

Build a Base

Choosing the right base for your new garden building is very important. If you do not build the right base it can cause damage and deterioration to both base and building. If the base is not flat and levelled it can cause issues when you start building your garden building, water can collect and cause unwanted damage. This guide will go through a few simple ways to build a base correctly.

THIS GUIDE WILL COVER THE FOLLOWING:

- [Portabase](#)
- [Plastic Base](#)
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Things to consider before building your base:

Access - You will need access to all side of the building during construction, so ensure your base is not built too close to walls or fencing.

Treatment - You will need to treat your wooden garden building annually. Therefore you need ensure that you have access to all sides of the building so you can apply treatment easily.

Natural Light - Make sure the position you have chosen for your building offers enough natural light otherwise you may have to install a different source of light in your building.

Electrical Supply - If you are installing your building with plans to add electricity, make sure you consult with an electrician before building your base.

Planning Permission - If you are unsure about the planning laws in your county please contact their office before purchasing a new building. Houses built in protected areas may be subject to different rules and regulations.

Portabase

A portabase is a time and cost saving option. A portabase is made from timber and comes in a range of sizes to suit different buildings. Our portabases are made from pressure treated timber and features bearers to give stability and strength.

You will need to ensure that the ground where you will be placing your garden building is completely flat and levelled before you install your portabase. Remember to use a spirit level when installing a base to check if it is truly levelled.

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Plastic Base

A Plastic Base is the perfect option if you live in rented accommodation or just want something a little less permanent. This type of base is made from 100% recycled plastic. The plastic tiles fit together to form a base.

Mercia do not stock Plastic Bases, however, these can be purchased in all major DIY stores.

What you will need to install:

- Spirit Level
- Measuring Tape
- Pegs & String
- Spade
- Pea Gravel (Recommended)
- Tamp Board
- Plastic Base

1. Choose and measure the area where you will be placing your plastic base, make sure you have good access to all sides of your building.
2. Mark out your area, use pegs and string. We recommend that you make your area larger than the base of your building.
3. Prepare the ground, remove turf and compact the ground. The ground needs to be 100% flat and levelled, if you are struggling to level your soil, use sand or pea gravel to fill uneven areas.

Option 1 - If you're using sand
 Use a rake to level the sand
 Tamp the sand down using a timber bearer
 Then check that the sand is level using a spirit level

Option 2 - If you're using pea gravel
 Pour pea gravel and use a rake to level
 Compact the ground using your feet
 Tamp down the pea gravel using a timber bearer

4. Layout the membrane provided
5. Layout your Plastic Base grids
 Remove the locking pins from the grids
 Grids simply clip together
6. Once all grids have been clipped together, insert the locking pins into the grids
7. Fold your membrane at the edges
8. Fill the grids and the outside of the base with pea gravel

Tip: Make the plastic base larger than the base of your building, this will help drain water away.

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Concrete Slab Base

A concrete slab base is one of the most permanent bases you can lay and although it is relatively straight forward to build we recommend that you hire a builder if you believe you do not have the skills necessary to carry out this task. A concrete base is strong and if laid correctly it can be used for any size building.

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 installing your garden building. If the base is not properly set before installing your product it can lead to condensation gathering in your building.

What you will need to install:

- Pegs and String
 - Sand and Gravel Mix
 - Hardcore
 - Standard Concrete
 - Timber (for framework)
 - Tape Measure
 - Spade
 - Cement Mixer (or a suitable mixing container)
 - Spot and Mixing Board
 - Wheel Barrow
 - Tamp Board
 - Spirit Level
1. Choose and measure the area where you will be placing your plastic base, make sure you have good access to all sides of your building.
 2. Mark out your area, use pegs and string. We recommend that you make your area the same size as the base of your building.
 3. Prepare the ground, remove turf and compact the ground. The ground needs to be 100% flat and levelled, if you are struggling to level your soil, use sand or pea gravel to fill uneven areas.
 4. This concrete base requires 3 inches (7.5cm) of compact hardcore underneath 3 inches (7.5cm) of concrete. You can dig the base down into the ground or have it raised above. If you choose to have your base levelled with the ground, you will have to excavate the top earth making it 6 inches deep. Remember to make the dugout base area levelled before adding a layer of hardcore.
 5. You will need to build a framework of timber to support the concrete and keep it in shape whilst drying. This involves measuring, cutting and fitting the timber into the shape of your base. Check the diagonals of the framework to ensure that these are squared and levelled.
 6. Ensure that both framework and base is levelled; use a spirit level to do this, before you lay the concrete.
 7. To mix the concrete you will need one part cement to five parts ballast. If you're using dry mix concrete just add the amount of water instructed on the packaging.
 8. Spread the concrete evenly within the framework, the concrete should sit proud of the framework. Once the frame is filled use a straight piece of timber and rest it on the framework. Use a sawing motion to level out the concrete.
 9. These steps should result in a smooth, levelled base. Let the concrete set completely before installing your building.

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Concrete Paving Slab Base

Concrete Paving Slabs can be used to build a base for a garden building. Paving slabs are easy to install, if installed correctly it provides a levelled and durable base.

What you will need to install:

- Pegs and String
- Flat Concrete Paving Slabs
- Sharp Sand
- Standard Cement
- Rake
- Tape Measure
- Spade
- Rubber Mallet
- Sweeping Brush
- Spirit Level

1. Choose and measure the area where you will be placing your plastic base, make sure you have good access to all sides of your building.
2. Mark out your area, use pegs and string. We recommend that you make your area larger than the base of your building.
3. Prepare the ground, remove turf and compact the ground
The ground needs to be 100% flat and levelled, if you are struggling to level your soil, use sand or pea gravel to fill uneven areas.
4. Dig out the top soil leaving a depth of 2.5 inches (7cm) to accommodate the base. Use a spirit level to make ensure the area is levelled and flat.
5. Mix together 1 part cement to 8 parts building sand. Spread this evenly in the base and make sure that it is 4cm in depth. Rake it and check with a spirit level.
6. Starting from one corner and working outward lay the concrete slabs. Tap the centre of each slab gently with a rubber mallet to set. Use a spirit level on each slab to check the base is levelled.
7. The complete base should be levelled and square. Brush off any excess sand/cement mix.