

HOW TO BUILD A SHED BASE



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A wooden portabase is more than enough to support this 48 square foot shed.



A paving slab base can be extended into a full patio area.



A solid concrete slab base is best for a heavier shed or log cabin.

INTRODUCTION



A solid, level base is essential to maintain the structure of your shed



Why do I need to install a base?

A base provides a sturdy, level platform for your shed, and prevents rot by stopping groundwater seeping into the bearers.

Install your shed on an uneven surface and the timbers will flex. As a result, screw holes and joints may not line up, and once you've assembled your shed, you might find the doors and windows don't shut properly.

A sturdy base also stops your shed subsiding over time, helping it last longer.

Using floor bearers to raise your shed a few centimetres from the base will also help to protect your shed from damp by allowing air to circulate.



Building on a strong, even base ensures years of hassle-free use.



An inadequate base damages your shed.

SHED LOCATION



Ensuring you have clear access to all sides of your shed makes installation and maintenance easier

think about the following points:

Terrain: Level the site. The flatter it is to begin with, the easier the job will be.

Access: For ease of access during construction and for maintenance afterwards, including regular wood treatment, try to leave a 3ft gap between your shed and any surrounding walls. This also lets the building 'breathe', reducing damp and the potential for rot.

Natural Light: What will you use your shed for and how much natural light do you want or

need? Site your shed accordingly – remember – direct sunlight soon turns a shed into an oven.

Electrical Supply: If you plan to install electricity, take the location of the supply into consideration when choosing your site.

Planning Permission: Most sheds don't require planning permission, but if you're not sure, our [guide to planning permission](#) contains plenty of useful information as well as links to the relevant planning bodies.



For many garden sheds, a wooden base is sufficient - but check the weight of the shed and its contents.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT BASE



Choose your shed foundation based on the shed size and weight when in use - as well as your personal preference

Once you've chosen a site, you're ready to choose a base. Here are your options.

Portabase

Suitable for garden sheds and playhouses

Install a Portabase on a concrete surface, or straight onto the ground.



A fully assembled portabase with a shed floor installed.

Concrete slab base

Suitable for all garden buildings

A concrete slab is the most permanent option.

You need to be competent at DIY to tackle this project. If you're not, it's best to employ a builder or landscaper.



A concrete slab is the most solid base, even for a small building.

Paving slab base

Suitable for all garden buildings

Concrete paving slabs are long lasting and easy to install, as long as you prepare the ground properly.



A paving slab base is quick and easy to install.

StopDigging

Suitable for all garden buildings

Installed by a team of professionals, the StopDigging base uses sturdy ground screws to secure and elevate your timber base.



A StopDigging base is installed by dedicated professionals.

PORTABASE



A cut-to-fit Portabase is available to match a selection of popular shed sizes for a perfect fit.

The Portabase is a time and cost-effective base purpose built for garden sheds.

Manufactured from pressure-treated timber, the Portabase provides a rot-resistant platform for your shed.

Because it's supplied with both ground spikes and metal support brackets, a Portabase is equally suitable for garden lawns and hard surfaces.



What you'll need:

- Portabase kit
- Electric drill and screw bit
- Tape measure
- Spirit level
- Hammer



The end goal: a garden shed raised off the ground on a strong, level Portabase.

PORTABASE

Installation process

Step 1

Level the ground ready to receive the Portabase. Arrange the shorter, cross-pieces on the ground, narrow side down.

Cap the ends with the longer timbers to form a grid.



An 8 x 6 Portabase laid out on flat ground ready to assemble.

Step 2

Mark the capping timber where the cross-pieces are to be secured to it. Drill two holes at each point.



Pre-drill holes ready to screw the timbers together.

Step 3

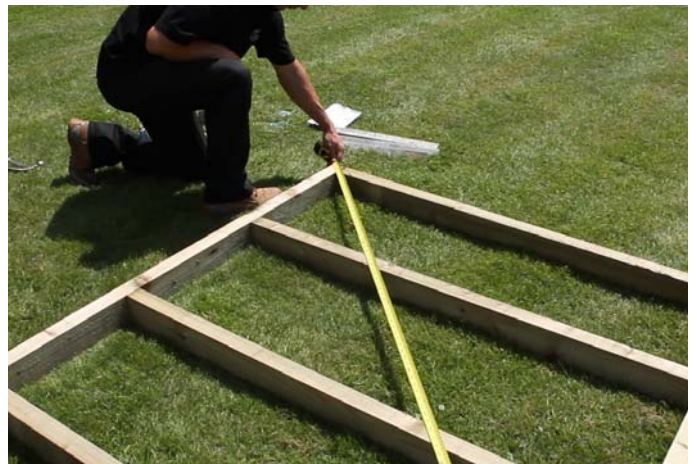
Screw the cross-pieces to the capping timbers using the screws provided. Drill pilot holes to prevent the timbers from splitting.



Screw the frame together.

Step 4

Measure the diagonals. If the base is correctly aligned, both will be the same length. If they're not, secure one corner, then with your hammer, gently tap the frame into alignment.



Measure the base from corner to corner.

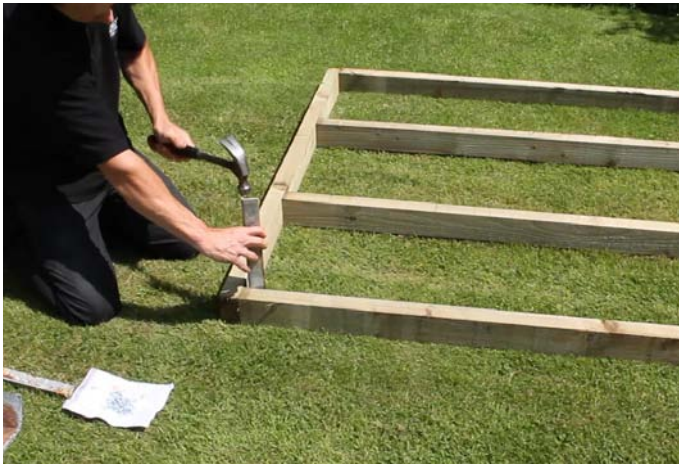
PORTABASE

Step 5

Securing the base

Take each galvanised metal spike and place it flush against the wood inside a corner of the frame. Hammer it into the ground.

If you're installing the Portabase onto solid ground like a patio, follow the instructions provided with the base to attach the metal foundation frame.



Hammer the spikes until flush with the top of the frame.

Step 6

When the top of the spike is level with the frame screw it to the wood.



Secure the timber frame to the ground using the spikes.

Step 7

Place an L plate against the inside of the capping timber close to each of the corners.

Hammer the plate to flatten it against the ground until the top is flush with the timber. Screw the plate to the frame. Repeat for each corner.



The L plates help to keep your building level.

Step 8

Use your spirit level to make sure the frame is level. If it's not, hammer the corner spikes further into the ground as required.



A strong and secure Portabase, ready for your shed.

You now have a stable, level base on which to build your shed.

PAVING SLAB BASE



Paving slabs are a flexible option - either make just a shed base, or extend the area into a patio

Concrete paving slabs make an ideal base for a range of garden buildings. As long as the ground is properly prepared, this is a long-lasting, durable option.

What you'll need:

- Concrete paving slabs
- Hardcore
- Slab fix mortar
- Tape measure
- Set square
- String and pegs
- Spade
- Rake
- Earth rammer
- Spirit level
- Watering can
- Slab spacers
- Rubber mallet
- Brush
- Trowel

Why stop at a base?

A patio is an easy way to add another dimension to your garden, creating a usable space all year round.



A slightly larger storage shed will benefit from the strength a paving slab base gives.

PAVING SLAB BASE

Installation process

Step 1

Level the site, then using the tape measure, pegs and string, mark out the area for the base. Use a builder's set square to check each corner is a 90° angle.

To create a patio area or walkway around your shed or summerhouse, mark out a correspondingly larger area.



Keep measurements accurate and you'll have a better fitting shed base.

Step 2

Remove the turf inside the perimeter, digging out the topsoil to a depth of 10cm for the hardcore, plus 2.5cm for the slab fix mortar, plus the thickness of your paving slabs.

Your paving slabs should sit just below the level of the surrounding turf.



Dig out topsoil a depth of 12.5cm plus the paving slab thickness.

Step 3

Lay the hardcore, rake it level and compact it with your earth rammer. Use your spirit level to check the surface is level.

An uneven or sloping base will weaken the structure of your shed.



Compress your hardcore to create a stable foundation.

Step 4

Starting from one corner, practice-lay the patio slabs to make sure they fit properly. Leave a gap between each slab using off-cuts of ply or patio slab spacers.

When you're happy with the layout, remove the slabs and stack them to the side.



Lay the slabs on dry sand to make sure they fit before fixing them with mortar.

PAVING SLAB BASE



A well-laid paving slab shed base provides a flat, level hardstanding for your garden shed.

Step 5

Spread the slab fix mortar to a depth of 2.5cm. Rake it level, sprinkle with water from a can and rake it level again.

Starting from one corner, lay the concrete slabs, inserting spacers between them.

Bed each slab by tapping it with the rubber mallet, remembering to check each one with the spirit level.

Allow up to 48 hours for the slab fix mortar to harden.

Step 6

Remove the spacers. Sprinkle dry mortar over your shed base brushing it into the gaps between the slabs.

When the gaps are full, brush away any excess mortar, then with a trowel, press the sand / cement mix into the gaps.

Now wet the surface with water sprinkled from your can. Allow to dry – your shed base is ready.



Use a rubber mallet to set each paving stone.



Filling the gaps between the slabs will prevent water and weeds growing between them.

CONCRETE SLAB BASE



A concrete slab is a sturdy and permanent base for a shed

A concrete slab is the most permanent shed base, offering a sturdy foundation or a solid floor for heavy equipment.

Installing this base requires that you have at least competent DIY skills. If you're unsure, we suggest you consider [hiring a professional](#).

What you will need:

- Sand and cement (or ready mixed concrete)
- Tape measure
- Pegs and string
- Set square
- Spade
- Hardcore
- Rake
- Earth rammer
- Timber
- Cement mixer or mixing board
- Wheel barrow
- Tamp board
- Spirit level

How much concrete will I need?

Use the following equation to work out how much concrete you'll need:

Slab depth x Slab width x Slab length

Round decimals up and add 10% contingency – it's better to have too much concrete than not enough.



Make 10% more concrete than you need.



CONCRETE SLAB BASE

Installation process

Step 1

Level the site then using the tape measure, pegs and string, mark out the area for the base. Use a builder's set square to check each corner is a 90° angle.

Check you have the angles correct once you have the pegs and string in place.



Accurate measurement is essential to ensure your shed's integrity.

Step 2

Remove the turf inside the perimeter, digging out the topsoil to a minimum depth of 10cm of hardcore, plus 15cm of concrete.

Add the hardcore, rake it level and compact it with the earth rammer.



Make sure the hardcore is properly compacted.

Step 3

Next, you'll need to build a timber frame to contain the concrete while it sets.

Measure, cut and join the timber, constructing the frame so that the inside measurements match the dimensions of your base.

Measure the diagonals. If they're the same, your base is square, if not, tap the frame into alignment with a hammer. Use a spirit level to check the frame sits level on top of the hardcore.



It's vital that the inside measurements of your frame are the size you want your base to be.

Step 4

Mix the sand and cement, and add water in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Once you're happy with the consistency of your concrete mix, pour it into the timber frame and start to spread it evenly.



Evenly spreading the concrete mix gives you a flatter base.

CONCRETE SLAB BASE



A wooden plank is the perfect tool for evening the concrete's surface

Step 5

Spread the concrete within the space until it slightly overfills the frame.

Take a straight-edged length of timber, long enough to span the width of your slab and beginning at one end, work it across the surface of the concrete, using a sawing action.

Use a spirit level to ensure you have a level surface.



Check that you have a flat, even surface.

Step 6

Wait for the concrete to set. If it rains, cover it with plastic sheeting. In warm weather, prevent cracking by covering with the surface with damp cloth – dust sheets or sacking work well.

Leave your concrete base to rest for at least three days before removing the timber frame, and installing your garden shed on it.



Leave your new concrete base to set for three days before removing the frame.

STOPDIGGING



The StopDigging team install ground screws to support your shed base

Designed for the freeze-thaw rigours of the Nordic climate, and an excellent solution for hillside gardens, the [StopDigging](#) system is a great way to give your shed a safe foundation.

Installation process

The team of installers use precision landscaping lasers to mark the area, checking for underground obstructions before drilling pilot holes through earth, stones and rock up to 30cm thick.

Next they screw in the ground screws to the required depth.

That's it, you're ready to install your shed base.

Quick, clean and installed by a team of experts, the StopDigging ground screw system offers the perfect foundation solution for garden sheds no matter what the terrain.



The StopDigging system keeps timbers off the ground, increasing the wood's lifespan.



StopDigging is a quick and efficient way to create a wooden shed base.