

How to Build a Flagstone Patio

Project Overview

I chose 1-inch-thick Champlain Stone granite flagstones

My lightweight stones needed a multilayer foundation too keep them from shifting

I began by outlining the patio,

digging down several inches

then adding a couple of inches of crushed stone, a couple of inches of sand, and finally the paving stones on top.

Step-by-Step

1. Dig Out the Foundation

Begin by using a square-nose shovel to outline the patio perimeter.

Loosen the soil within and scoop it out,

You're only going down a few inches,

pour more sand over the stones and sweep it into the gaps

use a garden hose to lightly wet the whole patio, rinsing off the stones and settling the sand in place

if the sand seems to disappear completely after the first wetting, just add some more, wet it again, and keep adding it until it forms a firm pack of mortar between the stones

Reference: <http://www.popularmechanics.com/home/how-to-plans/masonry/4315657>

2. Spread the Crushed Stone

use the back side of a garden rake to start spreading an even layer throughout the pit.

Pack the gravel down using a tamper.

3. Sprinkle the Sand

using the back of the garden rake, spread the sand evenly over the gravel.

4. Lay Out the Stones

We put the widest, flattest stones in the main field of the patio, and saved the smaller pieces for the less-trafficked path

Carefully walk over the pieces, or tap them down with a rubber mallet, to settle them firmly in the bed.

5. Fill the Joints