

# Stepping Stones



Stepping stones and paving blocks are available for purchase however it is also an easy, fun, creative and inexpensive activity for children to make them. A 'recipe' and a few suggestions for decorating stepping stones are provided below:

## To make stepping stones you will need:

- A four litre ice cream container per child
- Large jar of petroleum jelly
- Bags of quick set cement mix. One bag will make approximately 75 stones if they are 75 mm thick
- Masonry paint, non slip mosaic tiles, or other things to decorate the masterpieces!

Ensure the ice cream containers are clean, coat the inside with a good covering of petroleum jelly to make it easy to get the 'stones' out once dry.

Have an adult pour approximately 50 to 75 mm of quick set cement into the ice cream container. Be sure to read and follow the safety precautions and instructions on the cement packaging. To make this easier you can mark the ice cream containers with a line on the sides, 50 to 75 mm up from the base. Add sufficient water to make a good moist mix and stir well until it is the consistency of a cake mix.



Children can decorate the stones with their handprints (it is recommended that latex gloves be worn whenever working with cement), imprints of leaves, or non-slip mosaic tiles (available from a tile shop) in a pattern, while the cement is still wet. Alternatively, once dry, the children can paint the stones with masonry paint making any pattern at all. You may like to think about a theme for the tiles – rainbow serpent with each tile being part of the long snake, a beach scene, or individual birds, reptiles or other wildlife.

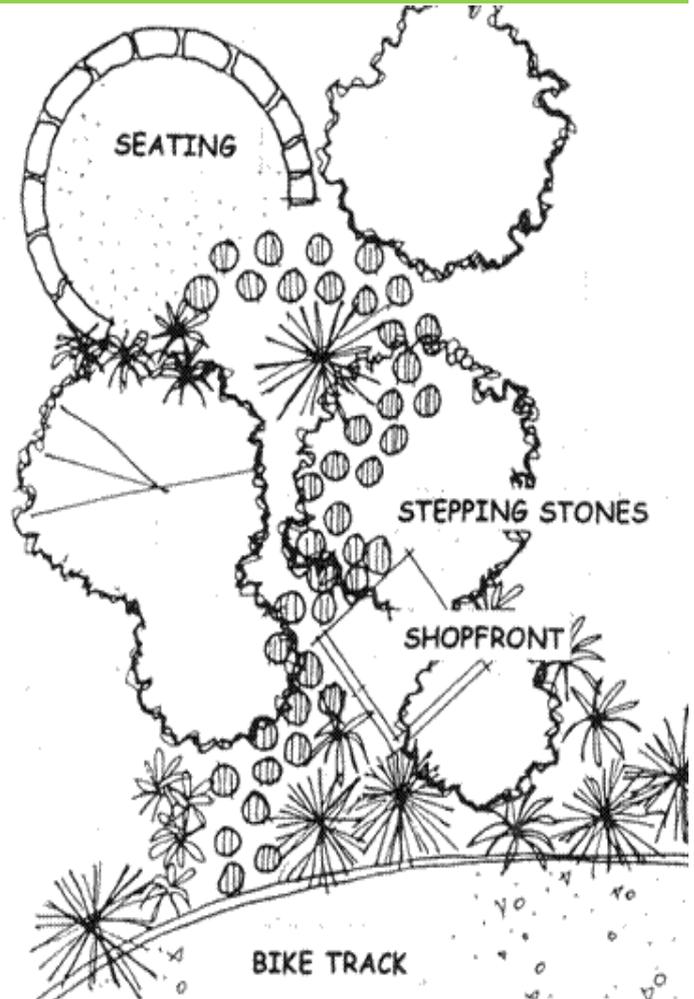
Allow the stepping stones to cure and set by placing an old washcloth or fabric on the design and spraying it with water several times. Wait until fully cured before removing the stepping stone from the mould. Turn the stepping stone out by inverting the container over grass or another soft surface.





### To lay stepping stones:

- Place the stones one child's footprint apart (if it's a path for adults then use one adult's footprint apart).
- Excavate holes a little bigger than the stones and approximately 100 mm deep.
- Place a pad of wet cement in the hole and position the stone on top. Tap all over the stone gently with a rubber mallet to ensure the stone is pushed into the pad of cement so it won't wobble.
- Place a spirit level over the stone in every direction, to ensure it is level and adjust as necessary.
- The stones should be flush with the surrounding ground level or mulched garden to avoid trip hazards.



If you are using the stones as stepping stones in a path then remember that the best paths are ones that meander through a garden, making you feel like you want to explore and find out what's around the next corner.

The stones may meander around shrubs or trees to connect one section of the playspace to another, or to arrive at a focal point or 'special' place in the playspace. Stepping stones can also be laid in a grid pattern to make a paved area with grass or herbs planted between them.



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