



WORKMANSHIP  
**MATTERS**

**UNILOCK**<sup>®</sup>  
DESIGNED TO CONNECT.

# WHAT CAN GO WRONG WITH A **SIMPLE PAVING JOB?**

**The edges of this project are failing and pavers are drifting apart**

- Edge restraint is absent or not secured properly
- Base wasn't extended beyond project edge



**Weeds are appearing**

- Paver drift makes joint vulnerable
- Old fashioned joint material easily washes away

**Project is settling because the base was poorly constructed**

- Excavation wasn't deep enough
- Use of poor quality materials that don't drain
- Insufficient compaction

**THIS CAN BE AVOIDED!** The long term performance of a paver project depends on **high quality workmanship** below the surface.

# CONSTRUCTION 101

## EXCAVATION

The first step in any paver construction project is **EXCAVATION**. The depth of excavation will depend on two factors:



- The type of soil in your area - Clay soil will require deeper excavation; sandy soil will require less.
- How your paver surface will be used - Heavy loads like driveways and retaining walls require deeper excavation; Lighter loads like patios and walkways require less.

## GRAVEL BASE

Once the excavation is complete, the area will be filled with an appropriate **GRAVEL BASE**. Your soil type and the intended use of the space will influence the mix of base materials chosen. This material needs to be:



- Strong enough to handle the load of whatever is placed on the surface
- Free draining so that water moves away from the surface
- Extended at least six inches beyond the edges of the finished paver surface

- Compacted in several layers, using the proper equipment

A base that is designed and installed properly will ensure that your paver driveway won't sink in the places where you park your car, and won't shift out of place with the freeze thaw cycles of the four seasons.

**REMEMBER** - When it comes to hiring a contractor, the **lowest price is rarely the best choice**. When comparing one contractor's project estimate to another, **make sure you're comparing apples to apples** in terms of installation methods, materials and the level of service provided.

## BEDDING MATERIAL



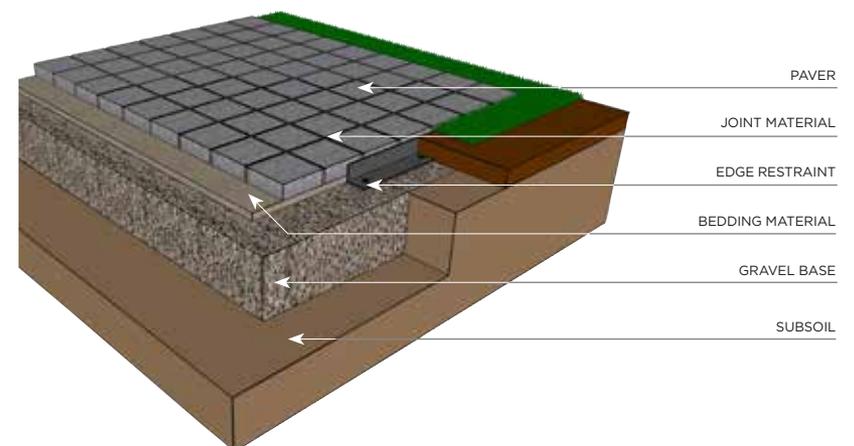
The next phase of construction is a layer of sand or small chip aggregate. The right **BEDDING MATERIAL**, installed at the right depth is vital to the performance of your pavement. It allows water to quickly drain through the gravel base below and provides a nice smooth surface on which pavers can be laid.

## EDGE RESTRAINT



Once the pavers are laid, an **EDGE RESTRAINT** secured with long metal spikes is used to prevent perimeter pavers from drifting away from the edge.

Finally, a **JOINT MATERIAL** is used to fill the spaces between the pavers. This joint material plays an important role in further locking the pavers in place, as well as keeping weeds and other debris out. There are several types of joint material to choose from.



# WHAT DOES GREAT WORKMANSHIP LOOK LIKE?

This driveway was **built properly in 1998** and still looks great...



- Pavers have not 'drifted' apart in spite of vehicle weight and wheels turning
- Edge restraint is still in place
- Jointing compound has kept weeds out

*Photo taken in 2015*

## CUTTING CORNERS

A great contractor will pay close attention to the details, in paver placement and cutting so that joints are even and aesthetically appealing.



A border with excellent cuts



Remarkable attention to detail

**REMEMBER** - A quality project is built upon a solid foundation. For this reason, we recommend **hiring a professional contractor.**

# FINDING A GREAT CONTRACTOR

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

How long has the contractor been installing pavers and walls? Has the contractor installed projects like yours in the past? If you're considering unique features like a retaining wall, a fire feature, a grill island, a raised patio or a water feature, **has the contractor done this kind of project before?** If so, can they provide photos?

## BASE PREPARATION

The longevity of your project relies on proper base preparation. What are the contractor's base preparation methods? What materials are used, and why? Is there a standard procedure for base preparation or will the contractor assess your site's unique needs?

## DESIGN

A contractor's portfolio of prior work can give you a great sense of their design approach. Does the contractor offer a design service or will the contractor expect to get the design from you? Is there a cost for this? Are the contractor's designs something you would like for your project?

## WORKMANSHIP

Ask the contractor for addresses of past projects that you can visit. **Pay attention to the details.** Are the pavers laid in a way that minimizes awkward cuts? Has edge restraint been used and is it still in place? Most jobs will look great when they are first completed, so make sure you ask to see projects that are several years old. How long does the contractor guarantee the work? Does the paver manufacturer guarantee the contractor's work?

## DOCUMENTATION

Does the contractor have the proper licensing for their work? Does the contractor have **liability insurance** and are employees covered by Workers Compensation? Will there be permits required for the job, and if so who is responsible to secure them?

## TIMING

Some of the very best contractors book their schedules months in advance. Ask the contractor how far in advance they are booking projects and how long they think your project might take.

# WE'RE INVESTED IN **QUALITY WORKMANSHIP.**

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ASK YOUR **PROFESSIONAL CONTRACTOR**  
ABOUT **UNILOCK.**

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