



Aggregate Information Guide

Driveway Materials:

Crushed Gravel

Crushed Gravel (or, Crushed Aggregate) is produced by crushing ledge rock or larger gravel and then screening it to a specific size. Crushed gravel contains angular stone and stone dust ("fines") that are designed to lock together tightly when compacted.



Advantages:

- Compacts much tighter; more stable under vehicle traffic
- Less rutting and washboarding
- Better for driveways and parking areas

Disadvantages:

- More expensive



Sizes:

- 3" minus contains larger stones and is recommended for building strong driveway bases and/or building up very low areas
- 1.5" minus contains medium-sized stones and is recommended as a middle layer when building new driveways, as a base layer for parking areas & shed/garage sites, or to build up moderately low areas/soft spots on an existing driveway
- 3/4" minus contains smaller stones and is recommended as a top layer when building a new driveway, or to cap/grade/resurface existing driveways that already have a solid base. 3/4" will give a smoother surface and the best compaction at the surface; ideal for snow plowing.

Rip Rap

Rip rap consists of large, angular rocks with little-to-no 'fines' designed to protect soil from erosion. Rip rap is commonly used for culverts, ditches, steep slopes, and shorelines. Geotextile filter fabric is recommended to be installed before layering on rip rap to prevent underlying soil from washing out.



Sand & Fill:

Bank Run Sand

Bank run sand is a natural, unprocessed mix of sand, clay, silt & small stones excavated directly from a riverbank or gravel pit.

Advantages:

- A cost-effective option for filling deep holes, building up terrain, and backfilling utility trenches
- Erosion-resistant (vs. loose sand)
- Good compaction; can act as a solid base

Disadvantages:

- Doesn't drain as quickly because of the 'fines'
- Quality varies by pit; not a universal standard



Foundation Sand

Sometimes called 'screened sand' is processed to remove oversized material and most 'fines'; resulting in a sand product with coarse sand and very little silt or clay.

Advantages:

- Excellent drainage; doesn't hold water
- Consistent material

Disadvantages:

- More expensive than bank run sand
- Doesn't lock together; can wash away if left exposed on slopes



Beach Sand

Beach Sand is naturally rounded from years of wave action. It usually contains very fine rounded sand particles, and little-to-no angular material. It's commonly used for beaches, sandboxes, playgrounds & volleyball courts; not for structural projects.

Advantages:

- Soft underfoot; great for recreation
- Easy to rake

Disadvantages:

- Compacts poorly; shifts underfoot



Bank Run Gravel

Bank run gravel is natural gravel excavated directly from a gravel pit with little or no processing.

Advantages:

- Usually the cheapest gravel product
- Good for filling large holes, building up low areas, and rough grading

Disadvantages:

- Less consistent quality; can contain oversized rocks
- Doesn't compact as tightly as crushed gravel; not ideal as a finished driveway surface



Fill

Fill can mean something different at each gravel pit, however it's generally a low quality mix of dirt, rocks of varying sizes, and other miscellaneous materials

Advantages:

- Usually the least expensive product to fill holes or very low areas where material quality doesn't matter, and drainage is not a primary concern

Disadvantages:

- No consistency; can contain larger boulders, roots, and even rubbish



Stone Products

Stone Dust

Stone dust, or 'crusher dust' is a very fine material consisting of angular particles ranging from powder up to 1/8" in size. Commonly used under pavers & patios, not in driveway construction.

Advantages:

- When moistened & compacted, stone dust compacts into a very tight hard surface
- Interlocks when compacted; more erosion resistant than sand

Disadvantages:

- Doesn't drain as well as sand
- Retains moisture, so can be susceptible to frost heaves



Washed Stone

Washed Stone, or Crushed Stone, is the term for loose crushed angular stone that's been rinsed with water to remove dust, clay, and other 'fines'. Commonly used for landscape pathways, dry riverbeds, and as ground cover; also a standard material for French drains, retaining wall backfill.



Advantages:

- Processed to remove 'fines'; allows water to pass through cleanly and doesn't track dirt/stone dust when walked on
- Sorted to uniform sizes for a consistent appearance
- Unlike raw unwashed gravel, washed stone has a more polished look and is visually appealing for pathways, gardens, and fire pits
- Angular stone can be compacted and is easier to walk on than round stone/pea stone

Disadvantages:

- More expensive than crushed gravel
- Not ideal as a driveway material, as it cannot be as tightly compacted without 'fines'. Not great for snow plowing/snow blowing.

River Rock

River rocks are natural stones that have been rounded over time by water in river or streams. They are a premium landscape rock used as a ground cover, decorative filler, and in water features.



Advantages:

- Attractive, natural appearance
- Excellent for drainage
- More permanent groundcover than mulch in garden areas

Disadvantages:

- Expensive
- Shifts underfoot; can feel unstable when walking on
- Snow removal & leaf removal can be more difficult
- Not recommended for driveways

Pea Gravel

Pea gravel, or 'pea pebbles', are a type of river rock. They're small and usually consistent sized, around 3/8" to 1/2". Recommended for decorative use only.

Advantages:

- Attractive, natural appearance
- Excellent for drainage
- More permanent groundcover than mulch in garden areas

Disadvantages:

- Expensive
- Shifts underfoot; difficult to walk on
- Snow removal & leaf removal are difficult
- Not recommended for driveways



Lawn & Garden Soil

Loam

Loam is a mix of sand, silt, clay, and organic material; ideally blended to balance moisture retention, drainage, and nutrients. Loam and 'topsoil' are not the same thing; 'topsoil' is a non-standard term and depending on the supplier/brand it may or may not be of good quality. Loam is the gold standard for lawns, perennial gardens, trees & shrubs.



Advantages:

- Intended to be used as a high-quality soil for seeding healthy lawns, or for planting perennials, shrubs & trees in
- For most plants, loam is the perfect mixture as-is with no amendments

Disadvantages:

- More expensive than 'dirt' or 'topsoil'