

HOUSING

The
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Observer

Using Paving Materials For Landscaping

Patios, walkways and other paved surfaces add interest and appeal to a home landscape. To endure conditions outdoors these surfaces must withstand the extremes of weather. To meet that requirement there are no better paving materials than brick, stone, concrete, wood and asphalt.

The creative use of these durable surfaces integrates a home with its garden for natural harmony. Paved surfaces around your house do more than provide secure footing. They define landscape boundaries and create the exterior floorplan of your house. Walkways lead visitors to your front and back doors and point out the way to a garden or shed. A driveway outlines the parking area while it directs traffic to the garage.

A lovely green lawn needs watering, fertilizing and mowing on a regular basis and a healthy garden requires a routine of weeding and nurturing. For anyone interested in a no or low maintenance home landscape, paved surfaces are a viable option.

There is a wide variety of paving materials to choose from and it is a good idea to look to the style of your house for guidance. For example, a brick patio attached to a stately colonial complements the architecture

while a less formal winding stone walkway is well suited for a cape cod.

When paving large areas the cost of the material is a factor. Brick and stone are attractive materials but are relatively expensive when compared to bark chips, gravel or asphalt.

How the material is installed is another consideration. Materials like wood rounds are light and easy to place and replace. Even though they are heavy bricks can be moved individually or in small amounts and set easily in a bed of sand.

The preparation of the ground or 'bed' for laying any type of paving materials is the most important element of a successful paving project. No matter what material you choose to use, the walk, patio or garden border will be only as good as the foundation it is laid on.

Sand or gravel are the easiest to use material for constructing a sub-base because they level easily and provide a smooth compacted surface.

For a long lasting surface the material should be laid on a slightly pitched base that provides proper drainage. When a paved surface runs alongside a building it should be sloped away from it so there is natu-

ral drainage of the roof run off water. This keeps the basement dry.

By combining different paving surfaces you can create a dramatic landscape.

Large paving units such as brick or stone arranged in a design with visible joints can be set in cement, sand or fine gravel and stones.

One of the most popular methods is to set brick or stone in a dry mortar base. Working with dry mortar is easier than wet mortar because you can take your time arranging the pavers without worrying about the mortar setting up. A light wetting and ground moisture will cause the mortar to eventually harden into a very solid walk.

A less permanent but easier method is to lay pavers on a sand base with loose sand filling in all the joints. The advantage to this technique is that the pavers can be repositioned.

For best results use two or three elements, any more results in a hodge-podge effect. It is better for a design to incorporate a large spread of two materials than cut up an area with patches of small dissimilar patterns and materials.

Look at your house for inspiration when choosing paving materials to

create a sense of harmony. Edging a walkway in a brick similar to that used in your house is an effective treatment, so is laying a bed of pebbles that blends with the color of the roof or shutters. You can be dramatic with a contrasting paving material that calls attention to a striking design or detail.

Best Advice:

- Don't be tempted to use salvaged bricks as pavers. They are less expensive than new bricks but will deteriorate and begin to flake when used outdoors. Used bricks may also fracture when exposed to freezing temperatures.

- Use light-colored paving materials to reflect the available light and brighten a heavily shaded area. Light colors give a more spacious feeling to a small area. Conversely to scale down a large patio or area use neutral or dark paving materials.

- Choose colors that blend with the natural setting, not compete or clash with it.

- Use inexpensive plastic sheets that have the brick pattern already embossed into them as a guide when laying brick. These black plastic sheets also prevent weeds from growing between the bricks.

Paving Materials

The most common paving materials of choice are brick, stone and precast concrete pavers, slabs or blocks. All of these are available in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and price ranges.

Bricks: Paving bricks also known as 'pavers' are different from common building bricks because they are denser and harder. They are designed to resist crushing and for extra low water absorption. Bricks are made in increments of 4 inches, basically they measure 4 inches wide by 8 inches long. They can be laid dry in a bed of sand or in a base of mortar.

There are several patterns you can follow to lay out a design of bricks. Some of the most popular are the basketweave, herringbone and running bond. To add interest to the design use a combination of these patterns, one around the edge to outline the area and another pattern in the field. A visit to a brick yard with display panels of various patterns will give you an idea of your choices.

Paving Stones: These come in all shapes and sizes and offer the added dimensions of color and texture. Since it is found everywhere natural stone paving tends to blend well in an informal home landscape.

In most parts of the country you have a wide selection of stone to choose from. Slate, bluestone and sandstone are ideal choices for steps and walkways because they are dense and durable.

Stone is heavy and expensive to transport so some varieties are only available locally.

Paving stones are irregular in size and shape so they require more effort to lay than brick. Granite and other stone blocks are uniform in size and are another good choice.

Concrete: Concrete is one of the

most versatile paving materials because it can be poured into any shape. It can be cast in place with a variety of aggregates in intricate patterns and textural effects and colored to match most settings. It is available in precast blocks, pavers and slabs which come in many sizes, shapes and colors.

Lumber: Woods like cedar, cypress and redwood are naturally resistant to rot and are practical and attractive paving materials. Other species can be preserved or treated chemically to make them resist decay. Railroad ties, pilings and pressure-treated wood are also good choices for outdoor surfaces.

Wood planks or rounds which are slices of large logs can be used alone or combined with other materials like stones to create an interesting paving surface. Pressure treated wood makes an ideal border to contain loose paving materials like stone, gravel or bark chips or as an edger for bricks or concrete.

Asphalt: Asphalt is used primarily for driveways because it is a functional inexpensive paving surface that is easy to maintain. When used for walks it requires a border material.

Gravel: Gravel is a loose natural paving material in the form of pebbles and crushed stone of varying shapes and sizes. Gravel looks best when used with an edging material like wood or brick that contains it in place.

Shredded bark: This material is inexpensive and well suited for an informal walkway or path. It is a soft loose material that requires a retaining edge to keep it from spreading. It is a good choice for the area around the kid's swing set or barbecue grill. Shredded bark needs occasional replenishment because it will decompose over time.

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"Clouds" wall mural in a child's bedroom setting

A full-color brochure showing available WallMurals, and information about local dealers is available by mailing Environmental Graphics, 717 South 5th St., Hopkins, MN 55343. Or call 1-800-328-3869.

Painting Aluminum Siding

Metal siding such as aluminum or steel is touted as being maintenance free, i.e., 'never' needing painting. Aluminum siding of itself is corrosion-free, but the paint coating will degrade in time. Aluminum siding finish is usually warranted for 20 years or more, but the day will come when the siding will need repainting.

Most premium-quality acrylic latex house paints are also recommended for use on aluminum siding. Check the label to be sure before selecting any particular product. Pittsburgh Paint, for example, not only recommends their exterior latex for use on aluminum, they also offer a full range of original siding colors, so you can repaint the siding in the exact same

color as the original, if you wish.

First use a cleaner, such as DEKWOOD, to clean away dulled and chalked paint from the siding. Follow label directions for application of the cleaner. The result may be a dull but clean siding finish.

If the siding is clean but dull, and the old paint film is intact, try clearcoating the aluminum siding.

I tried this technique on my own aluminum siding and the results were remarkable. At worst, the clear coat will make a good base coat for applying a new coat of paint.

If only paint will renew your siding, use any major brand of acrylic latex paint, applied as per label instructions

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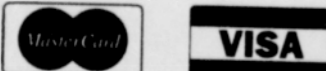
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COMMISSION MEETING

Date: July 17, 1996
Place: PDC
1120 SW 5th Ave., Suite 1100
Commission Conf. Room
Portland, Oregon
Time: 9:00 a.m.

Commission meetings are open to the public. A complete agenda is available at PDC or by calling 823-3200. Citizens with disabilities may call 823-3232 or TDD 823-6868 for assistance at least 48 hours in advance.

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