

## How to lay paving slabs

First you will need a good base, most popular being hard or soft sand.

Spread dry sand across the hardcore mix needs to be half an inch deep. Use a brick laying trowel for spreading the sand, making channel rows in the sand with the point of the trowel. This makes it levelling up and laying easier.

Lay the slab gently not to disturb the bed beneath.

Tap down the slab on all 4 sides. This can be done with a laying hammer or the handle of a normal hammer.

If you are laying a patio, be careful to ensure the grade runs away from the wall as this will mean any rain water will run towards the drain. Use a level on the side where the water is to run down, and tap down the slab until it moves slanted towards the drain.

Ensure the air bubble on the leveller is on the line, making sure not to fall in between the line and become flat. This must be consistent with all the slabs to create the same grade.

Make sure the slab is firmly in place, and use more sand if required to keep it sturdy. Always recheck the level when packing the sand around.

When laying the slab there are two main ways:

If the products have a square edge or are machine cut they can be laid so they line up. If they are natural edges which have been hand chiselled you may want to leave a 10mm gap for aesthetics and movement of the pieces.

*Tip! If you are leaving a gap use the same sand colour between slabs as the slab itself.*

The alternative way of laying paving slabs is with traditional grout and adhesive. This method can be used if the base you have is a thick concrete area, like a driveway. You can simply use tile adhesive and grout - the best products for these are flexible adhesive and flexible grout, as these can move with the slabs as they expand and contract with varying weather conditions.

Also, remember to use a full thick layer of adhesive. The dot and dab method usually used will only create air pockets under the slab and make them more susceptible to cracking, particularly when large weight is applied. Always use sealants for grouting as this protects and seals against any water or chemical damage.