



# HARDSCAPE/FEATURE CARE

## Paver Care

Many paver selections are very durable and low maintenance products however, seasonal maintenance is encouraged to retain the integrity of your hardscape installation. Pavers can be cleaned seasonally and kept free from debris including leaves, grass clippings or moss. It is important to be careful if using power washers however, as a focused nozzle could damage the paver and joint material.

### Pro Tip:

Pavers can be cleaned with a course-bristle brush and a mild detergent to keep them looking new. A quick scrub in the spring should leave your pavers looking tip top all season so you can focus on not burning the brats!

Most likely your pavers were installed with a Polymeric Sand Jointing Material. This joint material helps to stabilize the joints from degradation while maintaining the flexibility within the joints themselves. This sand helps to prevent weed growth or any problems with ants that were seen with traditional sand joints. Because of this, your joint material should need very minimal maintenance. Polymeric sand has a 7+ year lifespan depending on site conditions. Over time you may need to have the sanding re-done.

It is important to maintain the site conditions surrounding your hardscape installation as they were installed. Any additional water directed towards or onto your hardscape has the potential to undermine the structural integrity of the feature and often leads to failures.

## Sealing Your Pavers

Many people choose not to seal their pavers and that is okay. Sealants however can provide some additional benefits or even aesthetic to your hardscape. Sealants can help with adding enhancements to pavers, enriching color, protecting the surface from wear, or even add some additional traction to the surface itself. No matter what sealer is applied, it is always important to read the label and fully understand the directions before applying.

Please note that any sealer should not be applied within the first 90 days after install. We suggest this waiting period to allow any efflorescence that might come through the pavers, the ability to do so and to be cleaned before any sealant is applied to the surface.

## Permeable Paver Care

With permeable systems it is important to keep the surface and joints clean of loose debris such as leaves, pine needles, mulch or even potting soil to keep the system functioning properly. Keep in mind that this system is a fully functioning drainage system specifically designed to meet certain site conditions. Surfaces can still be cleaned with course bristle brushes and leaf blowers, however extra care should be taken to maintain the jointing material found between pavers. It is always better to vacuum up spills rather than wash them away.

### Pro Tip:

Tarps can be useful if put down under any projects being done on permeable paver systems. This can keep debris such as potting soil or wood dust from clogging the joints.

## Natural Stone Care

Similar to pavers natural stone is a relatively low maintenance product once installed. It is important to keep natural stone surfaces free of debris, and they can also benefit from season cleaning with a course bristle broom/brush.

Due to the chemical and mineral makeup of these natural products, it is very important to read all manufacturer instructions or speak with a representative before installing any sort of sealer or cleaner to a surface. It is also important to test a section of the stone with the cleaning product or sealer before applying to the entire surface.

## Retaining Wall Care

Retaining walls serve an important function in the landscape. It is important to inspect your wall routinely to identify any cracks, bulges or shifting in the wall before it becomes a larger issue. Should you notice any movement in your wall it is essential to contact a professional to inspect the wall for structural integrity and fix any potential hazards as soon as possible.

Similar to pavers, any additional water directed towards, behind or onto your wall has the potential to undermine the structural integrity of the wall and often leads to failures. The majority of our walls will have a site specific drainage system installed behind the wall. It is important to keep the drain tile and the drain tile outlet open and free from debris. This will allow the water within the system a way out and limit the potential for failure, including frost heave.

Our boulder walls are installed with a non-woven fabric behind them. This fabric helps to keep any soil or backfill material from migrating through the small gaps between boulders. Over time you may see some of this fabric start to pop up on top of the wall. It is okay to cut back any fabric seen on the top of the wall, however, any fabric between boulder gaps needs to stay intact.

### Pro Tip:

A plant bed or even a small (6") mow-strip above and below a retaining wall will help lessen maintenance on the property and eliminate the need for weed whacking.

Should you want to apply a sealant to any retaining wall block, it is important to wait at least 90 days before doing so. This delay in sealing, will allow time for any efflorescence in the block to begin working its way out and be cleaned with an appropriate efflorescence cleaner before sealing the block.

## Water Feature Care

Water features can be a delicate system that require a great deal of care and up-keep. In general our pond-less water features can be easily cared for by following some simple and easy guidelines. Maintaining appropriate water levels within the system and regularly cleaning/removing any debris such as leaves, twigs, and seeds should keep the system functioning efficiently.

Pumps should be removed in the winter and stored indoors whenever possible. Some pump models may need to be submerged in a bucket of water throughout the winter in order to minimize any cracked rings or dry gaskets within the pump. It is important to look into the best practice instructions for your specific model.

