

Laying your Patio

A full guide on how to **lay your own patio.**

So you can sit back and enjoy the luxuries at a **fraction of the labour costs.**

For assistance on what materials to use please call our sales depot on **01778 42 66 77.**

Or visit **www.branchbros.co.uk.**

Step by Step Guide on How to Lay a Patio

Tools you may need

- Pegs and Line
- Spade and Shovel
- Tape Measure
- Spirit Level
- Long Board (or a long spirit level)
- Disc Cutter (if slabs need to be cut)
- Rubber Mallet
- Trowel

Preparing the Ground

Firstly the ground needs marking out to scale with pegs and line so it is clear what area needs to be dug out. This area needs to be clear of all vegetation.

Dig out the marked area to a depth of at least 100 – 125mm (4 - 5") and pack down the soil at the bottom to help create a level base for the patio.

Creating the Base and laying the Pavers

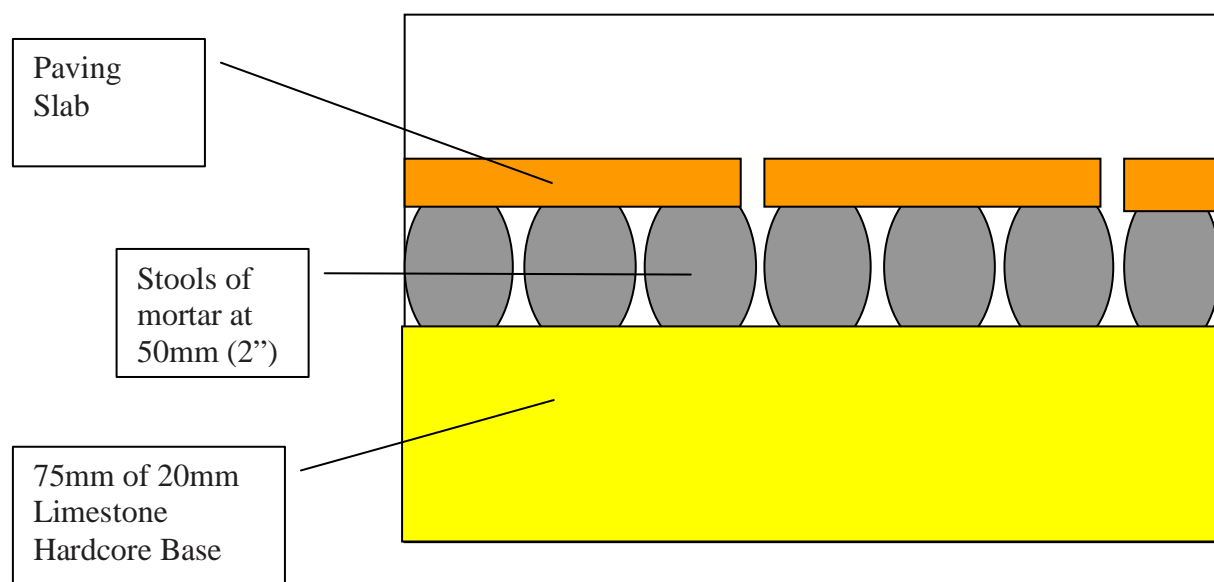
Once the ground has been dug out and is compacted, the base can then start to be laid.

Apply a minimum of 50mm (2") (may need to be thicker depending on the softness of the ground) of 20mm limestone hardcore into the area and compact the hardcore down thoroughly to ensure it leaves a flat, level and solid base. (Our aggregate calculator can be used to work out approximately how much hardcore you need.) It is also recommended at this point to lay out the slabs so that you can position them correctly and minimise the cutting when the slabs are permanently laid.

Steps to making your Patio

On top of the base of hardcore a layer of mortar needs to be applied to give a strong adhesive for the slabs to be put onto. This layer needs to be laid in conjunction to the slabs to ensure that the mortar bonds to the pavers properly. A mix of 4:1 of sharp sand and cement wet mix is usually enough for this mix.

Firstly start of my creating 5 stools of mortar. The size of the stool will depend on the size of the slab. Make sure they are firm enough to hold the weight of the slabs. Put 4 of the stools of mortar on each corner of a slab, then one stool in the centre and place it in the correct position on the area. Make sure the stools of mortar are big enough to cover most of the slab underneath squashed down to about 50mm (2"). Use a spirit level to make sure that it is completely level then gently put the first slab down and tap it gently into place with a rubber mallet. Remember to always check that the slabs are being laid completely level. Please use the diagram provided as a reference on how to lay the mortar.



Continue to lay the slabs this way by laying the slabs on dabs of mortar. Regularly check the slabs as they are being laid to make sure they are level throughout. Wooden spacers can be used to ensure the slabs are the same distance apart from each other.

Once you come to the end of the area you may well find that some of the slabs need to be cut. Use an angle grinder to cut the slab accordingly. Marking a line on the slab with pencil or chalk can help getting an accurate cut.

When the cut slabs are laid you should now have a level patio that's starting to look pretty good. There are still a few steps left.

Pointing the Patio

Leave the patio to dry for a few days to allow the mortar to set onto the slabs. Then the finishing touches can be added such as the pointing.

There are two main different methods of putting the pointing in.

The first method you can make a wet mix of building sand and cement and very carefully use a thin trowel to push the mortar into the gaps between the slabs. This is an effective method but can be very difficult to complete without staining the slabs.

The second method is using a product called geofix. Geofix is a special compound that comes in a vacuum sealed bag. To use it the bag is split, then the powder inside the bag is brushed into the gaps and the geofix is air cured so it sets itself. This method is much easier, lasts longer but it is more expensive.

Once you have done the pointing, leave again for a few days to either let the mortar dry or the geofix cure. Once this has been complete the patio is finished and ready to be used. Please read our article "Maintaining your Patio" to see details about keeping your patio clean and sealing your patio.

Things to Remember

- If the patio is next to the house, make sure the area is dug 150mm below the damp proof course of the house. The patio should be laid so that the water runs away from the house.
- The mortar mix should not be wet like porridge; it should be firm enough to support the slabs weight. If it is not possible to get 150mm below the house damp proof course, make sure a small area is left between the patio and the house; fill it with small gravel to allow it to drain water away from the house.
- No batch of slabs are exactly the same colour, make sure that the packs of slabs are mixed together to get a consistent shade of colours throughout the patio.
- Not all manufacturers recommend laying the slabs in a dab in each corner method. This is true however this method is quite adequate for use on patio that is only going to be walked on and not drove on.