could have a nice enough sub-base which contains the main strength of a patio or paving.

- ❖ You haven't yet finalised which slabs to lay.
- ❖ Your order has been delayed.
- ❖ For some reason, you might need to replace the slabs

If you're yet to order pavings slabs

Most preferred paving supplier:

There are many but some are just absolutely top-notch when it comes to the services.

- ❖ London Stone, especially for porcelain
- ❖ Paving Stone Direct apart from London Stone if you're looking for more variations.

Make sure, you've got 10% more slabs than you intend to lay. For example, if you're laying 20m², the quantity to order is 22m² as allowance for cuts.

If you've already got the paving slabs, one thing that you should check is the batch numbers on the pallets.



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