



Nancy and Pierre Moitrier

Paving Design and Construction 101

Take your garden to the next level with the addition of a walkway or terrace. These hardscape elements are necessary for the functionality and organization of every property. During the dormant season, plants are cut back, revealing the skeleton of the garden. Topography of the site and drainage patterns are more visible, and the potential for improvements becomes obvious.

CONSIDER DESIGN

- Walkways and terraces provide the perfect opportunity to emphasize and echo the style of your home or can be used to redefine a home with lackluster style.
- Geometric walkways exude a crisp, formal ambiance while meandering pathways evoke a more naturalistic feel.
- For cohesion, use no more than three types of hardscape materials. Examples of complementary combinations are (1) bricks, linear-cut bluestones, and cobblestones for formal settings or (2) irregular bluestones, boulders, and rounded steppingstones for informal settings. Remember to include materials already present in your home's construction within this number.
- Walkways or terraces should be scaled in relation to their intended use and proportionally to their surroundings. Consider primary versus secondary paths.
- Hardscape elements are impervious and rain falling on your property should infiltrate mainly on your property. Follow county-specific best management practices for storm water, which define the limits of impervious surfaces.

BASIC CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES

- A solid foundation is paramount to keep things working as intended in terms of aesthetics, function, and safety.
- There are two primary types of foundations: construction gravel with stone dust or concrete with cement. Both options are good and will depend on the situation.
- A concrete foundation will cost about three times more than a construction gravel foundation but will result in a longer-lasting final product.
- Concrete foundations require cement joints which will keep weeds at bay, while construction gravel foundation stone dust-filled joints will allow weeds to grow.
- Positive drainage away from structures is critical. A minimum pitch, or slope of 2% (equal to 1/4" per foot of run) is necessary.
- Walkways and terraces should be elevated 3" to 5" above existing grade for water shedding and to allow for soil and mulch to build up over time.

Done well, walkways and terraces are a home improvement and an investment that you won't regret. 🌱

NANCY AND PIERRE MOITRIER operate *Designs for Greener Gardens*, a boutique gardening company that specializes in designing, creating, developing, and maintaining distinctive gardens of all styles. Pierre hails from France and brings the charm of the Old World to their garden creations. Nancy's 40 years of gardening experience combined with her design knowledge and innate artistic eye add a superior dimension to their garden projects. Follow *Designs for Greener Gardens* on Facebook.

