

Our useful how to lay a patio circle laying guides will give you all the information you need to install our range of circle kit paving products, if you choose to do-it-yourself.

Ensure you read our advice before beginning work on your new design project - this will mean you are fully prepared and have everything to hand, ready to complete your perfect garden.

Materials and tools you need:

Always lay paving on a full bed of mortar to allow for the varying thickness of the paving stones.

All in one ballast, building and sharp sand is available from your stockist and they will be able to advise quantities.

Ensure you are wearing appropriate safety protection throughout your task. Wet mortar can burn exposed skin, so make sure you're wearing suitable gloves and long sleeves to protect your arms.

TOOLS YOU NEED

- A pair of trowels including a pointing bar
- String building line
- Long spirit level
- Rubber mallet
- Spade/tools for digging out
- Mixer

STEP 1: CIRCLE POSITIONING

Lay the patio circle pieces out on the ground leaving a 10-15mm jointing gap between each flag to check the final position and layout.

Then mark the centre and the shape with a sand line, leaving an extra 150mm for working space.

STEP 2: GROUND PREPARATION

Clear away all the grass and topsoil and dig out the foundations. If the circle is next to a building, then the finished circle must be at least 150mm below the damp proof course.

Dig out to approximately 300mm for the paving/foundations. When digging out, to ensure water cannot collect beside buildings, allow a slight fall away.

The fall should be at least 1:80 which means a difference of 25mm over a 2m distance. This should be invisible to the naked eye.

STEP 3: LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Cover the entire area with a sub base - we recommend using an MOT type 1 granular material or a semi-dry foundation mix of 6 parts all in ballast to 1 part cement.

Lay the crushed stone or ballast mix to a minimum depth of at least 100mm and then thoroughly compact it to a minimum depth of 75mm.

STEP 4: MORTAR MIX

Next prepare the mortar mix using 6 parts sharp sand to 1 part cement. This should be mixed to a damp, but not sloppy, consistency. Using a plasticiser will make the mortar more workable.

STEP 5: LAYING THE CIRCLE

Start at the centre and work outwards laying each concentric circle in order. Leave a 10mm-15mm jointing gap between each piece.

Spread out between 25mm and 40mm depth of mortar to cover the area of the piece you are laying and ruffle the surface of the mortar. Place each piece onto the mortar bed, tapping down with a rubber mallet.

Check your levels with a spirit level for each piece.

Once all the paving is laid, avoid walking on it for 24 hours.

If the circle or octagon is being laid as a feature within a paved area, use the corner accessories to square up to the paving. It's usually wise to lay a few courses of standard paving before you start laying your squaring off kit as this will help avoid cutting at the edges.

STEP 6: POINTING

The final step is to point all the joints including the false ones in the centre, if there are any.

Use a jointing mortar of 3 to 1 mix, which is 3 parts building sand to 1 part cement. Mix the mortar slowly, adding a little water at a time to get a smooth consistency. The mortar should be damp, not wet or sloppy.

Simply trowel the mortar into the joints, pressing it down and smoothing over using a pointing bar, taking care to avoid getting mortar on the surface of the paving slab.

Any surplus can be scraped off, but it's often best to leave this for a few hours until the mortar has started to harden.

That's job done - as a quick reminder, follow our 4 tips for success to create the perfect patio circle.

- Always dry lay the circle first to check position and measurements
- Create a good solid base
- Lay the circle from the middle out
- Check your levels and fall frequently to make sure you stay on track