

# Paving stone (flooring)

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An interlocking concrete **paver** is a multi-shaped, multi-colored piece of concrete commonly used in exterior hardscaping applications. Developed in Europe and introduced into the United States in the early 1970's, Interlocking Concrete Paving Stones offer an alternative to plain concrete or asphalt. Installed over a compacted stone sub-base and a leveling bed of sand, concrete paving stones can be used for walkways, patios, pool decks and driveways. Their 8000 psi compressive strength make concrete paving stones a more durable choice than clay bricks.



Concrete paver blocks laid in a circular pattern

Interlocking pavers are available in a wide range of shapes, so one isn't bound to using different sized squares that mimic European cobblestone. For instance, a diagonal arrangement of rectangular tiles might create a herringbone pattern. Hexagons fit tightly together, as well.



Concrete paver blocks laid in a rectangular pattern

Instead of connecting the pavers by pouring grout between the joints, as one would with tiles, sand particles are spread over the pavers and tamped down. The sand stabilizes the interlocking pavers, yet allows for some flexibility. In other words, this type of pavement will absorb stress such as small earthquakes, freezes and thaws, and slight ground erosion by shifting each tile slightly. Therefore, they will not crack or buckle like concrete.

The only special tool needed for installing interlocking pavers is a vibrating machine called a tamper. This actually vibrates the tiny spheres of sand until they are at their most compact. The sand doesn't easily wash out with rain or garden hose water. You can opt for an additional sealer, but many interlocking pavers come pre-sealed. A driveway especially benefits from a sealer, as oil and tire marks won't stain. Sealing is meant to protect pavers from the elements (i.e. rain, sun etc...) and anything foreign that were to fall on them. It creates an invisible barrier on top of the pavers that repels water, oil, and anything else you might accidentally drop on your driveway or pool deck, so long as you wash it clean as soon as you spot it. Sealing also preserves the pavers' natural beauty for years to come.

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