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How to install pavers by Ari Weil

Article published on June 1st 2012 | Home Improvement

Pavers are an attractive and easy addition to any outdoor living space. They are an affordable means of enhancing the natural beauty in any landscape. Installing pavers is an easy task, with the right tools, knowledge and preparation. For the right homeowner, installing your own pavers is a way to achieve the look you want while cutting down on the price at the same time. Be warned though, installing pavers takes planning, careful preparation and a little time. You may need to buy some tools in order to complete the job, it may be possible to rent what you need from the local rent-all.

Tools you will need include a shovel, wheel barrow, stakes, string, level, compactor, paver saw, rubber mallet and hammer. These tools can easily be found at any hardware store or rental outlet. Once you assemble the tools you will need to measure the area that is going to be covered by pavers. These dimensions will help you estimate the amount of materials you will need when you pick up your pavers, gravel and sand. While waiting for your materials to be delivered you can start prepping the area that is going to be paved. Check you measurements carefully, taking into account a few inches extra on each side.

Carefully remove any topsoil. Remember, you are trying to create a level surface for the pavers to sit on. Hilly or sloped areas will need to be graded in order to lay a level patio but walkways and stairs can be easily built. Dig down three inches below the level you want your pavers to sit. The corner or edge furthest from your house should be 1/4 to 1/2 inch lower than the side nearest your home. Fill the bottom with 3 inches of gravel, using the level and a 2x4 to make sure it is even and gently sloping away from the house. Now is the time to begin using the compactor, compact the gravel until the surface is tight and flat. You can easily rent a hand operated compactor for the day.

Once the gravel is compacted add a layer of sand 1â€• thick. Use the compactor again and go over the sand, pushing it into the gravel. Use the level to make sure your surface is even and sloping the direction you want it to. It's easier to fix any issues now than it will be later. Depending on the type of pavers you are using you may or may not want to install edging. Edging is plastic or wood-and-wire trim that goes along the edge of paved surfaces add to their look and durability. If you are using edging lay it along the ling you are going to start paving first. Usually this is a line perpendicular to the house. If you are installing a curved edged, lay the edging along the curve and lay the tiles into as you cut them. You can install the edging along the other sides as you get to them.

Now you are ready to install your pavers. Start with a straight row perpendicular to your home and go out along the edging to the outer border of your project. Be careful to keep the row straight. Install a couple of more rows, alternating the pavers per individual instructions. Once you have a few rows you can install the edging along the outside border. Continue laying pavers until the project is completed. For corners, curves or angled surfaces you may need to cut and trim pavers to fit. For this you will need a paver saw.

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Article Keywords:
Hire the Phx pavers company

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