



How to Build a Sub-Base

Both paving slab and concrete shed bases require the support of a sub-base. This sub-base is made from an MOT type 1 hardcore (consisting of crushed or broken bricks, block and stone) compacted with an earth rammer or a vibrating plate compactor and then topped with a layer of sharp sand or ballast – called blinding – to fill any gaps.

For a paving slab base:

This requires 5cm (approximately 2 inches) of compact hardcore underneath the paving slabs.

For a concrete base:

This requires 7.5cm (approximately 3 inches) of compact hardcore underneath 7.5cm of concrete.

You can dig the base down into the ground (as we have in our example), or have it raised above. If you choose to have your base level with the ground, you will have to excavate the top earth.

For a paving slab base:

This will be about 12cm (5 inches) deep to allow for the sub-base, mortar and paving slabs.

For a concrete base:

This will be about 15 cm (6 inches) deep.

A concrete slab base needs to be installed well in advance to ensure that it has had enough time to set properly before you start erecting the shed.

We recommend that you make your concrete base the same size as the base of your building or 25mm smaller on all sides than the base of the shed - this creates an overhang and prevents water accumulating around the timber floor and runners. Alternatively, you could make it larger and create a step if you prefer.



Step 1

Measure out the site for your sub-base and hammer a peg into each of the four corners.

Run a builder's line from each of the four pegs. This will help you visualise the site.

Use a builder's square to make sure the corners are square before you start excavating. As a final check, measure the diagonals to make sure they are the same.



Step 2

Use an edger to cut into the lawn for a straight cut, and then use a spade to cut the turf into strips, then roll it up and remove.

Save some of the turf in case you need to make good between an existing lawn and the finished base.



Step 3

Dig the area to the correct depth and use wooden marker pegs to mark the finished hardcore level.

Create the wooden pegs by cutting one end of 50 x 50mm pieces of timber into sharp points using a panel saw.

Hammer the pegs into the area until they're flush with the edge of the ground.



Step 4

Tip in enough hardcore to fill your sub-base to just above the top of the pegs.



Step 5

Compact the hardcore with an earth rammer or a vibrating plate compactor, as used here.



Step 6

Cover the surface with a thin coat of sharp sand or ballast and rake it level.