



INSTALLING PAVERS OVER CONCRETE

Installing pavers for a walkway, patio or even a driveway is easier than you'd think. While the materials can be heavy and sometimes difficult to move into place, the results are short of amazing! The purpose of this flyer is to walk you through the process of laying pavers over a concrete.

To begin, the best way to install pavers is over native dirt. Concrete can vary when it comes to thickness and quality. In addition, the ultimate thickness of the finished surface may be in excess of what you have space for. While "split" or "veneer" type pavers exist to minimize this, it often becomes a challenge. Should you still decide to lay pavers over your concrete, there a couple of ways you can go about it. The first would be to "mortar" them right over the top of your concrete patio. This process will be explained first. The second way would be to cover the concrete with a small amount of base and work from there.

Planning- Regardless of method of installation, the first step involves planning for your walkway, patio or driveway. We will assume your concrete slab is relatively level and sloped just slightly. You will want to sketch your project and come to McShane's with dimensions so we can determine the material you need. You will need to consider your pattern and paver size to get an accurate amount of material. It is always nice to chose a paver size and a pattern that minimizes the number of cuts you'll need to make. Once your materials and pattern are finalized, you can lay out your job. Use string and stakes to make your outline, and then spray paint to mark the edges. Keep in mind that the more curves you have in your design, the more pavers you will need to cut. You'll have to decide if the aesthetics make up for the extra work.

Mortar on Concrete- Should you choose to install your pavers using mortar over the concrete, the first step is to clean the existing concrete. You will want to do this with a pressure washer and even Muriatic Acid should the concrete be very weathered. Scrubbing and a thorough rinsing is recommended. The next step involves preparation and installation of the mortar. Utilizing a five gallon bucket will give you a good the best mixture and something easy to carry it in. The mortar should be applied $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch thick directly to the concrete. Lay your paving stones down on top of this layer of mortar according to your selected pattern. You'll want to space them no further than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart.

Work quickly, and measure your progress every 5 feet with your level to make sure that your patio is indeed leveled correctly. Assuming your slab is leveled right for drainage you should be okay. You will need to allow the pavers and their mortar to cure for 48 hours. This will allow the mortar to set properly and provide a sturdy base. Once the pavers have cured, you will want to fill the cracks between the pavers with polymeric sand. This is done by pouring a layer over the whole surface of the patio. Using a broom, working very slowly, run the broom over the surface, forcing the sand down into the cracks. This will prevent the bricks from moving, and will provide limited drainage.

Pavers Over Base- The alternative to installing your pavers using mortar over the concrete is to first apply base rock. You'll add 3 to 4 inches of base rock over the concrete and pack it down using a rented compactor. You will want to add water while you are compacting. Some sort of edging is recommended to contain the pavers. Plastic edging is the least conspicuous and is easy to install - just nail it in place using 12" galvanized nails directly into the ground at the edge of your job. Some folks use pressure treated wood as well. Many folks will even pour concrete edging. Once the edging is in place, add the sand or grey fines over your base-rock. You'll need to compact and level it. Now's would be a good time to check to be sure you have a slight grade running to drainage. Make one side of your screed board 1/4" higher than the other and you will be able to smooth the sand surface, while leaving the necessary slope.

Installation- Finally you get to start setting the pavers in, following your pattern. Just lay the pavers onto the surface with the edges touching; don't press them down or they won't be level. Use strings criss-crossed over the pathway to help you align the pavers. Once all the pavers have been laid in, spread sand or stone dust over the surface and sweep it into the seams. Run the compactor over the entire surface to firm up the walkway. Next you'll need to add some more sand to totally fill the seams.

Cleaning & preservation- The final stage will involve washing down your project. Many people choose to "seal" their pavers with Glaze-N-Seal sealer. The pavers will need to be extremely clean and dry prior to application. Depending on the conditions and traffic, periodic reapplication will be necessary. Pavers add significant value to your home. Best of all, they are designed to last a lifetime. Should you have ANY questions, please contact one of the professionals at McShane's Nursery & Landscape Supply for help.