



HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO PATIOS, DRIVEWAYS & PATHWAYS

TDS PAVING

Transform your outdoor space with the perfect paving – a friendly guide from TDS Paving. We've designed this brochure with a clean, easy-to-read layout to help you make the best decision for your home.

WELCOME TO OUR HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO PATIOS, DRIVEWAYS & PATHWAYS

INTRODUCTION

The South-East's Only Driveway, Patio & Landscaping Specialists with On- Site Materials Showroom

Upgrading a driveway, patio or garden path is an exciting way to add value and curb appeal to your UK home. But with so many paving options available, where do you start? Don't worry – TDS Paving is here to help. In this brochure, we'll walk you through five popular surface types we supply and fit: Pattern Imprinted Concrete, Block Paving, Permeable Paving, Natural Stone Paving, and Resin Bonded Paving.

You'll find an overview of each surface, along with their pros, cons, maintenance tips, and ideal uses for patios, driveways, and pathways. We've also included a handy pricing guide with UK cost per square metre estimates (don't forget: these are just ballpark figures). Our goal is to give you friendly, jargon-free advice so you can choose the right paving for your project with confidence. Let's get started transforming your outdoors!

Who are we?

TDS Paving & Landscaping - Owned and managed by Colin Stroud, with over 40+ Years experience, and with Award-Winning driveways, patios and landscaping projects in his portfolio. Contact him for a no-obligation consultation and quote. 0800 0568 768

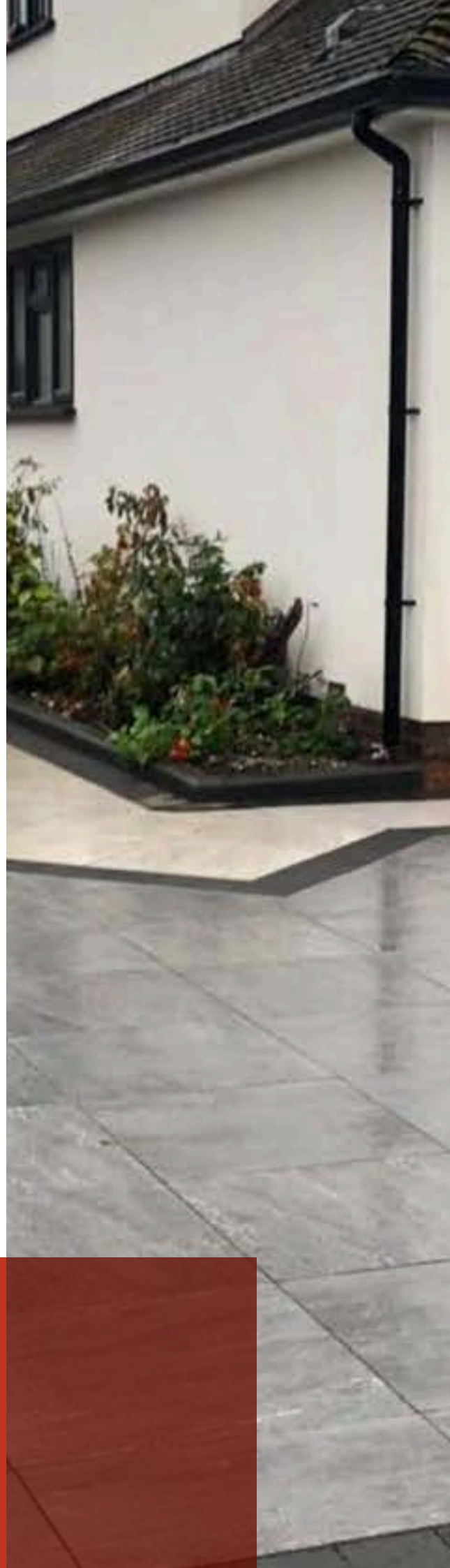


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

Paving Surface Options Overview

- Pattern Imprinted Concrete - Page 4
 - Block Paving - Page 7
 - Permeable Paving - Page 11
 - Natural Stone Paving - Page 15
 - Resin Bonded Paving - Page 20
-

2

Choosing the Right Surface by Project

- Patios - Page 25
 - Driveways - Page 29
 - Garden Pathways - Page 38
-

3

Pricing Guide & Cost Considerations

Pricing Guide - Page 46

4

Conclusion & Next Steps

Conclusion & Next Steps - Page 48

Paving Surface Options Overview

Pattern Imprinted Concrete (PIC) - Stamped For Style

Pattern Imprinted Concrete - PIC (often called *stamped concrete*) is a method of pouring a single continuous concrete slab and pressing an attractive pattern into the surface before it sets. Colour is added to mimic the look of natural stone, brick, slate or even wood. This creates the **appearance of individual pavers or cobbles** – complete with textured joints – but *without actual gaps* for weeds to grow through.

Once sealed, the result is a strong, solid surface that's durable and easy to clean. It's a popular choice in the UK for modern driveways and patios because it offers a high-end look with minimal upkeep.

Pros: You get **endless design flexibility**. PIC comes in dozens of patterns (cobblestone, herringbone, fan, etc.) and a wide range of colours – from classic charcoals and terracotta tones to warm sandstone or slate hues. This means you can create a custom look that complements your home's style. Another big plus is **low maintenance**: with no joints or loose pieces, you won't battle weeds or shifting blocks. Just sweep it and reseal it every few years, and it'll stay looking sharp. PIC is also strong and long-lasting – when installed on a proper sub-base, it can easily handle vehicles and heavy use for 20+ years.



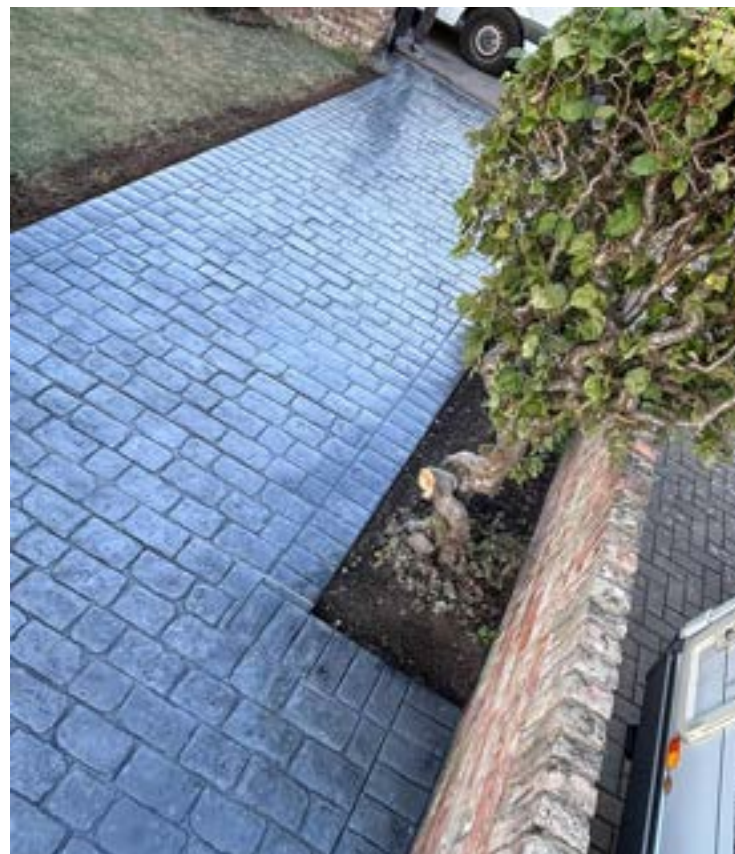
Homeowners love that it's a continuous, smooth finish that's easy to walk on, wheelchair-friendly, and adds instant kerb appeal. Overall, it's a cost-effective way to get an expensive "stonework" look without the high price of real stone.

Cons: While pattern-imprinted concrete looks like individual blocks, it is in fact one large slab. This means **it isn't permeable**, water can't drain through it, so you'll need proper drainage channels or a slope to prevent puddling. (Good installers, like TDS, will ensure drainage is handled, but it's something to be aware of.)

Another consideration: if a section ever gets damaged or you need to access underground pipes, you **can't simply replace one "brick"**, patch repairs are possible but tend to be visible, since matching the exact colour and pattern later is tricky. PIC also requires a **re-seal every few years** to protect the surface and maintain its colour; skipping re-sealing can lead to fading or staining over time. In freeze-thaw weather, the slab can develop hairline cracks (expansion joints are cut in to help control this).

Finally, because the texture is moulded in at installation, PIC might have **less natural texture than real stone**, and very smooth finishes can be slippery when wet – so it's wise to include an anti-slip additive in the sealant, especially for patios or poolside areas

Maintenance: Day-to-day care is easy – just occasional sweeping or hosing off dirt. Thanks to the sealed, continuous surface, **weeds and moss aren't a problem** (no little gaps for them to sprout). Do plan on re-sealing the concrete every 2–5 years (depending on usage and weather). Re-sealing is straightforward and will revive the colour and sheen while protecting against wear. If you notice the finish looking a bit dull or patchy, it's probably time for a fresh seal coat. Also, avoid using de-icing salts in winter, as these can sometimes damage concrete – plain sand or grit is better for traction if needed.



Best Suited For: Driveways and **larger patios** are where PIC truly shines. It's built to handle heavy loads (cars, vans) without sinking or rutting, so it's excellent for a busy family driveway or a front hardstanding.

For patios, PIC provides a gorgeous "slab" look – you can even mix patterns (say, a brick border around a slate-texture field) to define zones or add visual interest. Because it's weed-free and low-maintenance, it's ideal if you want a beautiful entertaining

space without spending weekends power-washing or pulling weeds. One limitation: PIC is less ideal for areas that must drain on-site (like certain front gardens under SUDS rules), unless you incorporate drainage, since the surface itself is solid.

Also, if your property is very traditional in style, you might lean toward natural stone for authenticity – but there are PIC patterns so realistic that many people can't tell the difference!



Block Paving - Classic Bricks & Blocks

Block paving involves laying individual **bricks or blocks** made of concrete, clay, or natural stone in patterns on a compacted sand bed. You've likely seen block pavers in driveways, paths, and patios all over the UK – they're a time-tested, **extremely popular choice**. The blocks come in various colours, shapes, and textures, arranged in designs such as herringbone, basketweave, or stretcher bond to create a decorative paved surface. The appeal of block paving lies in its **versatility** and **repairability**: if one or two blocks get damaged or stained (say, by oil), you can lift and replace those without disturbing the rest of the paving.

Pros: Block paving is considered a **premium, long-lasting option** for a wide range of projects. A well-laid block driveway or patio can easily last 20+ years. The materials are very **durable**, able to withstand British weather – from hot summers to freeze-thaw winters – without cracking. One big advantage is **design variety**: blocks come in many colours and finishes (from traditional brindle or charcoal concrete bricks to tumbled cobble-style pavers or even porcelain blocks). This means you can create unique patterns or borders and get creative with how your space looks. Block paving tends to **blend nicely with landscaping** – for example a block pathway weaving



through a garden looks natural and charming. Maintenance is relatively **straightforward**: regular sweeping and the occasional wash will keep it looking good. Unlike a solid slab, block paving

has built-in joints that can flex a bit, making it **resistant to cracking** from ground movement. And as mentioned, you can fix localised issues by swapping out blocks, which is a big plus for long-term upkeep. It's also worth noting that standard block paving can be made **permeable** by using special jointing materials or permeable blocks – helping with water drainage (more on that shortly)

Cons: The **upfront cost** of block paving can be higher than some other options, mostly due to the labour involved. Each block is laid by hand and requires skill to get the levels and pattern just right. Installation is labour-intensive and can take a bit longer, especially for complex designs or large areas. Because of those joints between blocks, there is a possibility of **weed growth or moss** if not properly maintained – weed seeds typically settle in the sand joints from above (they don't come up from underneath). Regular brushing and keeping the joints filled with sand will largely prevent weeds, but if neglected, you might see some green in the cracks over time.

Another consideration is that blocks can **shift or settle** if the base preparation wasn't ideal or if they're subject to heavy traffic and water flow. Proper installation by experienced professionals (like our Brett-approved TDS installers) is key to avoiding sinking or uneven spots.

Block paving is generally **not slippery**, but smooth or worn blocks might get slick in icy conditions, and like any hard surface, they can absorb heat on very hot days (the surface may feel warm underfoot). Lastly, while basic cleaning is easy, *deep* cleaning with a pressure washer needs caution – blasting out the joint sand means you'll have to re-sand the joints afterwards to maintain the interlock.

Maintenance: Low to moderate upkeep is required. Frequently, all that's needed is to sweep off leaves and dirt every so often to prevent stains or moss. It's wise to re-sand the joints (by brushing in kiln-dried sand) occasionally, especially after heavy rain or aggressive cleaning – this keeps the blocks locked tightly and deters weeds.

Weeds, if they do sprout, can be plucked or treated with weed killer sparingly. Many homeowners seal their block paving to help resist stains and algae; sealing can also stabilise the joint sand. A good quality sealant will need reapplication every few years. Avoid using harsh acid cleaners on blocks, as they can damage the surface. If a block is seriously stained (oil drip, paint, etc.), you can lift it out with simple tools and replace it with a new matching block – a nice perk of this system.

In winter, block paving tolerates de-icing salts better than concrete does, but it's still good to use them sparingly to protect any sealant and avoid excessive salt getting into the soil.

Best Suited For: Driveways and patios, as well as **garden paths,** all benefit from block paving – it's truly an all-rounder. Driveways are a classic use: a properly laid block driveway not only looks attractive but can handle vehicles for decades. If you anticipate heavy vehicles or frequent turning (such as a large SUV or caravan), choose a strong concrete or clay block and a herringbone pattern for extra interlock strength.



Block-paved patios give a more structured, formal look (great for contemporary gardens or where you want a defined geometric feel). Blocks can also be combined with other materials – e.g., a circle feature kit can create a focal point in a patio, or a contrasting border can outline a driveway. For garden pathways, smaller-format blocks or cobbles create a **charming, cottage-garden vibe** that suits many UK homes. One thing to consider: if your area is prone to poor drainage or you're covering a

front garden, you might opt for **permeable blocks or a permeable sub-base** to stay SUDS-compliant (sustainable drainage rules). In fact, permeable block paving (next section) is basically a variant of block paving specifically designed for stormwater management. Overall, if you're looking for value and flexibility, it's hard to go wrong with block paving – just be sure to get it installed by a qualified contractor for the best results. (Perhaps, get a quote from TDS by clicking [here](#)).



Permeable Paving – Eco-Friendly Drainage Solution

Permeable paving refers to paving systems designed to **allow water to drain through** the surface and into the ground below, rather than running off into drains. The most common approach is *permeable block paving*, which looks much like regular block paving, but uses special blocks and techniques to allow rainwater to soak through the gaps. Typically, permeable blocks have wider nibs (spacers), creating slightly larger joints that are filled with a porous grit rather than regular sand. Underneath, a stone sub-base with open voids is used to temporarily hold water. The result is a stable paved surface that doubles as a drainage system – great for preventing puddles and helping the environment by reducing runoff

Pros: The **environmental benefits** are the headline feature. Permeable paving significantly **reduces stormwater runoff**, which helps minimise the risk of flooding during heavy rain. Instead of water quickly overwhelming drains, it percolates slowly through the paving and into the soil, replenishing groundwater. As it filters through the layers, pollutants like oil and dirt are naturally trapped, so cleaner water returns to the ground, a win for local waterways. From a homeowner's perspective, this means **no more standing water** or big puddles on your drive or patio after a rainstorm. Practical perks include not needing planning permission for a new or



expanded driveway if you use permeable construction (current UK rules generally exempt permeable surfaces from planning requirements for front gardens over 5m²).

Beyond drainage, permeable block paving offers **all the design versatility of standard block paving** – you still have a variety of colours, shapes and patterns to choose from.

The surface looks virtually identical to normal pavers, so you don't have to compromise on appearance. It's also durable: quality permeable pavers can handle vehicles and weather just as well as traditional blocks. Many products are just as strong in load-bearing capacity. And maintenance, in many ways, is easier than with impervious surfaces because water doesn't pool; you avoid issues like ice sheets in winter (the water drains away) and algae growth from standing water.

Overall, permeable paving lets you be **eco-conscious** and have a beautiful, functional driveway or patio.

Cons: The main downsides relate to cost and care. Permeable paving systems typically have a **higher initial cost** than standard paving. The specialised materials (permeable blocks or grids, angular stone for joints and sub-base) and extra labour for installing the

layered base drive the price up a bit. It's often a worthwhile long-term investment, but expect to pay more upfront (see our pricing section for estimates). Proper **installation is critical**: not all contractors are experienced with permeable systems, so you need someone knowledgeable to ensure the base is correctly prepared, and the whole system works. If installed incorrectly, you could end up with water not draining as intended. Another consideration is **maintenance to prevent clogging**. Over time, debris, dirt, and fine sediments can accumulate in joints or voids, **reducing the surface permeability**.

To combat this, you might need to periodically vacuum or pressure-wash the surface to suck out dirt from the gaps (there are professional cleaning services for this). In a leafy area, keeping leaves off the driveway in autumn is important – mulched leaves can quickly fill those joints. Some permeable pavers may have a **slightly lower weight capacity** than traditional paving, depending on the design. For example, plastic grid pavers or certain permeable bricks might not support very heavy loads, like constant

commercial truck traffic (though for normal cars and light trucks they're fine). It's key to choose a system rated for your needs (we'll help you match the right product). Lastly, design-wise, if you love the look of tightly jointed block or imprinted concrete, the visible gravel in the joints of permeable blocks is a different look – not bad, just something to be aware of. And of course, permeable paving won't magically solve drainage issues if the soil below is clay and totally non-absorbent – in such cases, additional drainage solutions may still be needed (or a soakaway under the drive).



Maintenance: To prevent clogging is the name of the game.

Maintenance for permeable paving mostly involves keeping those drainage gaps open. We recommend sweeping the surface regularly to remove loose dirt and organic matter. Every year or two (or if you notice water starting to linger on the surface), give it a thorough clean: a **gentle pressure wash** or a **vacuum-sweep** machine can pull out trapped debris from the joints. Unlike regular block paving, you don't top up permeable joints with soft sand

they're filled with a no-fines gravel that shouldn't need frequent replacing, except maybe adding a bit if you lose some during heavy cleaning. Weed growth can occur in the joints if dirt accumulates, but if you keep them clean, weeds are minimal. If using plastic grid pavers with grass, you'll maintain it like a lawn (mow as needed, feed annually). And if using permeable resin-bound gravel, maintenance is just occasional power washing to remove grime. One perk: no puddles means less algae and moss, so the surface stays safer and less slick.

Overall, a little proactive cleaning will keep your permeable paving working perfectly and looking great for years.

Best Suited For: Driveways are a prime candidate – especially if you're installing a new drive or widening one in front of your house. Using permeable paving can keep you on the right side of planning regulations and eliminate the need for additional drains or soakaways in many cases. If you live in an area with frequent heavy rain or an overloaded stormwater system, a permeable driveway is a smart, forward-thinking choice.

Large patios or courtyards can also benefit – no more fretting about where the runoff will go, which is great if you have gardens you want to protect from erosion. For **garden pathways**, permeable solutions like gravel or grass grids are wonderful, as they blend into the landscape and nourish the ground.

Do you have a consistently soggy area in the garden? A permeable path might actually help improve that by allowing water to soak in. Keep in mind, permeable paving can be as **attractive** as any other option – from the street, a permeable block drive looks just like a regular block drive (maybe even nicer with those decorative gravel-filled joints).

If you desire the **ultimate sustainable driveway**, you could even combine permeable paving with rain gardens or a soakaway to handle all your roof and surface water on-site.

In summary, choose permeable paving if you're concerned about drainage, live in a flood-prone zone, or simply want to do your bit for the environment while still enjoying a functional, beautiful paved area.



Natural Stone Paving – Timeless Beauty from Nature

Natural stone paving means using real quarried stone – such as sandstone, limestone, slate, granite, or cobbles – cut into slabs or setts for paving. Each piece of stone is **unique in colour and texture**, giving any area paved with natural stone a high-end, one-of-a-kind character. From elegant sandstone patios with subtle colour variation to robust granite cobblestone driveways that evoke historic streets, natural stone offers a look and feel that many homeowners adore. When you want that **authentic, rustic charm or luxury finish** that can't be imitated, natural stone is the go-to. It's commonly used for patios and garden paths, and certain types (like setts or thick cobbles) are also used for driveways.

Pros: The first pro is purely aesthetic: **unmatched beauty and uniqueness**. No two stone slabs are exactly alike – you'll get varied tones and natural veining that make the finished project look organic and rich in character. Whether it's the warm earthy mix of an Indian sandstone, the sleek consistency of a black slate, or the timeworn texture of reclaimed Yorkstone, natural stone simply has soul. It can elevate the look of a property and even add value, as many buyers appreciate genuine materials. Next, **durability:** most natural paving stones (especially harder types like granite or limestone) are extremely long-lasting and **weather-resistant**.



They've been formed over millions of years and can shrug off rain, UV sunlight, and foot traffic with ease. A well-laid stone patio can last for decades, developing a lovely patina over time without losing

its structural integrity. Maintenance can be relatively low-effort; stones don't require the kind of sealing that concrete does (though optional sealants can be used). They generally only need occasional cleaning with mild soap and water to stay in good shape. Stains often don't penetrate deeply, especially if you choose a less porous stone or use a sealant.

Natural stone is also an **eco-friendly choice** in the sense that it's a natural material with no manufactured chemicals – using stone means you're not bringing plastics or cements into your garden. And at the end of life (if you ever change it), the stone can be reused or will simply return to the earth. Many natural stones have a **high slip resistance** due to their texture. Riven sandstone, for example, has a mildly rough surface that provides good grip even when wet.

Lastly, there's A LOT of choice: from creamy beige limestone that brightens up a space to dramatic green slates or multicoloured quartzite. You can select stone that fits traditional cottages or sleek modern designs (e.g., smooth-sawn sandstone for a contemporary look).

Cons: The primary drawback is the **higher initial cost**. Natural stone tends to be more expensive to buy and install than man-made options. The material itself, especially premium or imported stone, can cost significantly more per square metre than concrete products. Plus, stone paving often requires skilled labour to lay properly – each piece may have slight thickness variations, and achieving a level surface with the correct fall for drainage is a craft.

This means installation can be slower and pricier (though the end result is often worth it). Another consideration is **variability**: while we listed unique colours as a pro, for some, the natural variation can be a con if they prefer a very uniform look. Even stones sold as one colour can have shades that differ from piece to piece. You have to embrace a bit of randomness; if you need an exact, consistent tone, manufactured pavers or porcelain might be better. Some types of stone (particularly lighter sandstones or certain limestones) are a bit porous and can absorb water or stains if left unsealed – this could lead to darkening or marks from things like fallen leaves or BBQ grease.

Sealing the stone can mitigate this, but that's an extra step and cost. Also, **weathering and fading** can happen: for instance, some coloured sandstones might gently fade in strong sun over many years. It's usually a slow, even fade (not patchy), but it's good to know. In terms of strength, most paving stones are plenty strong for foot traffic, but for driveways you must use appropriately thick, hard stone (like granite setts or basalt cobbles). Softer stones (some slates or flagstones) could crack under vehicle weight or if there's movement beneath. So not every stone is suitable for every use. And while generally low-maintenance, stones can attract **algae or lichen** in shady, damp areas and become slippery unless cleaned, much like a natural rock in a forest.

Finally, **installation complexity:** natural stone, especially if you opt for irregular shapes or crazy paving, is like doing a jigsaw puzzle – it can take more time to puzzle pieces together, and cutting stone for edges requires special saws. Definitely a job for experienced pavers (like TDS) to get perfect.



Maintenance: Basic care for natural stone is quite simple. Sweep your patio or path regularly to remove dirt and prevent moss buildup. Once or twice a year, wash the stones with soapy water and a stiff brush to lift any grime – this will usually brighten them up nicely. If you notice any algae or slippery green film (common in shaded, damp corners), treat it with a patio cleaner or a mild bleach solution and rinse off.

For those who want to preserve the exact original colour, applying a breathable stone sealant will help prevent water and stains from soaking in. Sealed or not, clean spills (wine, BBQ sauce, etc.) reasonably quickly – stone can stain if something like oil sits on it for a long time, especially lighter stones. Weed-wise, if your stone is laid with mortar joints, you'll likely have almost no weeds. If laid with open joints (like gravel between stepping stones), just pull any occasional weeds or use a weed-inhibiting fabric under the gravel when installing.

One nice thing: natural stone doesn't really fade unevenly; it ages gracefully.

If a piece ever cracks (unlikely under normal use, unless something heavy and sharp hits it), you can have that piece lifted, and a new stone popped in by a professional, though colour matching an aged stone might be hard. In winter, stones handle frost well, but avoid metal shovels for snow removal, as they might scratch softer stone; use plastic shovels or a broom instead. Grit can be used for ice, and if the stone is textured, it's usually not too slippery to begin with.

Best Suited For: Patios and garden pathways are where natural stone truly shines. In the UK, a stone patio (like lovely Yorkstone or Indian sandstone) is often the hallmark of a quality garden – it creates a premium look that's perfect for outdoor entertaining spaces. The natural tones complement greenery and planting beautifully, giving your garden a cohesive, "designed" feel. For pathways, think about a winding slate path through a lawn or stepping stones across a gravel bed – it can be magical. Stone can also be used on **driveways**, particularly for period or high-end properties, a courtyard of granite

setts or cobblestones exudes traditional charm and can easily support vehicles.

Do note that for driveways, natural stone is at the top end of budget and often chosen for aesthetic reasons (for example, in conservation areas or for listed buildings where modern looks aren't suitable). But you could also consider mixing materials: e.g., using stone as an accent or border with more affordable paving in the main area. If your home's style is rustic, cottage, or classic, natural stone will *enhance* that character rather than looking out of place.

Even modern designs can use stone – large format smooth sandstone or granite planks can suit contemporary schemes. Essentially, choose natural stone when you want an **upscale, unique look** and are willing to invest a bit more upfront. It's like the difference between a laminate countertop and real granite – both work, but one has that special something.

With natural stone, your outdoor space won't look like anyone else's on the street, and that personalised beauty can be worth every penny.



Resin Bonded Paving – Gravel Look, Solid Finish

Resin-bonded paving is a modern surface treatment in which a layer of cold resin is spread over a firm base (usually concrete or asphalt), and natural aggregate stones are then **scattered onto the wet resin**. The stones stick to the resin as it cures, creating the appearance of a loose gravel surface, but they're actually fixed in place. Once it sets, you brush away any excess loose stones, leaving a **textured, stone-covered surface** bonded to the base. It's a quick way to transform an existing tired patio or driveway – essentially by “glueing” a new finish on top. Resin-bonded surfaces are *non-permeable* (the resin forms a continuous layer underneath the stones), unlike resin-bound surfaces, which are mixed together and porous. TDS Paving offers resin systems ideal for paths, patios or driveways where you want that decorative aggregate look without the loose gravel mess.

Pros: One big advantage of resin-bonded paving is **speed and convenience**. It can often be applied over your old concrete or tarmac drive/path if it's in decent condition, saving you the trouble of ripping out the old surface. In many cases, a resin-bonded overlay can be done in a day or two; you could redo your front path in the morning and walk on it by the next day. The end result gives you the **visual appeal of gravel** (natural stone chips in various colours), but since the stones are bonded, you



won't have issues with stones constantly spreading out or needing to be raked back into place. It's also **very low-maintenance** – there are no joints or gaps, and the surface is sealed by resin, so weeds find it hard to take hold (no more seedlings sprouting like in block paving).

The texture is naturally slip-resistant due to the many exposed stones, making it a good choice for sloped driveways or ramps where traction is important. Homeowners also appreciate the cleanliness: unlike loose gravel, resin-bonded aggregate won't be tracked into the house on shoes or scatter into the road. It's generally **UV-stable** if you use a quality resin, meaning the surface won't dramatically change colour or degrade with sun exposure. And of course, there's **plenty of choice** in aggregates – you can pick different stone colours or mixes to complement your home (golden flint, grey granite, multi-colour pea gravel, etc., often over 50 options). It gives a lovely natural stone effect. In terms of strength, resin-bonded surfaces are quite **durable for foot traffic and normal vehicle use**, and they form a continuous surface, so there's no settling or movement of pieces.

Another pro: no heavy construction required, it's a resurfacing technique – so it can be more **cost-effective** than digging up and relaying a whole driveway (the material cost of resin and aggregate is lower than, say, a full resin-bound system, and less labour is needed).

Cons: The phrase “resin-bonded” includes bonded for a reason: the performance hinges on the underlying base. A major limitation is that it requires a **solid, stable base** (like concrete or asphalt) in good condition. If the base cracks or has movement, the resin-bonded layer on top will crack too. So it's not suitable for covering janky, failed tarmac or block that's sinking – those issues should be fixed first.

Also, since resin-bonded is not permeable, you must ensure **proper drainage** via falls or drains, just as you would with concrete. Water will not soak through, so puddles can form if it's laid completely flat or if low spots exist. In fact, because water can't drain through, the surface can get dirtier more quickly (dust and grime don't wash through either, though rain typically cleans most of it off).

While generally low-maintenance, resin-bonded aggregate *can* lose some stones over time – especially in the first weeks, a few loose stones might come off when you sweep, and areas of high turning force (like where car wheels frequently turn while stationary) might loosen aggregate gradually.

This won't usually affect the overall look or performance immediately (because lots of aggregate is embedded), but down the line, very heavy-use areas might become a bit smoother as stones come out. If installed incorrectly or in bad weather (it shouldn't be laid in rain), a resin-bonded surface can end up **patchy or with bald spots**, so experience matters. Another con is that you **cannot easily invisibly repair just one spot**. If, say, you had to cut a section for plumbing work, the patched area might look different in stone distribution unless done carefully.

Typically, the whole driveway might need a new topcoat if a large section is disturbed. Some aggregates with iron content have been known to cause **rust patches** over time as they weather (e.g., some gravels might leach a bit of orange). Using high-quality washed aggregates prevents this. Finally, though cheaper than resin-bound surfacing, resin-**bonded** overlays are still relatively **premium** when done professionally because of the resin materials – more expensive than, say, basic asphalt or loose gravel (our pricing guide gives an idea of the cost range).



Maintenance: Easy day-to-day, with a few long-term checks. A resin-bonded surface doesn't accumulate much dirt because rain washes mud off the stones' surfaces. It's generally fine to hose down or use a pressure washer on a fan setting to spruce it up. Just be cautious with extremely high-pressure close-up, as you don't want to dislodge the aggregate. Sweeping with a stiff broom keeps leaves and debris off – important because built-up wet leaves could, over time, break down and foster moss on the surface. Speaking of which, if any moss or algae appear in shady, damp areas, treat them with a moss killer or a mild bleach solution, then rinse.

There are **no weeds** to pull (yay!) because there are no gaps for seeds to take root. One thing to monitor: edges. The interface between the resin-bonded surface and adjacent lawn or flowerbeds should be well sealed; if you notice stones coming loose at the edges, it might be worth adding an edging strip or curb to protect the edge from lawnmowers or car tyres. Also, heavy objects dropped can chip out some aggregate – if that happens, you can do a small

touch-up: clean the area and apply a bit of resin and sprinkle stones to patch the colour might not match 100% initially, but it's usually not very noticeable on a textured surface. Overall, a resin-bonded patio or drive will stay attractive with minimal effort – just periodic cleaning. And since it's UV-stable, you don't have to re-seal or coat it routinely (some people apply a clear seal coat after a few years to refresh it, but that's optional if everything is intact).

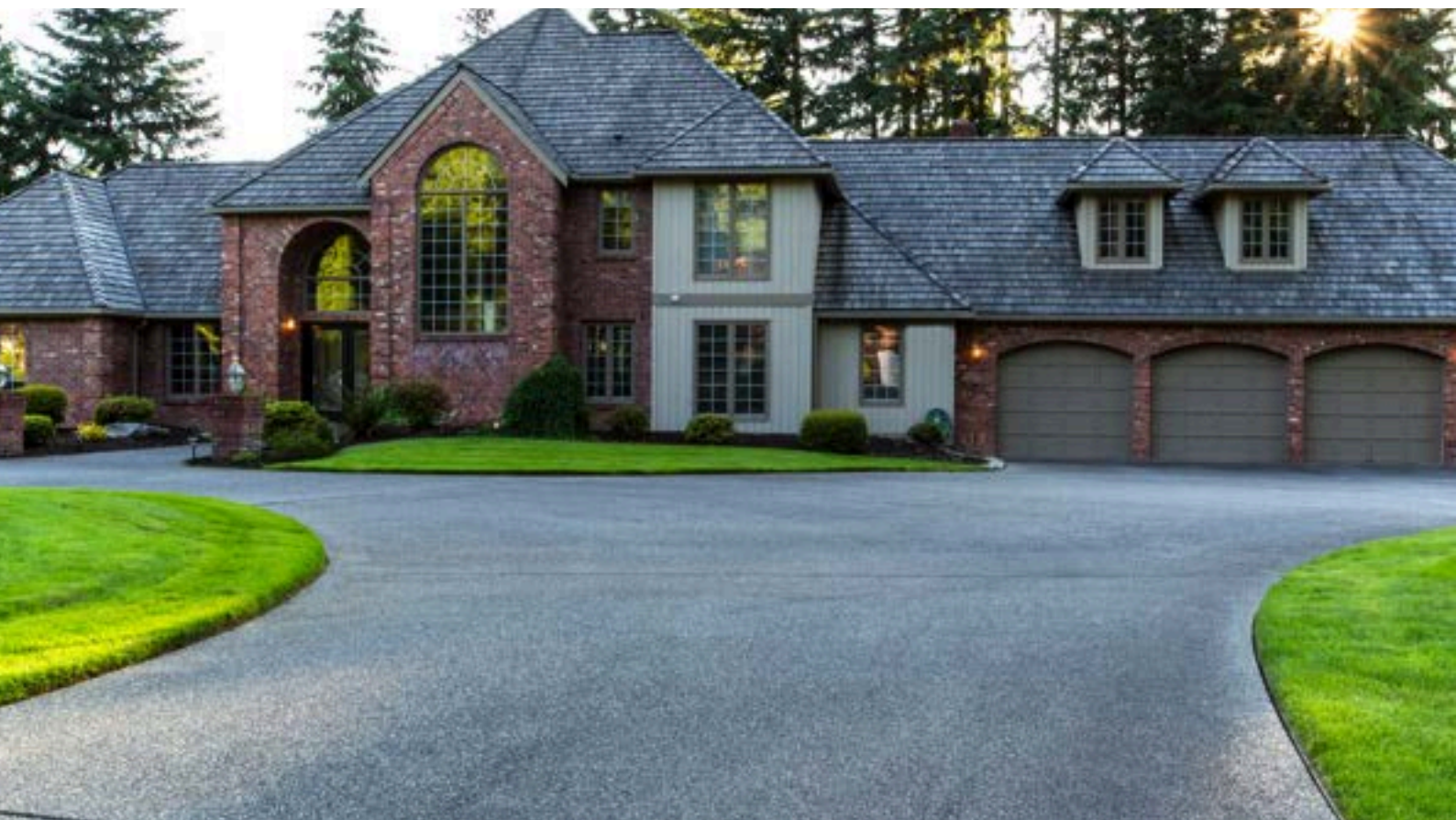
Best Suited For: Driveways and paths where you want a **decorative gravel look** without the gravel headaches. For example, if you love the charm of a golden pea-gravel driveway but hate how gravel moves around or makes pushing prams difficult, a resin-bonded drive is a fantastic alternative – you get the visual effect and satisfying crunch underfoot minus the loose stones. It provides a welcome **facelift for older concrete or asphalt** drives: rather than breaking it out, you resurface it. (We've had many clients choose resin overlays to quickly boost their home's kerb appeal.)

It's also great for **garden pathways** – think of a winding path through a garden that looks like loose aggregate but is actually fixed; you won't kick stones into the grass, and wheelchairs or bikes roll smoothly.

For patios, resin-bonded can work, though resin **bound** (a slightly different system) is more common for patios because it's smoother under furniture legs. If using for a patio, keep in mind the texture (it's a bit like very coarse sandpaper) – it's fine for tables and chairs, but not as “barefoot comfortable” as, say, smooth stone. One neat use case: resin-bonded paving can incorporate multiple colours in

patterns or borders (by masking areas) – so you could have a design or even simple motifs on a driveway, which is harder to achieve with other surfaces.

A word of caution: for large driveways on a slope or where cars brake hard, resin bound might be preferable because resin bonded could potentially lose aggregate under intense force. However, for the average driveway with normal use, resin bonded is absolutely suitable and provides excellent traction. Choose resin bonded paving if you're after a **fast makeover**, a unique stone-studded look, and a surface that's easy to live with day to day.



Choosing The Right Surface by Project

Now that we've introduced the five paving options, let's discuss how to decide which is best for **your specific project**. The ideal choice can vary depending on whether you're doing a patio, a driveway, or a garden path. In this section, we break down considerations for each project type and how each surface type stacks up in that context. We'll give examples and tips with UK homeowners in mind – so you can picture what works for a typical home and climate.

Patios: Creating Your Perfect Outdoor Living Space

A patio is often the heart of your garden – a place for relaxing, barbecues, and family gatherings. Key considerations for patio paving include **appearance**, **comfort underfoot**, and **maintenance**, since patios are all about enjoyment. You want a surface that looks great, complements your house/garden style, and isn't too slippery or hard to clean (think food spills, muddy footprints, etc.). Heavy load-bearing isn't a big issue (no cars on patios, usually), so you have freedom to choose purely on looks and feel. Here's how our paving options fare for patios:

- **Pattern Imprinted Concrete:** *Great for large or intricately designed patios.* With PIC, you can achieve beautiful looks like a faux-stone terrace or a cobbled courtyard without laying individual stones. Homeowners love it for patios because you can incorporate multiple patterns – for example, a stamped compass design in the centre of a patio, or a brick-effect border for visual interest. The lack of joints means your patio will stay **weed-free and easy to sweep**, which is a blessing in leafy gardens. Just remember to reseal it every few years so it stays spick-and-span (especially important for patios where food and drink spills might occur – the sealant will protect against staining). PIC patios can be made non-slip by adding texture or grit in the seal coat, so don't be wary of it being one flat slab. One limitation: if your patio area is right up against your house, ensure there's adequate drainage, since imprinted concrete doesn't drain through (your installer will typically include a drainage slot at the house edge if needed). Also, if you ever plan to extend or modify the patio later, patches won't match perfectly – so it's best to plan the size right the first time. But overall, for a modern, low-maintenance patio with lots of style, PIC is a top contender.

- **Block Paving:** *A classic choice for patios of all sizes.* Block paving can give a patio a **charming, inviting feel**. Many UK homes use block or brick pavers on patios to tie in with garden paths or the driveway, creating a unified look. The range of colours means you can match or complement your house brick or fencing. One advantage of patios: you can easily build in features like **raised planters or retaining walls** using matching blocks or edging kerbs, making the whole design cohesive. In terms of lifestyle, blocks are **comfortable underfoot**, even on a hot day; they won't get scorchingly hot (they tend to be light-coloured or concrete, which doesn't retain heat as much as dark tarmac). They also drain water through the sand joints fairly well (and you can use permeable blocks if needed), so puddles on a patio are rare unless the patio is poorly sloped. Maintenance on a patio is arguably easier than on a driveway – fewer weeds because there's only foot traffic, and you can easily stay on top of them with a quick sweep and occasional weed suppressant in the joints. Stains from the BBQ or plant pots? You can swap out stained blocks individually if needed. Do note that metal chair legs might catch in the small gaps between blocks if the sand settles. A rug under a dining set can help, or choose larger-format pavers. Aesthetically, block paving suits **both traditional and contemporary patios**, depending on the block style. For a cottage garden, you might use tumbled blocks in a random pattern; for a modern yard, perhaps smooth grey blocks in a stacked bond. The only "con" for patios is maybe that everyone's seen a lot of block patios, so it's not the most unique option – but it is popular for good reason. If you enjoy a bit of DIY, some people even install their own small block patios, but for a professional finish (especially on uneven ground), it's best left to the experts. All in all, block paving offers **reliability and flexibility** for patio projects.
- **Natural Stone Paving:** The premium patio pick for timeless style. There's something undeniably lovely about a natural stone patio – it can elevate a garden from nice to stunning. UK homeowners often choose sandstone or limestone paving slabs for patios to get that English garden charm. The variation in stone colours adds warmth and interest; for example, the subtle mix of browns, greens, and greys in a Yorkstone or Raj blend sandstone patio looks absolutely organic and inviting.

Stone stays fairly cool underfoot in summer and has a nice tactile feel if you're barefoot. In wet weather, many stones have decent slip resistance (especially those with a riven or textured surface). Natural stone patios do require a bigger budget, but they can truly make an outdoor space feel like an extension of your living area – almost like another room, with a “floor” that's unique and beautiful. If your home is older or you're aiming for a classic look, stone is often the best aesthetic fit. And for **small patios**, the cost difference might be manageable while the impact is huge since it's a focal point. One thing to consider is furniture: stone slabs provide a **very stable and even base** for tables and chairs (assuming they're laid flat and calibrated, which professional installers will ensure).

Lighter coloured stones can sometimes get minor **tea or wine stains**, but if sealed or cleaned promptly, it's no big worry – and the natural patterning tends to hide minor marks well. Over many years, a stone patio might develop a patina or slight fade, but this often just adds to its charm. If you want to keep it pristine, a quick power wash will easily refresh the stone. Also note, if you love gardening, stone patios allow for creative features like **plant pockets** (leaving spaces between stones for groundcover plants) or mixing in different sizes and shapes for a more random, cottagey feel. Natural stone, ultimately, is best for patios when your priority is **beauty and character**, and you're willing to invest a bit more for a standout result.

- **Resin Bonded Paving:** *A newer option for patios, focusing on convenience.* Resin-bonded patios aren't as common as resin driveways, but they're certainly feasible and come with some benefits. If you have an **old concrete slab patio that's sound but ugly**, a resin-bonded overlay can give it an instant facelift without demolition. You could choose a tan or grey aggregate that complements your house, and suddenly that dull slab becomes a pebbled courtyard! The surface will be **seamless and level**, which is great for seating areas (no wobbling furniture due to uneven stones or joints). It's also very low-maintenance; spilled food or drink can be hosed off, and there are no gaps for weeds or ants. The texture provides grip, so even when wet there's decent traction. However, resin surfaces can feel a bit rough on bare feet or if you were to kneel on it (like washing the dog or gardening), since the stones are exposed.

For many, that's a minor issue, but it's something to be aware of if you have crawling toddlers or plan to do yoga on your patio! Another consideration: resin-bonded patios, being non-porous, must have an adequate fall or drainage just like imprinted concrete. So be sure water will drain off to a garden bed or drain point – puddles on a patio are no fun. Design-wise, you can get creative with resin: for instance, create a **border or pattern** in a different-coloured aggregate, or even embed motifs (some people have done things like a compass design using metal dividers and different stone colours). That could make a patio quite personal and unique. The look of a resin-bonded patio is somewhat modern, thanks to the uniform pebble finish – it can be a nice contrast in a garden with lots of greenery, giving a clean, expansive feel (because it's visually one continuous surface). Overall, if you prioritise a smooth, weed-free, easy-clean patio and maybe want to reuse an existing concrete pad, resin-bonded paving is a solid choice. It's particularly good for **accessible patios** – say, if a household member has mobility issues, the flat, textured surface is wheelchair friendly and has no trip hazards. Just ensure a skilled installer does the job to avoid any unevenness or bald patches.

Patio Tip: In the UK, patios don't usually require planning permission (unlike front driveways) since they're not covering a front garden area. So you have the flexibility to choose between impermeable and permeable, as you see fit.

However, it's always wise to think about where the rainwater will go – for example, if you pave over a big chunk of garden, you might direct patio runoff into a lawn or flower border to soak away naturally. Also, consider colour: lighter surfaces (light grey blocks, buff sandstone, etc.) will reflect light and brighten a shady area, but they may show dirt/algae more and might cause glare in strong sun.

Dark surfaces (charcoal blocks, dark slate) won't glare and will hide dirt, but they can make a small area seem smaller. A mid-tone or mixed pattern often works nicely. And remember, whatever paving you choose, adding a few pots, planters or border plants around the patio will soften the edges and really make your outdoor space welcoming!

Driveways: Durable & Impressive Entrances

Your driveway has a big job – it needs to withstand vehicle traffic, support heavy loads, and still look attractive as part of your home’s first impression. When choosing paving for a driveway, consider strength, longevity, stain resistance, and whether you need a permeable surface to comply with regulations or meet drainage needs. It’s also often a larger area, so cost per square metre and overall budget come into play more heavily. A well-built driveway can last for decades, so think long-term. Here’s how each surface measures up for driveways:



Pattern Imprinted Concrete: *Excellent for driveways if installed properly.* PIC driveways are popular in the UK because they offer a high-end look (like a paved or stone driveway) at a relatively affordable cost, and they are monolithic – meaning no sinking blocks or sprouting weeds. A continuous concrete drive can support heavy vehicles with ease, provided the sub-base is adequate, and expansion joints are cut to control cracking. One big thing: **drainage, drainage, drainage** – since imprinted concrete is not permeable, your driveway must slope to a drain or lawn, or have drainage channels. Professional installers (like TDS Paving) will always plan this out. Once that’s sorted, you’ll enjoy a virtually **maintenance-free driveway**: no need to re-sand joints or kill weeds, just wash it and reseal every few years. Many homeowners love that there’s no shift or wobble underfoot when walking to the car, and for car maintenance, a solid surface means jacks or stands won’t sink.

A potential drawback for driveways is if any repairs are needed under the surface (like fixing a burst water main) – patching an imprinted pattern can be hard to blend in. But those instances are rare. As for stains, automotive spills like oil can be cleaned off a sealed PIC drive fairly easily, and you won't get those telltale oil spots spread between blocks (just one contained area to degrease). PIC driveways can be made with anti-skid grit in the seal coat to ensure good tyre grip even in wet or frosty conditions. And design-wise, you can choose patterns that complement a driveway scale – large cobblestone or ashlar patterns work well on bigger areas. A border pattern in a contrasting colour can also add a nice frame to the driveway, guiding guests to where they should park.

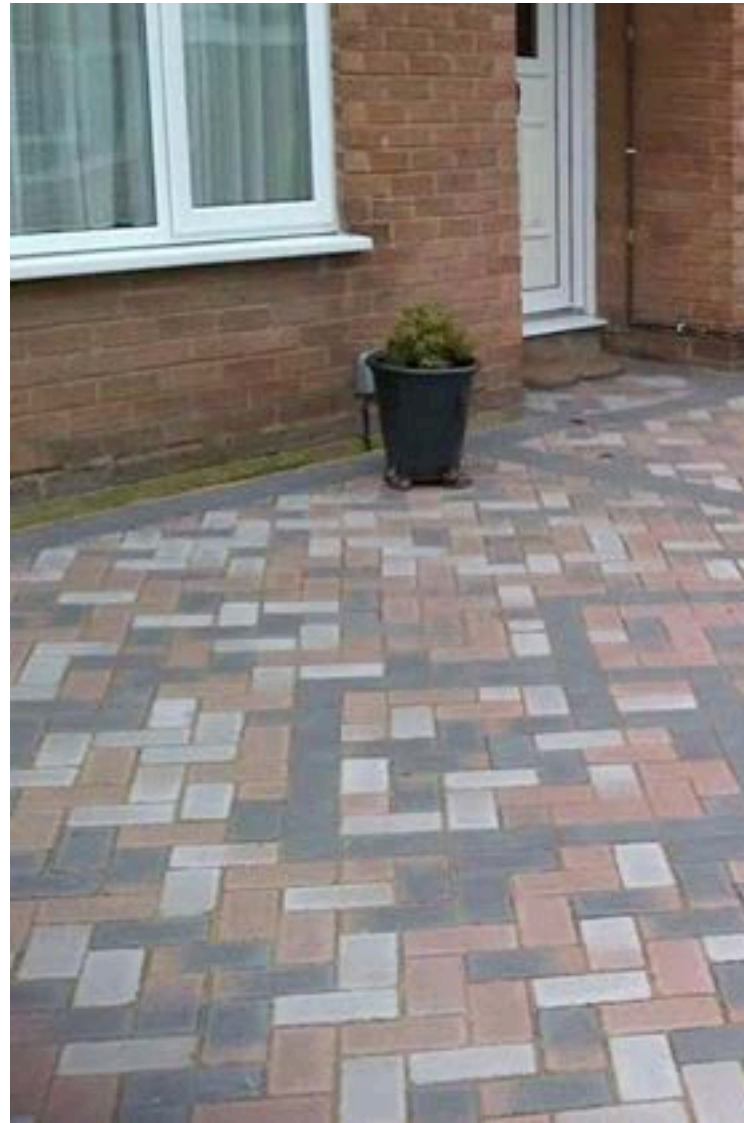
Keep in mind, heavy vehicles (like a skip lorry or moving van) can crack any concrete if the sub-base isn't thick enough, but a standard car or SUV is fine. If you expect unusually heavy loads, mention it to your contractor so they can beef up the base. All in all, a pattern-imprinted concrete driveway gives a sleek, modern appearance that can significantly boost curb appeal and is hard-wearing for daily use. Just factor in resealing as a routine task (every 3–5 years typically) to keep it in top shape and protect against colour fade.

- **Block Paving:** *A perennial favourite for driveways, combining strength with style.* Block paved driveways have been around for decades and remain one of the most common choices. They are highly robust when properly installed – a standard 50-60mm thick block on a compacted sub-base can easily handle cars and vans. For driveways, block paving has a couple of special advantages: repairability (if, say, you spill a load of paint or have to run a cable under the drive, you can lift and re-lay blocks without leaving a trace) and **flexibility** (the small units can accommodate slight ground movement or thermal expansion without cracking). Many drivers appreciate that block surfaces have a bit of texture, which provides **good traction** for tyres and isn't slippery to walk on, even when wet.

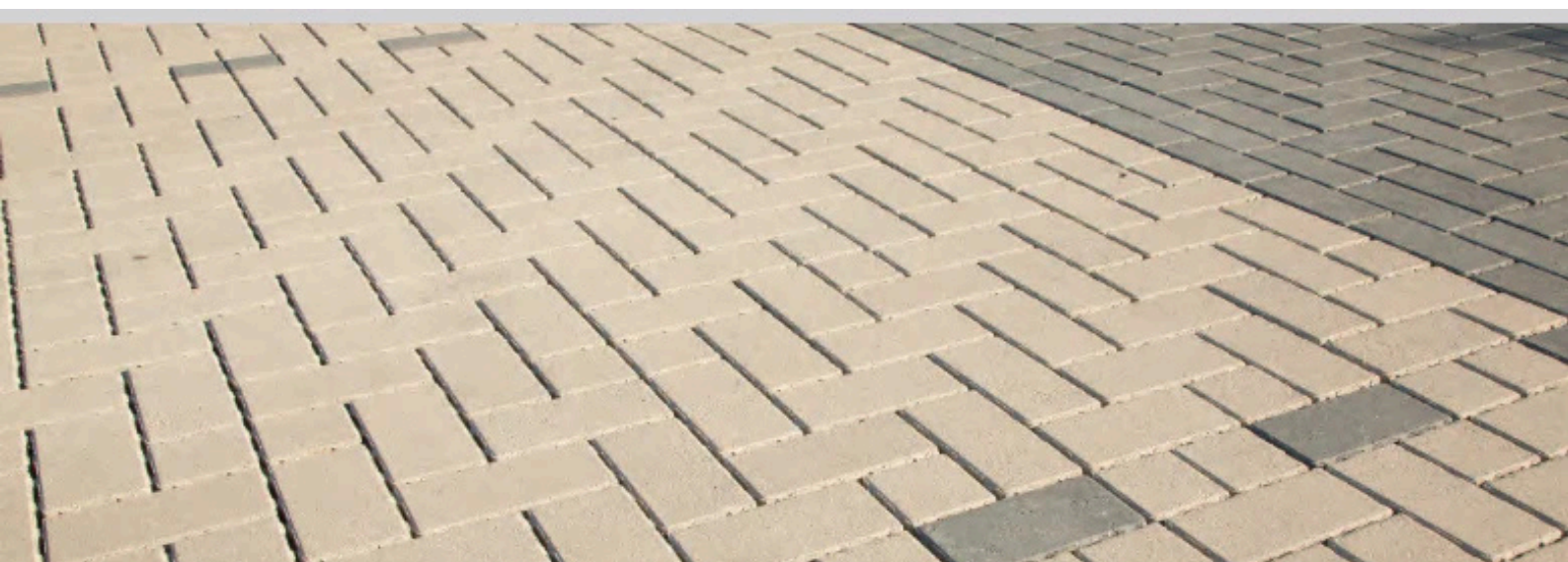


You can also design your drive with **practical features** using block – like integrating manhole covers with inset block trays (so they blend in), or creating a gentle slope or ramp easily by stepping the blocks. Another benefit: blocks are typically **permeable between joints** enough that minor rainfall will soak in before it runs off – though for heavy rain, you'd still need dedicated drainage or use permeable block systems. Aesthetically, a block driveway can be a real showcase: imagine a sweeping herringbone pattern up to the house, maybe with a contrasting border in a different colour. It's a chance to complement your home's brickwork or door colour. Maintenance on a driveway is a bit more involved than on a patio, since the stakes are higher (**weeds in joints**, or settled spots where car wheels go). Plan to weed or treat the joints annually if needed, and **resand** any areas where sand has washed out. Every 5-10 years, a homeowner might also pressure-wash the whole driveway and resand it to freshen it up. One tip: using **sealant** on a driveway can help reduce oil stains – it forms a protective layer. However, sealed blocks may become slightly more slippery and will still require occasional re-sealing, so it's optional.

In terms of longevity, a block driveway done right can last 20+ years; the most common issue is some settlement or rutting where car wheels repeatedly travel, but this can be fixed by relaying those blocks with additional bedding sand if it ever happens. Cost-wise, block paving for a driveway is mid-to-high, but remember – it's an investment with a long lifespan and strong kerb appeal (potential buyers often appreciate a proper block paved drive, and it's often cited as a selling feature). If you want a **reliable, tried-and-true driveway** that is both functional and attractive, you can't go wrong with block paving.



- **Permeable Paving:** *The smart driveway choice for drainage and regulations.* If you're replacing or adding a driveway and want to avoid the hassle of planning permission, or you simply have water drainage issues in your area, a **permeable driveway** is the way forward. Permeable block driveways function just like a regular block driveway for parking cars, but beneath the surface, they act as a mini reservoir for rainwater, slowly letting it seep into the ground. This means no run-off onto the road (and no contribution to local flooding in heavy rain). Practically, what you'll experience is a driveway that never puddles, even after a torrential downpour – the water just vanishes straight down. This can also prevent those annoying ice patches in winter; water doesn't linger on the surface to freeze, so you often get a safer, ice-free drive. If your property is in a low-lying area or you've had issues with water in the garage, permeable paving can alleviate some of that by directing water into the soil rather than towards your house. Installation of a permeable drive is a bit more complex (they'll use different sub-base aggregates and possibly extra drains under), but once it's in, **maintenance isn't bad** – mostly just keeping it from clogging as mentioned earlier. Every few years, flushing or vacuuming the joints can restore permeability if needed. One interesting option is using **permeable resin-bound gravel** for a driveway, which combines permeability with a smooth, wheel-friendly finish (resin-bound is a cousin of resin-bonded, using a different method to create a porous surface). Resin-bound driveways are fully SUDS-compliant and give a very sleek, stone-filled look – though they are pricier (for reference, resin-bound drives often cost between £180-£250/m² including base, quite higher than other options). Meanwhile, permeable block drives cost is roughly similar to or slightly above that of standard block (see pricing section). For most, the **peace of mind** that a permeable driveway offers – knowing you're not going to contribute to flooding and likely won't need extra drainage put in – is a key selling point.



If you have a large driveway area, permeable solutions can save you from installing a big soakaway or drain system, effectively **offsetting some cost**. And if you love the idea of being eco-friendly, you'll appreciate how permeable paving improves water quality by filtering out pollutants. Summing up, choose a permeable driveway if you want the **latest in driveway tech** that harmonises with nature, or if you're required to for planning – it will perform just as well as any traditional driveway while keeping you on the right side of the law and Mother Nature.

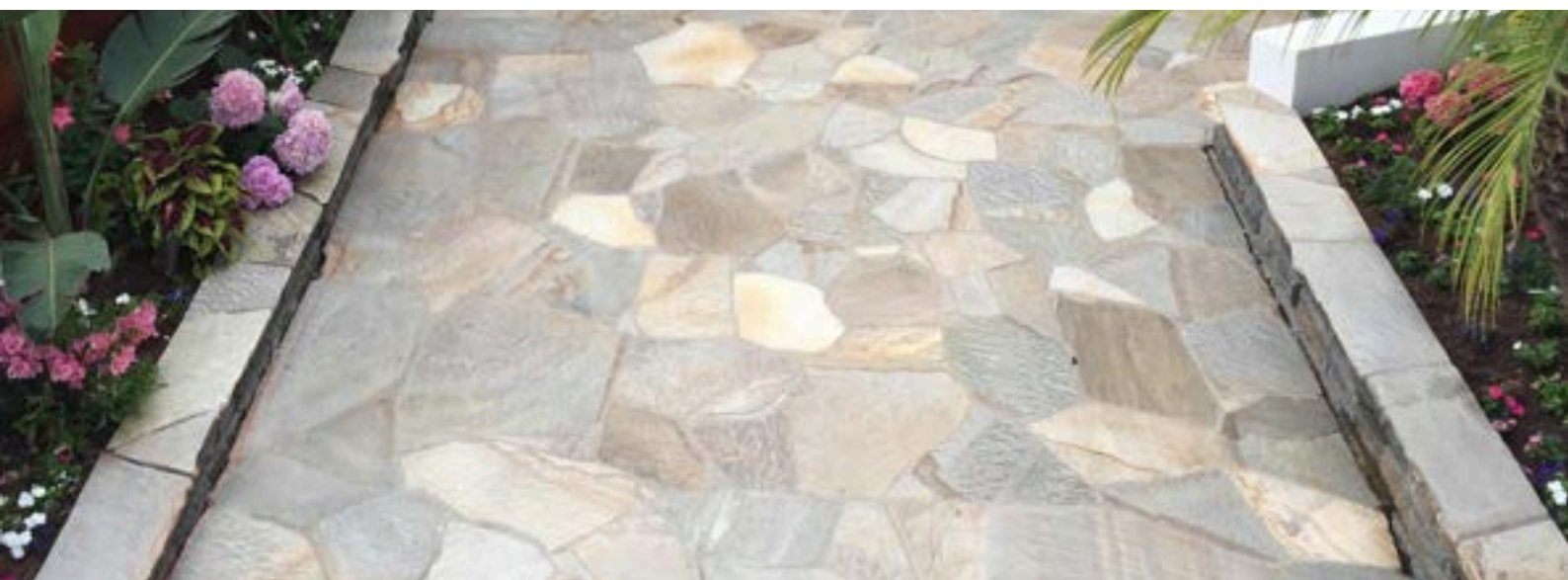
- **Natural Stone Paving:** *High-end and characterful driveways.* A driveway in natural stone is somewhat of a luxury choice – you often see them in upscale or period properties. The classic example is a **cobblestone (stone sett) driveway**, which can last not just decades but centuries (think of old cobbled streets still in place). Stone setts, typically granite or basalt, are small, extremely durable blocks that can withstand heavy vehicle loads. They create a wonderfully **historic and stately look**, perfect for older homes or those looking to add old-world charm.



Another approach is to use thick **flagstones or pavers** (such as 50mm-thick sawn granite slabs) for a very contemporary, luxe driveway. The pros are obvious: it looks absolutely stunning and unique. A well-laid stone driveway can make coming home feel like arriving at a mansion or a quaint country estate, depending on the style. Stone is also **naturally strong** – for example, granite setts won't wear down even after years of tyre friction. And they don't fade in the sun; if anything, they develop a patina that can be power-washed off if you ever want to "reset" the look. The cons primarily revolve around **cost and complexity**.

Stone driveways are expensive – both material and installation costs are high (often at least double the cost of block paving, and more if you use fancy stone). They are labour-intensive to lay; setting each stone and achieving a level, stable surface is skilled work. Also, stone setts mean lots of joints – so yes, **weeds can occur between stones** if you don't maintain or if the joints aren't mortared. Many stone drives use mortar or specialised joint compounds to lock the stones in place and prevent weed growth. A flagstone driveway with mortar joints, on the other hand, has almost no weed issues but requires a solid reinforced base and proper installation to prevent cracking. Another consideration: **noise**. Driving over cobbles makes that familiar rumble (some love it, some might not).

In terms of slipperiness, irregular cobbles can be a bit bumpy to walk on in heels, etc., and if not laid flat, could create puddles – but a good install will avoid that. It's important to ensure your stone driveway complies with drainage rules – usually that means designing it with a proper slope or permeable features (e.g., gravel between setts or drainage channels disguised within the pattern). Stone driveways are rarely permeable unless installed with wide gravel joints or a permeable base, so an ACO drain or similar is often used at the street entrance to catch runoff. In summary, a natural stone driveway is chosen for its **appearance and prestige**. It can absolutely serve as a daily hard-working drive, but you should be prepared for a bit more maintenance (occasional re-pointing of joints or weed patrol, and keeping the surface clean to avoid slick moss). For many, the trade-off is worth it – few things make a home stand out like a gorgeous stone driveway; it's often the detail that makes people say “wow” when they pull up. If your budget allows and the look is what you're after, a natural stone drive is the pinnacle of paving elegance.



- **Resin Bonded Paving:** *A convenient resurfacing option for driveways with a gravel aesthetic.* Resin-bonded driveways have gained popularity as a way to spruce up old driveways or get a distinctive look relatively quickly. They are particularly suited for those who love **gravel driveways** but dislike the maintenance (raking, weeds, unevenness). With a resin-bonded drive, you essentially get a fixed gravel surface, visually similar to loose gravel, complete with the crunch sound, but far less movement of stones. One big advantage is the ease of overlay: if you have a sound existing drive (be it concrete, asphalt, or even pavers), a resin-bonded system can often be applied right on top after proper prep. This can save a lot of time and money on excavation. The finished surface is seamless, with no joints or cracks, which means no weeds poking through (yay!). It's also fairly **thin**, so it doesn't usually require adjusting levels of thresholds or gates by much. In terms of driving performance, resin-bonded surfaces offer **good skid resistance** due to their exposed aggregate texture. Your tyres get grip, and you won't notice any wheel spin even in wet conditions. It also handles foot traffic well – no loose stones means easier walking and no stones scatter onto pavements or into your lawn.

Now, because it's essentially a coating, **longevity** might be a bit less than that of thicker pavers; you can expect a resin-bonded driveway to last maybe 10-15 years before it might need renewal, depending on usage and how well it was installed. Over those years, the top may lose some aggregate in high-stress areas (like where you turn your steering wheel while stationary). If you have a habit of, say, turning the car around in the driveway daily, you might eventually see some surface wear. However, you can mitigate that by choosing a smaller aggregate (which tends to lock in more) or simply being gentle on it.



Another plus: resin drives are typically **easy to clean** – a light power wash can remove dirt without disturbing anything (just avoid blasting directly downward too close, to keep stones in place). One of the few downsides is that it's not permeable, so, like PIC and standard paving, you need to handle water runoff appropriately. Most resin drives are laid to falls, or perimeter drains are installed if needed. If your driveway is flat, we'd add a slight gradient or a drainage channel to ensure water doesn't sit. Also, any significant cracks or instability in the existing base must be fixed first, because resin-bonded is a bit of a "skin" – it doesn't bridge gaps well. If your old concrete is cracked, those cracks could reflect through over time. Lastly, while many people DIY gravel or slabs, **resin is not a great DIY project**; it's chemistry! Mixing and spreading resin evenly and broadcasting aggregate correctly are skills, and doing it wrong can lead to bald patches or an uneven finish. So professional installation is key.

All things considered, a resin-bonded driveway is a fantastic way to achieve a **decorative, hard-wearing surface** relatively fast. It's especially appealing if you want to rejuvenate an old drive without a full rebuild, or if you love the look of stone but need a stable surface for wheeled devices (bikes, wheelie bins, mobility scooters) that roll effortlessly on resin compared to loose gravel. It's a happy medium between conventional paving and loose aggregates, giving you the benefits of both. If installed right, you'll have a driveway that neighbours might assume is loose gravel, until they notice how clean and even it stays!



Driveway Tip: In England and Wales, if you're paving over a front garden of more than 5m² with **non-permeable** materials, you are required to ensure water runs off to a permeable area (like a lawn or flower bed) or have planning permission and proper drainage. This effectively means most new or expanded driveways should either be permeable or have a drainage solution. It's wise to incorporate drainage channels or soakaways when building the driveway if using impermeable surfaces. All the options above can be made to comply, either by choosing permeable variants or by adding drainage. TDS Paving will always guide you on the best approach to meet regulations.



Also, consider adding an **edging or apron** to your driveway. For example, a contrasting border in block paving or a stone edging can not only enhance the look but also protect the sides of the driveway surface from crumbling or spreading (particularly for asphalt or resin surfaces). And don't forget practicality: ensure the design allows comfortable access in and out of your car, and consider adding a firm path or stepping stones if you have to cross a grass verge (you don't want to step onto mud when exiting your car).

Lastly, think about staining: if you have lots of trees (sap, berries) or you work on cars (oil spills), either choose a forgiving colour/pattern or be ready to do some cleaning. A mottled or darker surface will hide incidental stains better than a pristine light one. Regularly hosing the drive and using driveway cleaner annually can keep it looking fresh. With a bit of care, your new driveway will serve you reliably and look fantastic for years.

Not sure which paving option makes sense for your driveway? Apply for a no-obligation consultation, and we'll compare what really matters: drainage and puddles, front-drive planning considerations, maintenance (weeds/sealing/cleaning), accessibility, and the real cost drivers. You'll receive a clear, written quote—so you can decide in your own time.

[Click here to go to our online quote request form.](#)

Garden Pathways: Safe, Attractive Walkways

Garden and side pathways are the unsung heroes of landscaping – they connect spaces, guide foot traffic, and can themselves be lovely design features. For paths, the priorities are **safety (non-slip, even surface)**, **aesthetic harmony with the garden**, and, in many cases, **ease of installation in tighter or winding spaces**. Paths usually see only foot traffic (and maybe wheelbarrows or bikes), so heavy-duty strength isn't as critical as with driveways. This opens up more possibilities, including some DIY-friendly ones for short paths. Let's see how each surface works for pathways:



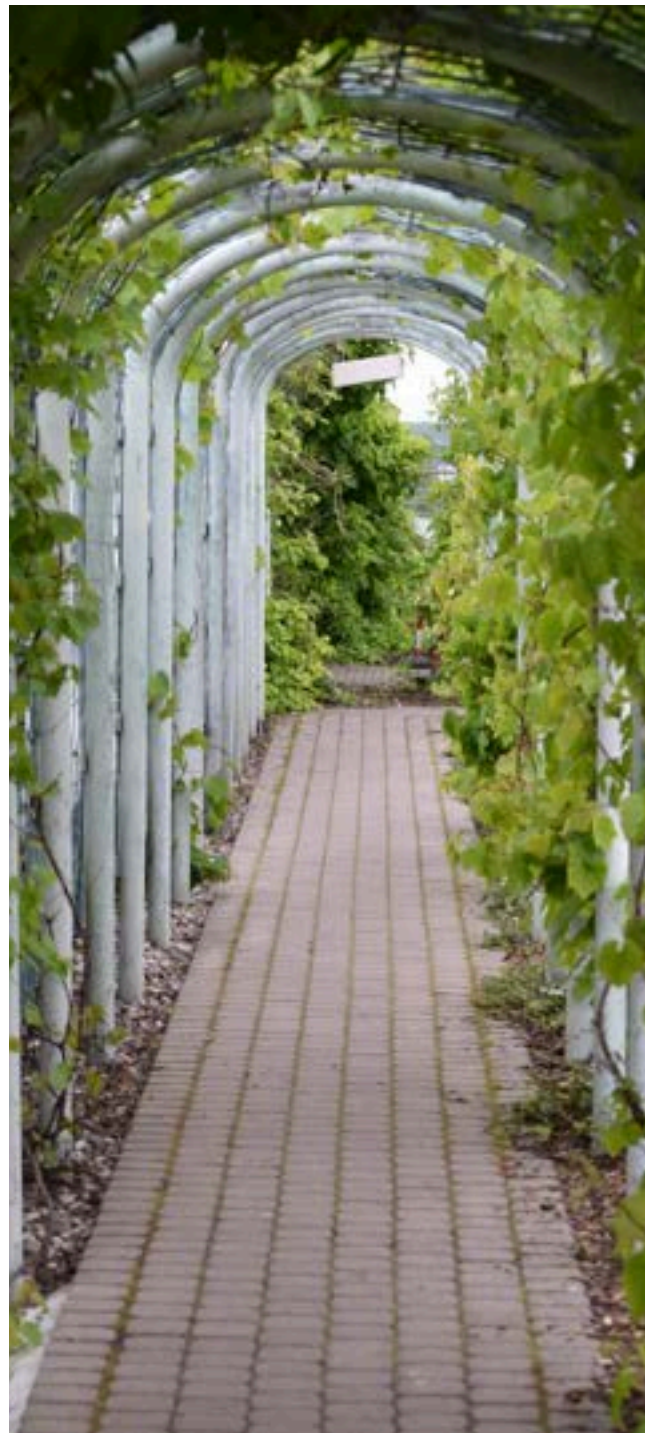
Pattern Imprinted Concrete: *Less common for narrow paths, but possible.* You can certainly do a patterned concrete garden path – it will have all the weed-free, low-maintenance benefits of PIC. Imagine a front walkway to your door in a brick or stone pattern that matches your driveway – it can look very smart and **welcoming**. The main challenge is that pouring concrete for a long, narrow path needs good formwork and the ability to imprint in a confined area, which might be tricky if your path curves or is very skinny.

Often, PIC is more cost-effective in larger slabs (there's a bit of setup overhead that doesn't scale down well). But if you have a straight or gently curved path and want it to last ages with zero weed concerns, PIC will do the job. Texturing is important on a path – you don't want a super smooth finish because paths can get slippery from rain or moss; thankfully, PIC patterns are inherently textured (e.g., stamped slate or brick has grooves and ridges that provide grip). One advantage is you can incorporate **steps or ramps** into the pour if your path goes up an incline – the concrete can be shaped accordingly and then imprinted, creating a seamless transition. Also, if the path is adjacent to a house wall or fence, PIC can be laid right up to it with no gaps. Just remember drainage: a concrete path should be slightly pitched to one side or crowned so water doesn't pool on it (this also avoids icy patches in winter).

Maintenance is virtually nil – maybe just a reseal every few years if you want to keep it looking like new and prevent algae from dulling it. One anecdotal point: many people avoid concrete for garden paths, thinking it might look too hard or “commercial”. But with imprinting and colouring, it can actually blend in nicely – for example, a cobblestone stamp in an earthy tone can complement a garden style well. If you do go for PIC on a path, consider adding a **decorative border** (such as a different stamp or a bevelled edge) to give it a finished look. All told, PIC is probably a top choice for *side paths* (like along the side of a house where you just want a clean, no-fuss walkway for bins, etc.), and a good but less usual choice for *garden paths* where other materials often dominate.

Block Paving: *One of the best choices for paths – versatile and attractive.* Block paving excels as a pathway because of its modular nature. You can easily follow curves or make intricate designs on a path using small pavers. A simple garden path in a **herringbone or stretcher bond** pattern looks neat and can tie together with a patio or driveway design. Blocks provide a nice, **firm, even surface** for walking, pushing prams, or moving your wheelie bins. They also handle the UK freeze-thaw cycle well, so you won't get spalling or cracking – any movement is absorbed by tiny shifts in the sand base. If a tree root upheaves a section, you can lift, address the root, and re-lay – try that with solid concrete!

For safety, block paving is generally a **winner**: most blocks have chamfered edges and a gritty surface, giving good traction and little risk of tripping as long as they're laid flush. One thing to watch: over many years, the blocks right at the edges of a path can loosen if not restrained (especially if someone constantly steps on the path edge).



That's why using an edge restraint (like a soldier course of blocks on concrete or a hidden concrete margin) is important to keep a path tidy. Maintenance is like any block surface – keep the joints sanded and clear out debris to prevent weed growth. Paths tend to accumulate leaves and such, so a quick sweep every so often and perhaps a pressure wash each spring will keep algae at bay. A nice aesthetic aspect: you can mix block paving with other path materials. For instance, a central path of concrete pavers with a border of granite setts, or alternating bands of colour, etc. Blocks also integrate well with steps – you can build steps out of block paving by using riser blocks or kerb units. If your garden path involves steps up a slope, block paving ensures everything matches.

Also, for permeability, you can use permeable jointing or permeable blocks on a path if needed (though in gardens it's usually less of a concern compared to driveways). And finally, because paths are narrow-ish, the cost for using high-quality blocks is usually manageable – you can splurge on a nice paver for your path without breaking the bank, because the area is small. From cottage-garden stepping-stone paths (yes, blocks can even mimic that if laid with gaps for ground cover) to formal straight paths, block paving is a *top-tier choice for walkways*. It's hard to find a downside, except maybe that you'll have some weeds if you truly never sweep or maintain it – but that's the case for any open-joint paving.



Permeable Paving: *A great idea for paths in waterlogged areas.* While most garden paths don't strictly need to be permeable, there are scenarios where it's beneficial. For example, if you're laying a path through a lawn and you don't want the path to interrupt drainage or cause the lawn to get soggy along the edges, a permeable path lets rain pass through as if it were still lawn. Permeable block paving for a path would work just like for a driveway – same benefits of no puddles, quick drying after rain, and environmental friendliness. One cool option is using permeable paver grids filled with gravel or even grass for a path. Some homeowners use **plastic grid tiles** that clip together: fill them with gravel, and you have a stabilised gravel path that you can even mow over if grass grows in – it looks natural, but you won't sink into mud.

These are superb for low-impact garden paths, especially in eco-conscious or wild gardens. They're also DIY-friendly for small sections. If your path leads to a water feature or you live in a conservation area, using permeable materials can show a bit of extra care for the environment. On the flip side, if you have a very leafy garden, you will need to watch out for those leaves clogging a permeable surface. But a quick sweep after leaf-fall will sort that out. Another plus: permeable paths can count towards your property's SUDS compliance if you're doing multiple areas; for instance, if you have a new extension with patio that's non-permeable, making connecting paths permeable helps offset the runoff.



In terms of **appearance**, permeable paths can look like any other – if done with permeable blocks or resin-bound aggregate, most folks won't even notice. Or they can be deliberately rustic, like a crunchy gravel track. So, consider permeable paving for your path if drainage is tricky in your garden (e.g., clay soil that puddles) or you simply want to incorporate sustainable drainage principles. Walking on permeable block or resin-bound paths feels the same as the non-permeable version – solid and secure. And you'll love seeing the rain just soak in rather than form puddles, especially in those heavy downpours that seem to be more common these days!

Natural Stone Paving: *Arguably the most charming material for garden paths.* If you flip through any gardening magazine, you'll likely see beautiful stone paths gracing many landscapes. Natural stone is made for garden pathways in many ways. Flagstones (irregular or cut) can be laid as stepping stones through a lawn or set in a continuous path with mortar joints. Each piece of stone adds character, and as it ages, it can get a bit mossy along the edges, blending into the garden as if it's always been there. For a **front path**, something like a row of sandstone slabs or slate tiles can greatly enhance curb appeal, leading guests to your door in style. For meandering **back garden paths**, consider materials like slate pabblestones or small setts to create curved paths that look straight out of a storybook.

Stone is sturdy for foot traffic – no concerns there – and won't shift if laid properly. Do be mindful of **slip potential**: polished stone is a no-no for paths; go for naturally riven or textured finish stones for grip, or at least apply a treatment if using a smooth stone. In damp shade, some stones can get algae, so you may occasionally need to scrub a stone path to keep it safe (a bit of bleach solution can help). Stone paths can be set in gravel or sand for a permeable solution, or on concrete for solidity. If you opt for spaced-out stepping stones (a common and lovely approach in lawns or gravel beds), make sure the spacing suits a comfortable stride – typically about 55-65cm from centre to centre of each stone or average adults. One downside to stone is cost – but since paths are usually not huge, you might find it affordable to use nice stone since the area is small.



Also, **installation skill**: fitting irregular stones together is like art; our TDS installers have the experience to do it beautifully, but DIYers might find it like solving a jigsaw puzzle. A tip: lay out pieces on the ground to get a pleasing arrangement before bedding them in. If your path will see things like bicycle traffic, note that very uneven stones can be bumpy, so flatter cut stone might be better in that case than random flagstone. Also consider edging: stone paths often benefit from a stable edging (brick, metal, wood) to keep adjacent soil or grass from encroaching and to hold everything in place. Ultimately, a stone path is as much an aesthetic feature as a functional one – it can transform the vibe of your garden, making a stroll through it feel special. Whether it's a thyme-filled crazy-paving path or a formal geometric walkway, natural stone will deliver beauty and function in equal measure.

Resin Bonded Paving: *Good for secondary paths or quick fixes.* For pathways, especially those where you might want a uniform look matching a driveway, resin-bonded can be used. It's particularly handy if you have an old concrete garden path that's structurally sound but looks drab – just as with driveways, a resin-bonded overlay can rejuvenate it instantly. It's a way to get a **gravel path aesthetic without loose gravel**, which is great for side paths where you drag bins (no more wheels sinking into gravel) or for accessibility (smooth for wheelchairs yet textured for slip resistance). The thin profile means you won't create a big step up at thresholds, etc., by adding it. For a garden path, you might choose a reddish-brown aggregate to mimic traditional gravel, or a bright honey colour to light up a shady side return. Maintenance on a resin path is minimal – occasional sweep, and maybe a wash.

No weeds will poke through the solid resin layer, which is music to many ears! However, if the path is through a garden bed or under trees, be aware that soil can accumulate on top over time; you'll want to keep it clean, or moss might grow on that dirt layer. Also, resin paths are best on **straight or gently curved runs**; if you have lots of tight curves, cutting and shaping a continuous resin layer is a bit harder (though not impossible – we'd use flexible edging to define the shape and pour within that). Another consideration: a resin-bonded path will be fairly firm underfoot – that's good for stability, but if you prefer a softer, rustic path (like bark or gravel feel), it's a different experience.

On balance, for a practical, clean-looking path, resin-bonded surfaces do a fine job. They can especially shine in **modern gardens** where you want a sleek, uninterrupted look for paths that complement resin or modern paved patios. Also, if you have steps on your path, the gritty texture of resin-bonded aggregate can improve grip on step treads nicely, though you'd likely combine it with concrete or stone steps. Keep in mind that, like other non-permeables, resin paths should be sloped to shed water or have drainage planned, because you don't want water pooling (most paths naturally slope a bit to one side or another anyway). Overall, resin-bonded is somewhat of a specialist choice for paths – not the most common, but where used, it provides a **solid, uniform walkway** that's easy to traverse and maintain.



Pathway Tip: First, think about the *purpose* of your path: is it a lightly used garden stroll path, a main route to the front door, or a utilitarian side alley? This will guide how decorative vs. how practical it should be. For heavily used paths (front door entries, side paths for bins), prioritise **even footing and durability** – block paving, resin, concrete or smooth stone are great. For meandering garden paths that are more about exploration, you can afford to use quirkier materials and accept a bit more upkeep – like log slices (though not covered here, some people use wooden stepping disks), loose gravel, or stepping stones.

Always ensure paths are slightly above the surrounding soil or have good edging; a path that's level or below ground level can become a mud channel in rain. If you have poor mobility or anticipate older family members using the garden, flatter surfaces and avoiding trip hazards becomes crucial – so perhaps skip the very uneven cobbles or raised stepping stones and go for something flush like block or bound gravel.

Another tip: **lighting**. Consider installing pathway lighting (solar stakes, LED strips, or lanterns) along any path for safety and ambience. Most paving options here allow for integrating lights – you can notch blocks for lights or run conduit under PIC or resin easily before it sets. Lastly, width: ensure your path is wide enough for its use. 750mm is an absolute minimum for one person; ~900-1200mm is better for comfortable walking or two people side by side. If using large format slabs or patterns, design the width to fit whole units to avoid awkward cuts. With thoughtful planning and the right surface choice, your paths will be both functional and a delightful part of your landscape!



Pricing Guide & Cost Considerations

It's important to have an idea of **budget** when choosing your paving, as costs can vary significantly between materials. Below is a rough guide to typical installed prices for each surface type, in **£ per square metre (m²)**, based on UK averages. These estimates include both materials and labour for a professional installation (inclusive of VAT), assuming a fairly standard job with existing access and base preparation. Keep in mind prices can fluctuate with region, project complexity, and current material costs – but these ranges **provide a ballpark figure ONLY**:

Paving Surface	Typical Installed Price (per m ²)
Pattern Imprinted Concrete	£75 – £90 (avg. ~£80)
Block Paving (Standard)	£95 – £140 (avg. ~£120)
Permeable Paving (blocks or grids)	£120 – £170 (avg. ~£145)
Natural Stone Paving (flags or setts)	£170 – £250 (premium range)
Resin Bonded Gravel	£80 – £120 (overlay on prepared base)

Average costs are drawn from recent industry data, including Checkatrade and Cost Estimator guides for 2025-26.

Notes on pricing: These figures are **indicative only** – actual quotes will depend on many factors. For example, natural stone has a wide price range: basic imported sandstone might be at the lower end (~£100/m² for some patio kits), whereas high-end Yorkstone or granite setts with complex laying patterns can be well beyond £200/m². Similarly, block paving costs can vary depending on whether you choose standard concrete blocks, clay pavers, or complex designs.

Groundworks and site conditions play a major role in cost. If your project needs significant **excavation, new sub-base installation, or drainage work**, that will add to the price. For instance, digging out an old driveway and disposing of the spoil, then laying a new hardcore foundation, could account for a substantial portion of the cost. **Site access** is another factor – a back garden with narrow access, where all materials must be wheelbarrowed in, will cost more in labour than an open front drive, where a lorry can tip materials in.

Location in the UK also influences price; for example, Southern England and London areas tend to have higher labour rates (often 10-20% more) than the North or Midlands, so adjust expectations accordingly if you live in an expensive area. **Drainage requirements** can add cost too – installing linear drains, soakaways, or permeable membranes will involve extra materials and labour. However, sometimes opting for a permeable solution can save on other drainage costs.

Be aware of **unusual site conditions**: if your ground is unstable (clay that heaves, or ground with a lot of tree roots or old building rubble), additional preparation, such as a deeper dig-out or geotextile membranes, might be needed. Likewise, if your design includes features like steps, walls, or fancy edging, factor in extra expense for those elements.



All the above surfaces have different maintenance costs over time (as discussed earlier), but, purely in installation terms, resin-bonded and pattern-imprinted concrete often come out a bit cheaper than block or stone for the same area, **provided the existing base is usable**. If a new base is needed, that narrows the gap. Natural stone is usually the priciest upfront, but many consider it an investment in beauty and longevity. Block paving sits in the middle, offering a balance of cost and flexibility.

When budgeting, also consider **wastage and extras**: ordering a bit more material than needed (usually 5-10%) for cuts and breakages, and any extras like manhole covers, drainage channels, edging kerbs, sealing (for blocks or PIC), etc. Most quotes will itemise these. And don't forget the value of a quality installer – a slightly higher labour cost for an excellent crew is worth it to avoid problems down the line (re-laying a failed surface is far more costly than doing it right initially!).

In summary, use the table above as a starting guide. **We at TDS Paving provide detailed quotes that break down all these aspects**, so you'll know exactly where your money is going. Prices might seem daunting, but remember that a well-built driveway or patio not only enhances your daily life but also **adds real value to your property** and can last for generations. Always get a couple of quotes, check what's included, and ensure you're comparing like-for-like (one quote might include better base prep or thicker slabs, for example). We're happy to advise on ways to achieve your look within budget – often there are clever tweaks (like using a decorative border in a costlier material with a cheaper main field, or opting for standard colours vs custom) that can save money while still delivering a fantastic result.

Indicative pricing sources: Average costs are drawn from recent industry data, including Checkatrade and Cost Estimator guides. For example, imprinted concrete driveways average around £80/m² installed, standard concrete block paving around **£100/m²**, and resin-bonded overlay systems roughly **£80-£120/m²** (excluding any significant base reconstruction). Natural stone tends to start above **£100/m²** and goes upward with the choice of stone and complexity. Permeable block installations typically add ~10-20% over non-permeable due to the specialised sub-base and materials. These figures are 2025-2026 estimates and may change due to material costs and economic conditions.

Conclusion & Next Steps

We hope this comprehensive guide has helped demystify the world of paving for you. By now, you should have a clearer idea of which surface might best suit your patio, driveway, or pathway project – be it the custom flair of pattern-imprinted concrete, the trusty elegance of block paving, the eco-friendly permeable options, the timeless beauty of natural stone, or the quick-transforming resin-bonded finish. Each material has its own charm and set of advantages, and there's truly no one-size-fits-all answer. It comes down to your personal preferences, practical needs, and budget.

A few parting pieces of advice as you plan your home improvement: - Visualise & Plan: Take some time to visualise the end result. Sketch the layout, mark out the area in your garden, or use online tools. Sometimes, even laying out ropes or hoses to simulate the shape of a new patio or path can help you picture it. This will ensure you're happy with the size and shape before any work begins. - Consider Phasing: If budget is a concern, you can tackle projects in stages. Perhaps the driveway first, then the patio next year, etc.

Plan the overall design now (so things match or complement), and do them as funds allow. TDS Paving can help phase projects in a sensible way. - Think Long-Term: Choose materials and colours that you'll love for years. It's usually a significant investment, so while that hot pink block might be trendy today, neutrals and natural tones tend to age better (and appeal to future buyers). You can always add pops of colour with landscaping or furnishings. - Ask Questions: When getting quotes or advice, don't hesitate to ask questions about the install process, guarantees, maintenance, or anything you're unsure about. A reputable installer will be happy to explain. We take pride in educating our customers – an informed client is a happy client!

Permits & Permissions: Check if you need any permissions (for example, dropping a kerb for a new driveway, or those drainage rules we mentioned). We can guide you through any regulatory steps if needed.

Quality Matters: Finally, whichever paving type you choose, invest in quality materials and installation. Cutting corners can lead to failures like sinking, cracking or deteriorating surfaces, which end up costing more to fix.

With TDS Paving, you can be confident we use proven products and follow best practices (we even guarantee our work, because we believe in doing it right the first time)

Your outdoor spaces are an extension of your home. Enhancing them not only adds value but can truly improve your day-to-day lifestyle – from enjoying summer BBQs on a stunning patio to not stepping in mud when taking out the bins to having a driveway that makes you proud every time you park. We at TDS Paving & Landscaping are passionate about creating these happy outcomes for homeowners across the UK.

Next Steps: If you're feeling inspired and ready to take the next step, why not reach out for a **free consultation and quote?** We can visit your property, discuss your ideas, show you samples of materials, and provide a detailed proposal tailored to your needs. Our friendly team is here to answer any questions you have, no matter how early you are in the decision process. Whether you have exact specs in mind or just a vague idea ("I'd like something low maintenance and pretty for the back garden..."), we're happy to offer suggestions.

Thank you for reading our Homeowner's Guide to Paving. We hope you found it informative and reassuring. With the right information (and the right contractor!), upgrading your paving is not daunting at all – it's an exciting project that can really transform your home's look and functionality.

When you're ready to proceed or if you need further advice, TDS Paving is just a phone call or email away. Let's work together to create surfaces you'll love for years to come, and turn your outdoor dreams into a solid, beautiful reality!

— The TDS Paving Team

Not sure which paving option makes sense for your project? Apply for a no-obligation consultation, and we'll compare what really matters: drainage and puddles, front-drive planning considerations, maintenance (weeds/sealing/cleaning), accessibility, and the real cost drivers. You'll receive a clear, written quote—so you can decide in your own time.

Call us at 0800 0568 768, email us at sales@tdspaving.co.uk, or click the link below to complete a quick quotation request form.

[Click here to go to our online quote request form.](#)