TRADECRAFT

# Concrete pad

A 10' × 12' pad for a shed, hot tub, AC unit or bins

DRAFT V0.5, PENDING INSTALLER REVIEW

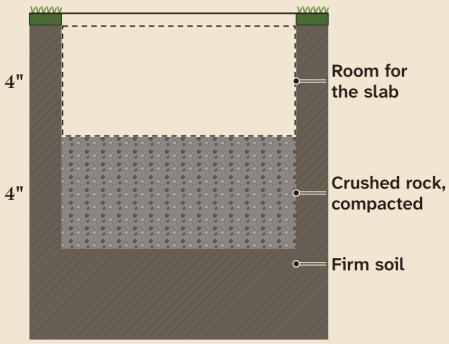
THE STEPS ON VIDEO

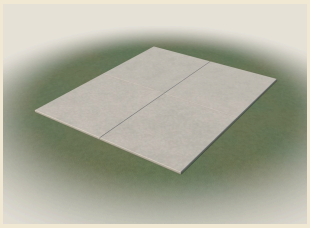
## 3 RULES

### 1 Compacted base, never soft soil

### 2 2x6 forms, never 2x4

### 3 Control joints: the groove where it cracks straight



FINISHED LOOK

10' × 12'

Ready-mix concrete, 3000 psi, 4" slab (6" driveway) — 1.75 yd³

Colour not chosen yet

KEY NUMBERS

| | |
|---|---|
| 4" | slab |
| 4" | compacted base |
| 8" | dig below the string |
| 2" | rebar above the base, on chairs |
| 1" | joint depth |

A soft base or a thin slab sinks and cracks, and the shed twists. Tearing it out to repour comes out of your pocket.

**STOP AND CHECK**

**Fix it first. On a hot tub pad, the tub maker's spec wins.**

- The base is frozen, muddy or flooded
- The base doesn't run 6" past the slab edge
- Hot tub: the maker's spec asks for more than 4"

## STEPS

### 1 Layout

- Stakes and strings outside the corners
- The string marks the slab top
- Slab top 1½" above the lawn

**Check:** Each diagonal reads 15' 7½"

### 2 Dig and base

- Dig 8": sod, roots, soft soil out
- Compact the dug floor; soft spots get base
- 4" crushed ¾" minus, never pea gravel

**Check:** Damp, all at once: plate leaves no marks

### 3 Forms

- 2x6 boards, never a 2x4
- Bottom edge 1½" into the base
- Inside 10' × 12'; diagonals again

**Check:** Shed, tub or AC pad: level both ways

### 4 Rebar

- #3 rebar every 18", center to center
- On chairs (small stands), 2" up
- Stops 2" in from the forms

**Check:** The rebar doesn't touch the base

### 5 Pour and screed

- No extra water in the mix
- Screed: straight board, sawing motion, concrete ahead
- Bull float: stones down, cream up

**Check:** No water sheen before you edge

### 6 Joints and cure

- Edger along every form
- Joints at the middle, both ways
- Shed floor smooth; 7 days wet or covered

**Check:** Each joint: 1" deep

## THE 3 COSTLIEST MISTAKES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ✕ Bin pad flat or falling toward the house | ✕ Ordering only what the pad holds | ✕ One joint only: long panels crack |
| ✓ Bin pad: ⅛" per ft away from the house | ✓ Order 10% extra, up to the next quarter yard | ✓ Joints both ways: four near-square panels |

**This job's local rule:** Before you mark the pad, check the local rule. Some cities need a permit for a slab, or for the shed or tub on it. The distance to the property line varies by county.

Hard-surface limit: _____ Water goes to: _____ Permit? yes / no

## STAY SAFE

- Best practice: call 811 before you dig, it's free.
- Wet concrete burns skin: waterproof gloves, glasses and boots; if it gets on you, wash it off right away.
- Silica dust: cut wet and wear a mask. On the plate compactor and saw, hearing and eye protection.
- Electric mixer or saw: outdoor-rated cord and a GFCI. A gas engine runs outdoors only. Lift bags with your legs, two people for awkward loads.

**Sources:** Green Maestro's answers for this pad; actual sizes of dressed lumber; the bagged mix label; industry guides on slabs, joints and curing, cited by research. Those guides were not in the supplied packet and are pending confirmation.

Educational content from the Manos de Oro program. Each Maestro is an independent contractor and manages the risks of their own work.