



Best practice paving method:

1. Excavate and prepare the base course

Remove all top soil and excavate to the required depth (depth required should take into account paver thickness suited to application and base course thickness relative to application and soil conditions). Bring to level using base course material. The base course should comprise of granular material with hard durable particles free from organic material, fill in and compact in layers of no more than 100mm and compact to a uniform dense condition, especially around manholes and kerbs. If the texture of the finished base course would allow bedding sand to drain through, seal the base course with a fine shingle i.e. GAP7 before proceeding. The finished base course should match the exact contour chosen for the final paving, within a tolerance of +0 to -10mm at any point

2. Prepare the sand base

Bedding sand provides support for the pavers but will not hide irregularities in the base course or sub-grade. It should be well-graded and damp, but not wet. Only spread enough sand for the pavers you'll lay in one session. Store sand for later use in a covered pile to maintain its moisture level. Use runners and straight edges to aid screeding. The final compacted sand depth once the pavers are laid out should be 30mm. Start with 35 to 40mm to achieve the desired sand thickness. Since the degree by which your sand compacts will vary, experiment with a paver and rubber mallet to see what depth will produce a 30mm compacted layer.

3. Lay the pavers

Starting from the straightest convenient edge, start laying your pavers in accordance with your chosen pattern. Avoid laying downhill if possible. Maintaining a joint of 2-4mm between pavers is essential to allow sand penetration and paving performance. If you need to cut pavers for edge filling, use a concrete saw or paving splitter (available from hire centres) or a bolster chisel for smaller areas. Keep vehicles off the paved area until complete and if a loaded wheelbarrow has to cross it, lay timber running boards. Edge restraints add strength by preventing sideways movement of pavers. Where present, existing paths or structures will suffice, but if not, edge restraints must be laid. A typical edge restraint is 'haunching', where the outer pavers are held by concrete, starting approximately half way down the side of the pavers and angled downwards at 45 degrees to a further depth of 100mm. Haunching should be undertaken after compaction. Use a temporary constraint until the haunching is in place.



4. Compact the pavers

For smaller areas use a rubber mallet to compact. For larger areas use a plate compactor, available from most hire centres. A minimum of 3 passes each at 90° is recommended. Extra care must be taken when compacting Chancery Pavers, Courtyard Flagstones, Palermo Pavers, Grass Pavers or Gobi Blocks. Carpet may be required when compacting these pavers to help prevent them from cracking. Alternatively a rubber mallet may be used. Contact Firth Information Service on 0800 800 576 for more information. Once the pavers are laid and all cuts placed, sweep dry joint sand such as Dricon PaveSand™ or Dricon PaveLock® (following the instructions on the bag)* into the joints. Go over with a plate vibrator and repeat the process until all joints are filled. Grass Pavers and Gobi Blocks don't require jointing sand, Once compacted into place, spread topsoil and sow grass seed or for a different look fill the voids with decorative pebbles. * If used in damp conditions or not swept clean, surface contamination (staining) may result. Please try a small area first.



5. Finishing touches

Joints in pavements with a high traffic volume will seal quite quickly and little further maintenance will be necessary. For areas such as patios or paths where pavers may be vacuum cleaned or washed regularly, joints may need periodic topping up. To maintain a 'just laid' look, a variety of sealers are available on the market. Talk to your local Firth Paving distributor about the paving sealers they stock. Unsealed paving will weather naturally making colours appear less intense.

***All paving should be laid as per NZS 3116:2002. The above is a guideline only. For more information please contact Firth Customer Services on 0800Firth1 (0800 800 5760).**