

VANCOUVER INTERLOCK

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## Design & Planning

Interlock project layout, pattern selection, material budgeting, permit requirements, and drainage planning for Metro Vancouver hardscaping projects

20 Expert Answers from Interlock IQ

[vancouverinterlock.com/construction-brain](https://vancouverinterlock.com/construction-brain)

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## How much does it cost to hire an interlock designer in Vancouver?

**Interlock design services in Metro Vancouver typically cost \$500-\$2,500 for residential projects, depending on the scope and complexity of your hardscape vision.**

Most homeowners working with experienced interlock contractors don't need to hire a separate designer, as skilled installers provide design consultation as part of their service. However, for complex outdoor living spaces, challenging sloped lots, or high-end custom hardscaping, a dedicated landscape designer or hardscape designer can be valuable.

### Design Service Options and Pricing

**Basic design consultation** from an interlock contractor runs \$200-\$500 and typically includes site measurement, material recommendations, pattern suggestions, and a rough sketch or basic CAD drawing. This level of design service is often credited toward your project cost if you hire that contractor for installation.

**Professional landscape designer** services range from \$1,000-\$3,500 for comprehensive hardscape design including detailed drawings, material specifications, grading plans, and drainage design. This is worthwhile for properties with challenging slopes (common in North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Burnaby, and Coquitlam), complex drainage issues, or when integrating interlock with pools, outdoor kitchens, fire features, and extensive plantings.

**Architect or engineer involvement** becomes necessary for retaining walls over 4 feet (requiring building permits), complex grading that affects drainage patterns, or structural integration with buildings. Engineering fees run \$2,000-\$8,000+ depending on project complexity and typically include sealed drawings required for municipal permits.

### What Design Services Include

A quality hardscape design addresses Metro Vancouver's specific challenges: managing the region's heavy rainfall (over 1,200mm annually), working with clay-heavy soils prevalent in Surrey, Richmond, Delta, and Langley, and creating proper drainage slopes away from buildings. The designer should specify appropriate base depths for Vancouver's wet climate (6-8 inches for patios, 10-12 inches for driveways), recommend polymeric sand for joint stability, and plan for moss and weed management in shaded areas.

Design services typically include site analysis, material selection guidance, pattern and layout options, grading and drainage planning, integration with existing landscaping, and detailed drawings for contractor bidding. For sloped properties, the design must address retaining walls, stepped installations, and managing runoff from upper to lower levels.

## When Professional Design is Worth the Investment

Hire a designer for properties with significant elevation changes, complex drainage challenges, integration with existing structures, high-end material selections (natural stone, permeable pavers, custom patterns), or when the hardscape budget exceeds \$25,000. Professional design is also valuable when dealing with strata requirements for townhouse or condo projects, as strata corporations often require detailed drawings and material specifications for approval.

## DIY Design Considerations

Many straightforward paver patios, walkways, and simple driveways can be planned without professional design services. Experienced contractors provide sufficient design guidance for standard rectangular patios, straight walkways, and basic driveway replacements. However, don't underestimate the complexity of proper drainage design in Metro Vancouver's wet climate—inadequate slope and drainage planning is the leading cause of interlock failure in the region.

## Finding Design Services

Vancouver Interlock can connect you with contractors who provide design services, or you can find landscape designers and hardscape specialists through the Vancouver Construction Network. Many contractors offer free initial consultations and basic design as part of their estimating process, making separate design fees unnecessary for simpler projects.

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Q2

## What's included in the price of a paver installation quote in Metro Vancouver?

**A comprehensive paver installation quote in Metro Vancouver should include all materials, labour, excavation, base preparation, and finishing work — typically ranging from \$15-30 per square foot installed for concrete pavers.** However, quotes can vary significantly in what's included, so understanding the components helps you compare contractors fairly.

### Standard Inclusions in Quality Paver Installation Quotes

**Excavation and site preparation** forms the foundation of every quote. This includes removing existing grass, soil, or old paving materials to the proper depth — typically 8-10 inches for patios and walkways, 12-14 inches for driveways in Metro Vancouver's clay-heavy soils. Quality contractors include disposal of excavated material, though some charge separately for concrete or asphalt removal (\$3-8 per square foot additional).

**Base materials and installation** represent the most critical component. Proper quotes include 6-8 inches of compacted granular base (3/4-inch minus crushed gravel) for pedestrian areas, or 10-12 inches for driveways. This includes geotextile fabric between the clay subgrade and gravel base — essential in Surrey, Richmond, Delta, and Langley where clay content is high. The base must be installed in 2-inch lifts with plate compaction between each lift to achieve 95%+ compaction.

**Bedding sand and screeding** creates the level surface for paver installation. Quality quotes include concrete sand (not mason sand) screeded to precise levels using aluminum rails. This 1-inch layer provides the final leveling surface and allows for minor adjustments during paver placement.

**Pavers and installation labour** includes the actual interlocking pavers, cutting for edges and obstacles, and professional installation in your chosen pattern. Standard residential thickness is 60mm for patios and walkways, 80mm for driveways. Labour includes precise cutting around curves, steps, or landscape features.

**Edge restraints and polymeric sand** complete the structural system. Aluminum or plastic edge restraints along all unconfined edges prevent paver spreading over time. Polymeric sand (Techniseal, Alliance, or Sakrete brands) fills joints, hardens when activated, and resists washout in Metro Vancouver's heavy rainfall. Proper activation requires controlled water application — not flooding.

## What May Cost Extra

**Drainage improvements** beyond basic surface grading often appear as separate line items. Installing perforated drain pipe, catch basins, or connecting to municipal storm drains adds \$15-40 per linear foot. However, proper drainage is non-negotiable in Metro Vancouver's wet climate — budget for it upfront rather than dealing with water problems later.

**Retaining walls or grade changes** require separate pricing. Even small retaining walls (2-3 feet) add \$30-60 per square foot of wall face. Walls over 4 feet require engineering and permits, significantly increasing costs.

**Sealing services** typically cost extra — \$3-7 per square foot applied 6-12 months after installation once efflorescence has stopped appearing on new pavers. Many contractors offer sealing as an optional add-on or return service.

**Permit fees and engineering** for retaining walls over 4 feet, drainage connections, or work within municipal setbacks appear as separate charges. Building permits range from \$200-800 depending on the municipality and scope.

## Metro Vancouver Pricing Context

**Labour rates in Metro Vancouver are 15-25% higher than national averages** due to cost of living, WorkSafeBC requirements, and strong demand. Expect \$8-20 per square foot for labour alone, with material costs adding another \$7-15 per square foot for concrete pavers.

**Slope work is common and costly** in North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Burnaby, Coquitlam, and Port Moody. Building on slopes adds 20-40% to base costs due to additional excavation, retaining structures, and access challenges. Many properties require manual material transport when trucks cannot access the work area directly.

**Strata properties** may require additional documentation, alteration agreements, or specific material approvals that add administrative costs. Some contractors charge extra for strata paperwork and coordination.

## Red Flags in Quotes

**Quotes significantly below \$12 per square foot installed** likely skip essential components — inadequate base depth, no geotextile fabric, standard sand instead of polymeric sand, or missing edge restraints. These shortcuts guarantee problems within 2-3 years in Metro Vancouver's challenging climate.

**Vague material specifications** without brand names, thickness measurements, or compaction standards indicate a contractor who may substitute inferior materials. Quality quotes specify "6 inches of 3/4-inch minus crushed gravel compacted in 2-inch lifts" rather than just "gravel base."

**No mention of drainage** in a Metro Vancouver quote is a major red flag. Every installation must address surface water management — minimum 2% slope away from buildings and proper integration with existing drainage patterns.

When comparing quotes, focus on the completeness of base preparation, material specifications, and drainage provisions rather than just the bottom line. A properly installed paver system lasts 25+ years, while shortcuts lead to costly repairs within 5 years. Quality contractors provide detailed breakdowns showing exactly what's included in their pricing, helping you make an informed decision for your Metro Vancouver hardscape investment.

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Q3

## How much does a full front yard interlock makeover cost in Vancouver?

**A complete front yard interlock makeover in Metro Vancouver typically costs \$15,000-\$45,000, depending on the size of your property, materials chosen, and complexity of the design.** Most Vancouver front yards range from 800-1,500 square feet of total hardscaping when you include the driveway, walkways, and decorative patio or seating areas.

## Breaking Down the Components

A full front yard makeover usually includes several elements that each contribute to the total cost. The **driveway renovation** is typically the largest expense — removing existing concrete or asphalt and installing new interlock pavers for a standard 600-800 sq ft driveway runs \$12,000-\$20,000. This includes proper excavation (10-12 inches deep), compacted gravel base, 80mm pavers rated for vehicle traffic, polymeric sand, and edge restraints. If your existing driveway is in good condition, you might save \$2,000-\$4,000 by overlaying pavers on a concrete base, though this approach has limitations.

**Front walkways and entry features** add another \$3,000-\$8,000 to the project. This includes the main walkway from the sidewalk to your front door (typically 100-200 sq ft), plus any secondary paths to side gates or garden areas. Many Vancouver homeowners also add a **decorative patio or landing area** near the front entrance — a 150-200 sq ft paver patio runs \$3,000-\$6,000 installed.

**Retaining walls** are common in Vancouver front yards due to the city's hilly topography, especially in areas like North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Burnaby, and parts of Coquitlam. A 3-foot high retaining wall along your driveway or to create level planting areas typically adds \$90-\$150 per linear foot installed. If you need walls over 4 feet high, engineering requirements and permits can add \$3,000-\$8,000 to the project cost.

## Metro Vancouver Considerations

Vancouver's marine climate significantly impacts material selection and installation requirements. The region receives over 1,200mm of annual rainfall, with North Shore communities exceeding 2,000mm, making **drainage the most critical design element**. Every front yard makeover must include proper surface slope (minimum 2% away from your house), adequate base depth, and often perforated drain pipes to handle runoff from your roof and the paved surfaces.

**Clay-heavy soils** prevalent in Surrey, Richmond, Delta, and Langley require deeper excavation and geotextile fabric to prevent soil migration into the base material. This adds approximately 10-15% to excavation and base preparation costs compared to properties with sandy or gravelly soil.

## Material Choices and Pricing

**Standard concrete pavers** (\$15-\$25 per sq ft installed) offer the best value for most front yard makeovers. Popular choices include Holland pavers, tumbled pavers for an aged look, or large-format slabs for a contemporary appearance. **Premium concrete pavers** with special textures or colours run \$20-\$30 per sq ft installed.

**Natural stone** like flagstone or granite creates stunning curb appeal but costs significantly more — \$25-\$50 per sq ft installed. BC has excellent local stone sources, and locally quarried basalt complements Vancouver's natural landscape beautifully.

**Permeable pavers** (\$20-\$35 per sq ft installed) are increasingly popular and may qualify for municipal stormwater incentives. The City of Vancouver and other municipalities offer reduced stormwater fees for properties that manage rainfall on-site rather than sending it to the storm drains.

### **Additional Costs to Consider**

**Slope work** is common in Vancouver and adds 20-30% to project costs due to additional excavation, retaining structures, and drainage complexity. Properties in areas like Queen Elizabeth slopes, the North Shore, or Burnaby Mountain often require extensive grading work.

**Difficult access** affects many older Vancouver neighborhoods where trucks cannot reach the work area directly. Manual material transport through narrow side yards or up stairs can add \$2,000-\$5,000 to a project.

**Landscaping integration** — coordinating your interlock installation with new planting, irrigation, and lighting — typically adds \$3,000-\$8,000 but creates a cohesive, finished appearance.

**Strata approval** is required for townhouse front yards and can add 2-4 weeks to project timelines. Most strata corporations require alteration agreements and may restrict paver colours or patterns.

### **Timeline and Seasonal Considerations**

Most front yard makeovers take 1-2 weeks to complete, depending on complexity and weather. While installation is possible year-round in Vancouver's mild climate, the optimal window is May through October when drier conditions allow better base compaction and polymeric sand activation.

A well-executed front yard interlock makeover significantly enhances curb appeal and property value while providing decades of low-maintenance outdoor surfaces. The key is proper base preparation and drainage design — shortcuts in these areas lead to settling, shifting, and costly repairs within 2-3 years.

Need help finding an interlock installer? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced contractors from the Vancouver Construction Network for free estimates on your front yard transformation.

## Is it worth paying for a 3D design before starting a paver project?

A 3D design is absolutely worth the investment for complex hardscape projects like multi-level patios, retaining walls, or full backyard transformations, but may be unnecessary for simple walkways or single-level patios. The key is matching the design investment to your project's complexity and budget.

### When 3D Design Adds Real Value

For projects involving **multiple elevations, retaining walls, or integrated features** like fire pits, outdoor kitchens, or water features, 3D design prevents costly mistakes and change orders during construction. Metro Vancouver's hilly terrain — especially in North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Burnaby, and Coquitlam — often requires complex grading solutions that are difficult to visualize from 2D plans alone. A 3D rendering shows exactly how your new patio will integrate with existing slopes, where retaining walls are needed, and how drainage will flow.

**Strata properties** particularly benefit from 3D design because most strata councils require detailed plans for approval of hardscape alterations. A professional 3D rendering demonstrates that your project complies with setback requirements, doesn't impact neighbouring units, and maintains the overall aesthetic of the development. This documentation often speeds strata approval and prevents rejection based on unclear plans.

### Cost and ROI Considerations

3D hardscape design in Metro Vancouver typically costs **\$500-\$2,500** depending on project complexity. For a \$15,000+ paver patio or driveway project, this represents 3-15% of your total budget — reasonable insurance against expensive mistakes. The design cost is often credited toward your project total if you hire the same contractor for installation.

The real value comes from **avoiding change orders during construction**. Moving a retaining wall location, adjusting patio dimensions, or redesigning drainage after excavation has begun can add \$2,000-\$8,000 to your project cost. A thorough 3D design identifies these issues upfront when changes are still on paper, not in the ground.

### What 3D Design Should Include

Quality 3D hardscape design shows **material selections, joint patterns, elevation changes, and drainage flow**. It should include views from multiple angles, especially from your house windows and main outdoor living areas. The design should specify paver colours and patterns — crucial because pavers look different in large installations than in small showroom samples.

For Metro Vancouver's climate, the design must address **surface drainage and water management**. The 3D model should show how water flows off the paved surface, where it collects, and how it's directed away from your foundation. This is particularly critical for properties with clay soils (common in Surrey, Richmond, and Delta) where poor drainage causes base saturation and paver settling.

### When to Skip the 3D Design

Simple projects like **straight walkways, basic rectangular patios under 300 sq ft, or single-step installations** rarely justify 3D design costs. If you're replacing existing concrete with pavers in the same footprint, a detailed quote with material specifications is usually sufficient.

**DIY design software** like SketchUp or specialized hardscape programs can work for simple projects, but they require significant time investment and don't replace professional knowledge about drainage, structural requirements, or Metro Vancouver's specific installation challenges.

### Finding Design Services

Many established interlock contractors in Metro Vancouver offer 3D design as part of their service package, often using software like Belgard's or Techo-Bloc's design programs. Independent landscape designers and landscape architects also provide hardscape design services. Expect 2-4 weeks for completion of detailed 3D plans.

**The design investment pays for itself through better material ordering, fewer construction delays, and confidence that your finished project matches your vision** — especially important for projects that significantly impact your property's curb appeal and outdoor living space.

Need help finding contractors who offer 3D design services? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced hardscape professionals who provide comprehensive design and installation services.

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Q5

## How much should I budget for a complete backyard paver project in Richmond?

**Budget \$20,000-\$50,000+ for a complete backyard paver transformation in Richmond, depending on size, materials, and complexity.** Richmond's clay-heavy soils and high water table require extra attention to drainage and base preparation, which affects both material and labour costs.

### Typical Complete Backyard Components and Costs:

A full backyard renovation in Richmond typically includes multiple hardscape elements. A **400-600 sq ft paver patio** runs \$6,000-\$18,000 installed, depending on whether you choose standard concrete pavers (\$15-\$25/sq ft)

or premium natural stone (\$25-\$45/sq ft). **Paver walkways** connecting different areas add \$2,500-\$6,000 for 100-200 sq ft. If your backyard slopes toward the house or neighboring properties — common in Richmond's newer developments — you'll likely need **retaining walls** at \$4,500-\$9,000 for a 50-foot gravity wall, or \$12,000-\$25,000+ for engineered walls over 4 feet requiring permits.

### **Richmond-Specific Challenges That Affect Costs:**

Richmond's **clay-heavy soils** significantly impact project costs because clay doesn't drain well and requires deeper excavation, geotextile fabric separation, and thicker gravel bases to prevent the clay from migrating into the base material over time. Expect to add 15-25% to standard pricing for proper clay soil management. Richmond's **high water table** — especially in areas near the Fraser River, Sea Island, or Lulu Island — may require additional drainage infrastructure including perforated drain pipes, catch basins, or connections to the municipal storm system. Some Richmond properties require **engineered drainage solutions** that can add \$3,000-\$8,000 to a project.

### **Material and Design Considerations:**

**Permeable pavers** (\$20-\$40/sq ft installed) are increasingly popular in Richmond as the city encourages stormwater management through reduced impervious surfaces. The City of Richmond offers stormwater fee reductions for properties that manage rainwater on-site rather than sending it directly to the municipal system. For a complete backyard, consider mixing materials — concrete pavers for high-traffic areas like the main patio, natural stone accents for visual interest, and permeable pavers for secondary walkways or overflow parking areas.

### **Additional Elements to Budget For:**

**Outdoor lighting** integrated into hardscape features adds \$2,000-\$6,000. **Fire pits or outdoor fireplaces** with proper paver surrounds run \$3,000-\$12,000. **Pool deck integration** if you have or plan to install a pool requires slip-resistant pavers and precise drainage, typically \$7,500-\$20,000 for 300-500 sq ft. **Strata approval** is required for Richmond townhouse projects — budget time and potentially \$500-\$2,000 for engineered drawings if your strata requires them.

### **Realistic Budget Ranges by Scope:**

- **Basic backyard** (400 sq ft patio + simple walkway): \$12,000-\$20,000
- **Mid-range backyard** (600 sq ft patio + walkways + small retaining wall + lighting): \$25,000-\$40,000
- **Premium backyard** (large patio + natural stone + multiple retaining walls + fire feature + extensive drainage): \$45,000-\$75,000+

### **When to Hire Professionals:**

Richmond's challenging soil conditions and drainage requirements make this a job for experienced local contractors familiar with clay soil management and municipal drainage requirements. Get multiple quotes and verify that contractors understand Richmond's specific soil challenges and permit requirements.

Need help finding an interlock contractor experienced with Richmond's unique conditions? Vancouver Interlock can match you with local professionals for free estimates.

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Q6

## Can I save money by supplying my own pavers and hiring labour only?

**You can potentially save 10-20% by supplying your own pavers, but this approach carries significant risks that often outweigh the savings.** Most experienced interlock contractors prefer to supply materials themselves because it ensures quality control, proper quantities, and warranty coverage for the complete installation.

### The Reality of Labour-Only Arrangements

**Material markup is typically 15-25% over retail** when contractors supply pavers, so your potential savings are real but modest. On a \$12,000 paver patio project, you might save \$1,200-\$2,000 by purchasing materials directly. However, this shifts substantial responsibility and risk to you as the homeowner.

**Most reputable contractors are reluctant to accept labour-only jobs** because they lose control over material quality, delivery timing, and quantities. When problems arise — wrong paver thickness, colour variations between batches, insufficient edge restraints, or damaged materials — the contractor still gets blamed even though they didn't select or purchase the materials. Many established interlock contractors in Metro Vancouver will decline labour-only work entirely.

**You become responsible for calculating exact quantities** of pavers, bedding sand, base material, polymeric sand, edge restraints, and geotextile fabric. Miscalculations are common and costly. Running short of pavers mid-installation means work stops until you source matching materials — and colour lots can vary significantly between production runs. Over-ordering means you're stuck with expensive materials you can't return.

### Metro Vancouver Considerations

**Material delivery coordination becomes your responsibility** in Metro Vancouver's challenging access conditions. Many older Vancouver neighbourhoods have narrow driveways, steep slopes, or rear-only access that requires special delivery arrangements. Concrete pavers weigh 4-5 pounds each, so a typical 400 sq ft patio requires 2-3 tonnes of pavers plus base materials. Coordinating multiple deliveries to arrive when the contractor

needs them — not days early where they sit in your driveway — requires careful planning.

**You lose warranty protection on the complete installation.** When contractors supply all materials, they typically warranty both materials and workmanship for 1-3 years. With labour-only arrangements, material defects become your problem to resolve with suppliers, while installation issues remain the contractor's responsibility. This creates grey areas when problems arise.

**Quality control suffers when contractors don't select materials.** Experienced installers know which paver manufacturers perform best in Metro Vancouver's wet climate, which polymeric sands resist washout during heavy winter rains, and which edge restraint systems work reliably in clay soils. They also spot defective materials before installation begins.

## Practical Challenges

**Timing coordination becomes critical and stressful.** Base materials must arrive after excavation but before paver delivery. Polymeric sand needs to be on-site for the final day of installation. Edge restraints and bedding sand are needed mid-project. One delayed delivery can shut down the entire job, and contractors charge standby time when they can't work due to missing materials.

**You're responsible for material storage and protection** during Metro Vancouver's rainy season. Pavers can sit outside, but polymeric sand, bedding sand, and some edge restraint components must stay dry. Wet sand becomes unusable, and polymeric sand that gets damp prematurely activates and turns into concrete-hard chunks.

**Returns and exchanges become complicated** when you discover mid-installation that you need different materials or additional quantities. Contractors have established relationships with suppliers for quick exchanges and emergency deliveries. As a homeowner, you'll pay retail prices for rush orders and may not be able to return unused materials.

## When Labour-Only Might Work

**Simple, small projects with standard materials** are the best candidates for homeowner-supplied materials. A basic rectangular patio using common Holland pavers with straightforward access might work if you're comfortable managing the logistics.

**Work with contractors who explicitly welcome labour-only arrangements** rather than trying to convince reluctant installers. Some smaller contractors or newer businesses are more open to this approach, though you sacrifice the experience and established supplier relationships of larger firms.

**Have a detailed material list prepared by the contractor** before purchasing anything. Insist that they specify exact quantities, brands, colours, and delivery timing for every component. Get this in writing as part of your

contract.

## **Better Money-Saving Strategies**

**Get multiple detailed quotes** from different contractors and compare not just total prices but material specifications, base depths, and warranty terms. Price differences often reflect different quality levels rather than profit margins.

**Consider timing your project** during contractors' slower periods (typically November through March in Metro Vancouver) when some offer winter discounts despite the weather challenges.

**Simplify the design** to reduce labour costs. Straight lines, standard patterns, and rectangular shapes install faster than curves, complex patterns, or irregular shapes that require extensive cutting.

**Handle site preparation yourself** if you have the tools and ability. Clearing vegetation, removing existing materials, and basic excavation can reduce labour costs more safely than supplying materials.

The modest savings from supplying your own pavers rarely justify the added complexity, risk, and potential for costly mistakes. Most homeowners find that working with contractors who supply complete material packages provides better value through proper material selection, coordinated delivery, comprehensive warranties, and professional accountability for the entire project.

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## What paver colours and styles are trending in Vancouver right now?

**Current paver trends in Metro Vancouver favor sophisticated, natural-looking designs that complement the region's West Coast aesthetic and work well with the marine climate.** The most popular styles blend modern clean lines with organic textures, emphasizing larger format pavers in neutral tones that harmonize with Vancouver's natural landscape of mountains, ocean, and evergreen forests.

**Large format pavers in neutral tones dominate Vancouver installations right now.** Homeowners are moving away from traditional small Holland pavers (4x8 inches) toward larger slabs measuring 12x24 inches, 16x16 inches, and even 24x24 inches. These create a more contemporary, streamlined appearance with fewer joint lines. Popular colours include charcoal grey, slate grey, sandstone beige, and warm grey — all of which hide the moss and algae staining that's inevitable in Vancouver's humid climate better than lighter colours. Belgard's Mirage series, Techo-Bloc's Blu series, and Barkman's Dimensional Stone collection are frequently specified by Vancouver landscape designers.

**Textured surfaces are increasingly popular for both aesthetics and safety.** Smooth pavers become slippery when wet — a serious concern during Vancouver's October-to-March rainy season. Tumbled pavers with rounded edges and weathered surfaces, wood-grain textured pavers, and natural stone-look surfaces provide better traction while creating visual interest. The tumbled look also helps new installations blend with Vancouver's heritage neighbourhoods in areas like Kitsilano, Mount Pleasant, and Commercial Drive.

**Permeable pavers are gaining significant traction** as Metro Vancouver municipalities push green infrastructure initiatives. The City of Vancouver offers stormwater fee reductions for properties that reduce impervious surface area, making permeable pavers both environmentally responsible and financially attractive. These typically come in neutral colours (grey, charcoal, tan) with wider joints filled with permeable aggregate rather than sand.

**Natural stone remains the premium choice** for high-end Vancouver properties, particularly in West Vancouver, North Vancouver, and Shaughnessy. Local BC basalt and granite are especially popular because they complement the regional geology and support local quarries. Flagstone in blue-grey and charcoal tones works beautifully with West Coast contemporary architecture and established gardens.

**Multi-size patterns and mixed materials create visual depth** without being busy. Popular combinations include large format pavers as field stones with contrasting border colours, or mixing two sizes in the same colour family (like 12x12 and 6x12 pavers in charcoal grey). Accent strips in contrasting colours — such as a charcoal field with sandstone borders — add definition without overwhelming the space.

**Colour choices that work best in Vancouver's climate** lean toward mid-tone greys and earth tones. Pure white or very light colours show moss staining quickly and require frequent cleaning. Very dark colours (pure black or dark brown) can fade in UV exposure and show salt residue in coastal areas. Mid-tone charcoal, slate grey, and sandstone beige provide the best balance of aesthetics and maintenance practicality.

**Pool decks and outdoor living spaces** increasingly feature slip-resistant textured pavers in light grey or sandstone tones that don't absorb heat like darker colours. Textured surfaces are essential around pools for safety, and lighter colours stay cooler underfoot during Vancouver's occasional summer heat waves.

**For retaining walls**, the trend is toward larger block sizes with natural stone textures rather than smooth concrete faces. Allan Block's Courtyard collection and Belgard's Highland Stone series offer the structural engineering of concrete blocks with natural stone aesthetics that blend with Vancouver's mountainous landscape.

**Installation patterns favor clean, geometric layouts** over complex herringbone or basket weave patterns. Running bond (like subway tile), stack bond (grid pattern), and large format ashlar patterns create contemporary looks that showcase the paver material rather than the pattern complexity.

Vancouver Interlock can match you with contractors experienced in current design trends and the specific installation requirements for these newer paver styles and patterns. Many of these trending materials require precise installation techniques to achieve the clean, contemporary look that makes them popular.

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Q8

## How do I choose between herringbone, basketweave, and running bond patterns?

**Pattern choice depends on your project size, traffic loads, and aesthetic goals. Herringbone offers maximum structural strength for driveways, basketweave creates classic elegance for patios, and running bond provides clean modern lines with the most efficient installation.**

### Herringbone Pattern

**Herringbone is the strongest interlock pattern** and the best choice for driveways, high-traffic walkways, and areas with vehicular loads. The 45-degree or 90-degree interlocking creates maximum load distribution — each paver is locked in place by its neighbours in multiple directions. This structural advantage makes herringbone the preferred pattern for Metro Vancouver driveways where pavers must withstand vehicle turning, braking, and acceleration forces without shifting.

**Installation complexity is moderate to high.** Herringbone requires precise cutting at edges and corners, and the diagonal layout means more waste (typically 8-12% extra material needed). Labour costs run \$2-4 per sq ft higher than running bond due to the cutting and fitting time. However, the long-term performance benefits justify the additional cost for driveways and high-use areas.

**Visually, herringbone creates dynamic movement and traditional appeal.** The zigzag pattern draws the eye and works particularly well in formal settings, heritage properties, and areas where you want the paving to be a design feature rather than a neutral background.

## **Basketweave Pattern**

**Basketweave offers excellent structural performance with classic, timeless aesthetics.** Pairs of pavers laid perpendicular to each other create a woven appearance that's been popular for centuries. The interlocking is nearly as strong as herringbone, making basketweave suitable for patios, pool decks, courtyards, and moderate-traffic walkways.

**Installation is easier than herringbone but more complex than running bond.** The perpendicular layout requires careful attention to keep courses straight and square, but edge cutting is simpler than herringbone's diagonal cuts. Material waste is typically 5-8%, and labour costs fall between running bond and herringbone.

**Basketweave works exceptionally well in Metro Vancouver's traditional neighbourhood character** — particularly in Vancouver's heritage districts, older Burnaby and New Westminster areas, and anywhere you want classic European-inspired hardscaping. The pattern scales well from intimate garden patios to large entertaining areas.

## **Running Bond Pattern**

**Running bond is the most cost-effective and versatile pattern** — rectangular pavers laid in offset rows like traditional brickwork. While not as structurally strong as herringbone or basketweave, running bond provides adequate performance for patios, walkways, and low-traffic areas when properly installed with a deep compacted base.

**Installation is fastest and most economical.** Minimal cutting required except at edges, lowest material waste (3-5%), and fastest installation pace. This translates to \$2-3 per sq ft savings compared to herringbone. For large patio projects where budget is a primary concern, running bond delivers professional results at the lowest cost.

**The clean, linear appearance complements modern architecture** and works well as a neutral background that won't compete with landscaping, outdoor furniture, or architectural features. Running bond is particularly effective for contemporary Vancouver homes and minimalist landscape designs.

## Metro Vancouver Climate Considerations

**All three patterns perform well in Vancouver's marine climate when properly installed** with adequate base preparation and polymeric sand joints. However, **herringbone's superior load distribution makes it more forgiving of minor base settlement** — important in Metro Vancouver's clay-heavy soils in Surrey, Richmond, and Delta where some movement is inevitable over time.

**Pattern choice doesn't significantly affect drainage performance** — proper surface slope (minimum 2% away from buildings) and base drainage are far more important than pattern selection for managing Vancouver's 1,200mm+ annual rainfall.

**Moss and weed growth affects all patterns equally** in Vancouver's humid conditions. Polymeric sand application and periodic maintenance (every 3-5 years) are essential regardless of pattern choice.

## Practical Selection Guidelines

**Choose herringbone for:** Driveways, steep slopes, areas with heavy foot traffic, formal or heritage-style properties, and anywhere maximum durability is the priority. Budget \$18-25 per sq ft installed.

**Choose basketweave for:** Patios, pool decks, courtyards, moderate-traffic walkways, and traditional or transitional home styles. Budget \$16-22 per sq ft installed.

**Choose running bond for:** Large patios where budget is a concern, modern architectural styles, areas where the paving should be a neutral background, and walkways with light traffic. Budget \$15-20 per sq ft installed.

**For mixed applications,** many Metro Vancouver homeowners use herringbone for the driveway (maximum strength) and running bond or basketweave for patios and walkways (cost savings where high strength isn't required).

Need help finding an interlock installer experienced with all three patterns? Vancouver Interlock can match you with contractors who can show you samples and discuss which pattern best suits your specific project and home style.

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Q9

## What should I look for when hiring an interlock contractor in Vancouver?

**When hiring an interlock contractor in Metro Vancouver, prioritize WorkSafeBC coverage, local references from recent projects, and demonstrated understanding of Vancouver's wet climate drainage requirements.**

The right contractor will emphasize proper base preparation and drainage design as the foundation of any

successful interlock installation in our marine climate.

### **WorkSafeBC Coverage and Insurance Verification**

Every legitimate interlock contractor in BC must carry active WorkSafeBC coverage — this protects you from liability if a worker is injured on your property. Ask for their WorkSafeBC registration number and verify it directly through WorkSafeBC's online registry. Also confirm they carry general liability insurance (minimum \$2 million is standard). Don't accept expired certificates or promises to "get coverage before starting" — legitimate contractors maintain continuous coverage.

### **Local References and Portfolio Review**

Request references from at least three projects completed within the past two years in Metro Vancouver. Contact these homeowners directly and ask about the contractor's punctuality, cleanliness, problem-solving when issues arose, and how the installation has held up through Vancouver's rainy seasons. Ask to see photos of completed projects, paying attention to clean edge lines, consistent joint spacing, and proper drainage integration. Be wary of contractors who only show photos from other climates or can't provide local references.

### **Climate-Specific Knowledge and Base Preparation**

A qualified Vancouver contractor will immediately discuss drainage design, base depth requirements, and polymeric sand necessity when evaluating your project. They should explain why Metro Vancouver's 1,200mm+ annual rainfall requires deeper bases (6-8 inches for patios, 10-12 inches for driveways) and better drainage than drier climates. Red flags include contractors who suggest 3-4 inch bases to save money, recommend standard sand instead of polymeric sand, or dismiss drainage concerns. Ask specifically how they handle Vancouver's clay-heavy soils — proper contractors will mention geotextile fabric and compaction in controlled lifts.

### **Detailed Written Estimates and Material Specifications**

Professional estimates should specify exact base depths, material types (including polymeric sand brand), compaction methods, edge restraint systems, and drainage provisions. Vague estimates with phrases like "standard base" or "regular sand" indicate inexperience with Vancouver conditions. The estimate should include excavation depth, type and thickness of base material, bedding sand specifications, paver thickness (60mm for patios, 80mm for driveways), and polymeric sand activation process.

### **Understanding of Local Regulations**

Experienced Metro Vancouver contractors know municipal setback requirements, when building permits are needed (retaining walls over 4 feet), and strata approval processes for townhouse and condo properties. They should ask about underground utilities and offer to arrange BC One Call utility locates. For retaining walls, they should clearly explain the 4-foot permit threshold and have relationships with geotechnical engineers for taller walls.

## **Realistic Timelines and Weather Considerations**

Vancouver contractors understand that quality interlock installation requires dry conditions for base compaction and polymeric sand activation. They should explain how they handle weather delays during the October-March rainy season and may recommend scheduling major installations between May and October. Be suspicious of contractors who promise to work regardless of weather — proper installation cannot be rushed or done in unsuitable conditions.

## **Red Flags to Avoid**

Door-to-door solicitors offering immediate starts or "leftover materials from another job" are typically scams. Contractors demanding large upfront payments (more than 10% down is unusual), providing verbal-only estimates, or pressuring for immediate decisions should be avoided. Be wary of significantly low bids — quality interlock installation requires proper materials and skilled labor that cost money. Contractors who can't explain why Vancouver installations need different approaches than Alberta or Ontario projects lack the local experience you need.

## **Strata and Permit Considerations**

For strata properties, ensure your contractor understands alteration agreement requirements and can provide the documentation strata councils typically require. Some contractors specialize in strata work and can guide you through the approval process. For projects requiring permits, the contractor should either handle permit applications or clearly explain what permits you need to obtain.

## **Getting Multiple Quotes**

Obtain at least three detailed quotes from different contractors to understand the market range for your project. Quality installations in Metro Vancouver typically cost \$15-30 per square foot for concrete pavers, \$25-60 for natural stone, and \$30-60 per face square foot for retaining walls. Quotes significantly below these ranges often indicate corners will be cut on base preparation or materials.

Need help finding an interlock contractor? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced local professionals who understand Metro Vancouver's unique climate requirements and have proven track records in the region.

## How far in advance should I book a paver contractor in Vancouver?

**Book your paver contractor 6-12 weeks in advance during peak season (April through September), and 3-4 weeks during the off-season.** Metro Vancouver's construction market is highly competitive, and experienced interlock contractors often have full schedules, especially for larger projects like driveways and extensive patios.

**Peak season booking (April-September)** requires the most advance planning. This is when weather conditions are optimal for excavation, base compaction, and polymeric sand activation. Contractors prefer this window because they can work efficiently without weather delays, and homeowners want their outdoor spaces ready for summer entertaining. Popular contractors often book their entire summer schedule by March or April. If you're planning a paver driveway, large patio, or retaining wall project for completion between May and September, start your contractor search in February or March.

**Shoulder season (October-November and March-April)** offers more flexibility with 4-6 weeks advance booking typically sufficient. Many contractors appreciate steady work during these transitional months, and you may find better pricing as demand softens. Weather can be unpredictable during shoulder seasons, so build some flexibility into your timeline for rain delays.

**Winter installation (December-February)** is possible in Metro Vancouver since the ground rarely freezes hard enough to prevent excavation. However, the persistent rainfall makes base preparation and polymeric sand application challenging. Contractors working in winter often charge premium rates and require weather protection (tenting) to keep materials dry during installation. Winter projects typically need only 2-3 weeks advance booking, but expect 20-30% higher costs and potential weather delays.

**Project complexity affects booking timelines significantly.** Simple paver patios under 300 square feet might be scheduled with 3-4 weeks notice even during peak season. However, complex projects requiring permits (retaining walls over 4 feet), engineered drawings, or coordination with other trades (landscaping, electrical for lighting, plumbing for drainage) need 8-12 weeks lead time. Strata properties add another layer of complexity since alteration agreements and strata council approvals can take 4-8 weeks alone.

**Material availability can extend timelines** during peak construction periods. Popular paver colours and styles sometimes face supply delays, especially specialty products or natural stone. Discuss material selection early in the planning process and have backup options identified. Some contractors maintain inventory of popular pavers, while others order specifically for each project.

**Start your search early but don't rush the selection process.** Use the extra time to get multiple detailed quotes, check references, verify WorkSafeBC coverage, and review past project photos. A quality interlock installation

should last 25+ years, so investing time in contractor selection pays dividends. Meet with contractors on-site so they can assess drainage challenges, soil conditions, and access limitations that affect both timeline and pricing.

**Consider off-peak scheduling for better value.** Contractors often offer 10-15% discounts for projects scheduled during slower periods (November through March). If your project timeline is flexible, off-peak installation can provide significant savings while still delivering the same quality results.

Need help finding an interlock contractor with availability that matches your timeline? Vancouver Interlock can connect you with experienced professionals from the Vancouver Construction Network who understand Metro Vancouver's unique climate and installation requirements.

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Q11

## What questions should I ask before signing a paver installation contract?

**Before signing any paver installation contract in Metro Vancouver, ask detailed questions about base preparation, drainage design, material specifications, and warranty coverage.** The quality of your interlock installation depends far more on what happens below the pavers than the pavers themselves, so focus your questions on the foundation work.

### Base and Drainage Specifications

Ask your contractor to specify the exact base depth and materials in writing. For patios and walkways, you need minimum 6-8 inches of compacted granular base. For driveways, require 10-12 inches minimum. The base material should be 3/4-inch minus crushed gravel (also called road base or Class 2 aggregate) compacted in 2-inch lifts to 95% compaction. Ask: "What is your base depth and compaction procedure?" If they can't give you specific numbers, keep looking.

Drainage is critical in Metro Vancouver's wet climate. Your contractor should explain how surface water will drain away from the installation (minimum 2% slope away from buildings), where low points will drain to, and whether perforated drain pipe is included. Ask: "How will you handle drainage, and is drain pipe included in the price?" Properties with clay soil, high water tables, or poor existing drainage may need additional drainage measures that should be identified upfront.

### Material Quality and Specifications

Specify the exact paver manufacturer, product line, colour, and thickness. Standard residential pavers are 60mm thick for patios and walkways, 80mm for driveways. Ask for the manufacturer's spec sheet showing compressive

strength (should be 8,000+ PSI for concrete pavers). Verify that polymeric sand is included - this is essential in Vancouver's rainy climate and costs \$3-5 per bag more than regular sand.

Ask about edge restraints along all unconfined edges. Professional installations use snap-edge or aluminum L-channel restraints spiked into the compacted base every 12-18 inches. Without proper edge restraints, pavers will spread and shift over time, especially along driveway edges.

## **Excavation and Site Preparation**

Confirm what excavation depth is included and how existing materials will be disposed of. Removing old concrete or asphalt typically adds \$3-8 per square foot to the project cost. Ask about underground utilities - BC One Call locates must be completed before excavation begins. Verify whether geotextile fabric is included between the subgrade and base material, which is essential in Metro Vancouver's clay-heavy soils.

For sloped properties common in North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Burnaby, and Coquitlam, ask how grade changes will be managed. Retaining walls over 4 feet require engineering and permits under the BC Building Code.

## **Timeline and Weather Contingencies**

Metro Vancouver's rainy season from October through March affects installation quality. Ask how the contractor handles weather delays and whether they tent or tarp the work area during installation. Bedding sand and polymeric sand cannot be properly installed in heavy rain. Quality contractors schedule the critical phases (base compaction, screeding, paver laying, and polymeric sand activation) for dry weather windows.

## **Warranty and Maintenance**

Ask for specific warranty terms in writing. Reputable contractors typically warranty their workmanship for 2-5 years against settling, shifting, or structural failure. Material warranties come from manufacturers (concrete pavers typically carry 25+ year warranties). Understand what maintenance is your responsibility - polymeric sand replenishment every 3-5 years, periodic cleaning, and moss/weed control are normal homeowner maintenance in Metro Vancouver's climate.

Ask about post-installation support. Will they return to address minor settling in the first year? Do they offer maintenance services like re-sanding, sealing, or releveling?

## **Permits and Compliance**

Verify who obtains required permits. Retaining walls over 4 feet need building permits and engineered drawings. Driveway modifications may require municipal permits. Strata properties need alteration agreements before work begins. Ask: "What permits are required and who handles the applications?"

Confirm the contractor carries valid WorkSafeBC coverage and general liability insurance. Ask to see current certificates - this protects you from liability if workers are injured on your property.

## Payment Structure and Change Orders

Avoid contractors demanding large upfront payments. Typical payment schedules are 10-20% to start, progress payments tied to completion milestones, and final payment upon completion. Never pay the full amount upfront.

Establish how change orders will be handled. Scope changes during excavation are common when unexpected drainage issues or poor soil conditions are discovered. Ask for written change order procedures with pricing approval required before additional work proceeds.

## Red Flags to Watch For

Be cautious of contractors who won't provide specific base depths, skip drainage discussion, quote significantly below market rates (\$10-15 per square foot installed is unrealistically low for quality work), demand full payment upfront, or pressure you to sign immediately. Door-to-door contractors and those without local references should be avoided.

Quality interlock installation in Metro Vancouver typically costs \$15-30 per square foot installed for concrete pavers, including proper base preparation, drainage, and materials. Quotes significantly below this range often indicate corners will be cut on base depth, compaction, or drainage - the most expensive mistakes to fix later.

## When to Hire a Pro

Professional installation is essential for any driveway, patio over 200 square feet, retaining walls, or permeable paving systems. The specialized equipment (plate compactors, laser levels, wet saws), material knowledge, and drainage expertise required for lasting results make this a professional trade in Metro Vancouver's challenging climate.

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Q12

## Do I need a landscape architect or can an interlock contractor design my project?

**Most interlock contractors can design and plan standard residential paver installations like driveways, patios, walkways, and basic retaining walls. However, complex projects involving significant grading, drainage engineering, or integration with extensive landscaping benefit from a landscape architect's**

## **expertise.**

For typical Metro Vancouver interlock projects — a new paver driveway, backyard patio, front walkway, or retaining wall under 4 feet — experienced contractors handle the design as part of their service. They'll assess your space, recommend appropriate materials for Vancouver's wet climate, calculate proper base depths for our clay-heavy soils, design adequate drainage slopes, and create layouts that work with your home's architecture and your family's needs. Most established interlock contractors use design software to create visual renderings and can suggest paver patterns, colour combinations, and functional layouts.

**When You Need a Landscape Architect:** Complex projects requiring comprehensive site planning, significant grade changes, or coordination with multiple landscape elements typically require professional design. This includes properties with challenging slopes (common in North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Burnaby, and Coquitlam), extensive drainage issues, integration with pools or outdoor kitchens, or projects combining interlock with irrigation, lighting, plantings, and multiple hardscape elements. Landscape architects understand Metro Vancouver's marine climate, municipal stormwater requirements, and can design permeable paving systems that qualify for municipal incentives.

**Retaining Wall Considerations:** Any retaining wall over 4 feet requires engineered drawings from a geotechnical engineer — this is a BC Building Code requirement. Landscape architects can coordinate this engineering and integrate tall retaining walls into comprehensive site designs. For walls under 4 feet, experienced contractors handle the design, but landscape architects ensure proper integration with drainage, plantings, and overall site aesthetics.

**Strata Properties:** Townhouse and condo projects often require professional drawings for strata approval, even for simple patio installations. Many strata corporations prefer landscape architect drawings because they show how the interlock integrates with existing landscaping and drainage systems.

**Practical Approach:** Start with consultations from experienced interlock contractors. Most offer free estimates that include basic design concepts. If your project involves complex grading, multiple trades, or your strata requires professional drawings, then engage a landscape architect. The contractor can often work from architect-provided plans, combining professional design with specialized interlock installation expertise.

**Cost Considerations:** Landscape architect fees typically run \$2,000-\$8,000 for residential interlock projects, while contractor design is usually included in installation costs. For straightforward projects under \$15,000, contractor design is usually sufficient. For complex projects over \$25,000, professional design often saves money by preventing costly mistakes and ensuring municipal approval on the first submission.

Need help finding an interlock contractor who can assess whether your project needs professional design? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced professionals who understand Metro Vancouver's unique

requirements.

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## How do you plan interlock around existing landscaping and trees?

**Planning interlock around existing trees and landscaping requires careful consideration of root zones, drainage patterns, and long-term growth to prevent costly damage and ensure both your hardscape and plants thrive together.**

The most critical factor is understanding that tree roots extend far beyond the visible canopy — typically 1.5 to 3 times the tree's height in all directions, and they're concentrated in the top 18-24 inches of soil where your interlock base will be installed. Large mature trees common in Metro Vancouver like Douglas firs, Western red cedars, big leaf maples, and oaks have aggressive root systems that will lift and displace pavers over time if you install too close.

### **Root Protection and Safe Distances**

Maintain minimum distances from tree trunks: 8-10 feet for large mature trees (over 20 feet tall), 5-6 feet for medium trees, and 3-4 feet for smaller ornamental trees. These distances protect both the tree's critical root zone and your interlock investment. Installing pavers closer than these minimums almost guarantees root damage to your installation within 3-5 years as roots grow and expand.

For existing landscaping beds, avoid running interlock directly adjacent to planted areas where possible. Tree and shrub roots will migrate under paver installations seeking the improved drainage and compacted base material. Instead, leave a 2-3 foot buffer zone with mulch, gravel, or groundcover plants between your pavers and planted areas.

### **Drainage Integration**

Metro Vancouver's heavy rainfall makes drainage coordination between hardscape and landscape areas essential. Design your interlock with proper slope (minimum 2% away from buildings) that directs water toward planted areas or drainage systems rather than creating runoff that erodes landscape beds. Existing mature trees and shrubs can actually help manage runoff from paver areas if you design the grading to direct water toward their root zones — but avoid concentrated flow that creates erosion channels.

Consider how roof downspouts, existing irrigation systems, and natural drainage patterns will interact with your new interlock. You may need to relocate or extend downspouts, adjust irrigation coverage, or install drainage pipe to prevent water from pooling against your pavers or flooding landscape beds.

### **Working Around Existing Plants**

For valuable mature trees and established shrubs you want to preserve, design your interlock layout to flow around them rather than forcing a rigid geometric pattern. Curved edges and organic shapes often work better than straight lines when integrating with existing landscaping. This is particularly important in North Vancouver, West Vancouver, and Burnaby where mature native trees are common and valuable.

Protect existing plants during construction by clearly marking root protection zones with temporary fencing. Excavation equipment should not operate within the drip line of trees you're keeping. Hand-dig near valuable plants and avoid soil compaction from heavy equipment in root zones.

### **Material Selection for Integration**

Choose paver colours and textures that complement your existing landscape rather than competing with it. Earth tones like charcoal, brown, and sandstone colours blend naturally with Pacific Northwest vegetation. Tumbled or textured pavers often integrate better with natural landscaping than smooth, highly geometric styles.

Consider permeable pavers in areas near existing trees and landscape beds. Permeable interlock allows rainfall to infiltrate naturally, reducing runoff and providing water to nearby plants — particularly beneficial during Metro Vancouver's drier summer months.

### **Future Growth Planning**

Account for the mature size of existing young trees and shrubs when planning your layout. That small ornamental maple may be 6 feet tall now, but it will reach 15-20 feet with a corresponding root spread. Design your interlock with enough space for 10-15 years of growth, or accept that you may need to modify the installation as plants mature.

### **Professional Installation Considerations**

Hire contractors experienced with landscape integration, especially for complex sites with mature trees or steep slopes common in Metro Vancouver. Professional installers can hand-excavate near sensitive root zones, install root barriers where appropriate, and design drainage that works with your existing landscape rather than against it. They also understand local soil conditions — particularly the clay-heavy soils in Surrey, Richmond, and Delta that affect both drainage and root growth patterns.

### **When to Hire a Pro**

Professional design and installation is essential for sites with mature trees over 15 feet tall, slopes greater than 10%, or complex drainage integration with existing landscape beds. Arborist consultation may be valuable for high-value trees to determine safe working distances and root protection measures.

## What's the best time of year to install interlock pavers in Vancouver?

**The best time to install interlock pavers in Vancouver is May through October, with July through September being the optimal window.** While Metro Vancouver's mild climate allows year-round installation, the drier months provide ideal conditions for proper base compaction, polymeric sand activation, and sealer application.

### Summer Installation Advantages (July-September)

Metro Vancouver's driest months offer the best conditions for interlock installation. July typically receives only 40mm of rainfall compared to December's 200mm+, giving contractors consistent dry weather for excavation, base preparation, and finishing work. Dry conditions are crucial for proper compaction of the granular base — moisture content must be controlled during compaction to achieve the required 95%+ density. Wet base material doesn't compact properly and leads to settling issues within 1-2 years.

Polymeric sand activation also works best in dry conditions. This specialized jointing sand requires controlled water application to harden properly between paver joints. Rain during or immediately after polymeric sand installation can cause washout, hazing on paver surfaces, or incomplete curing. Summer's predictable weather patterns allow contractors to complete the entire installation process without weather delays.

### Spring and Fall Installation (May-June, October)

These shoulder seasons offer good installation conditions with moderate rainfall and comfortable working temperatures. May and October typically receive 60-80mm of rainfall — manageable for experienced contractors who can work around weather windows. Material costs may be slightly lower during shoulder seasons as demand decreases. However, contractors need to be more flexible with scheduling and may require tenting or tarping to protect work areas during unexpected rain.

### Winter Installation Challenges (November-March)

While technically possible, winter installation in Vancouver requires additional precautions and costs. The region receives 70% of its annual rainfall during these months, creating persistent moisture challenges. Contractors must tent work areas, pump standing water from excavations, and carefully time polymeric sand application between rain events. Base material may need to be covered overnight to prevent saturation. These extra measures typically add 10-20% to project costs.

### Metro Vancouver Climate Considerations

Vancouver's marine climate creates unique timing considerations compared to other Canadian cities. Unlike Toronto or Calgary where frozen ground prevents winter work entirely, Vancouver's mild temperatures mean the

ground rarely freezes hard enough to stop excavation. However, the persistent moisture from October through March creates more challenging installation conditions than the brief but intense freeze-thaw cycles of Eastern Canada.

The region's high humidity (60-80% year-round) means that even during "dry" periods, morning dew and overnight moisture can affect work schedules. Professional installers often start later in the day during summer months to allow surfaces to dry, and may cover materials overnight to prevent moisture absorption.

### **Practical Installation Tips**

For homeowners planning interlock projects, book consultations and obtain quotes during winter months (January-March) when contractors have more time for estimates and planning. Many contractors offer early-bird pricing for projects scheduled during their optimal installation season. However, don't expect significant discounts — Vancouver's year-round construction season means contractors stay busy even in winter.

Consider your project's urgency against seasonal advantages. A patio needed for summer entertaining should be installed by June at the latest to allow time for any settling or minor adjustments. Driveway projects can be more flexible since functionality matters more than aesthetics.

### **When to Hire a Professional**

Any paver installation larger than 100 square feet should be professionally installed regardless of season. Proper excavation depth (6-8 inches for patios, 10-12 inches for driveways), base compaction in controlled lifts, and precision screeding of bedding sand require professional equipment and experience. In Vancouver's wet climate, inadequate base preparation is the leading cause of paver failure — settling, shifting, and drainage problems that become apparent within 1-3 years.

Need help finding an interlock installer? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced contractors from the Vancouver Construction Network who understand Metro Vancouver's unique climate challenges and installation requirements.

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**Q15**

## **How do you design interlock for a strata complex courtyard in Vancouver?**

**Designing interlock for a strata complex courtyard in Vancouver requires navigating strata approval processes, engineering common property drainage, and selecting materials that handle heavy foot traffic while complementing the building architecture.** The project must meet strata bylaws, municipal requirements,

and perform reliably in Metro Vancouver's wet climate with minimal maintenance burden on the strata corporation.

## Strata Approval Process

**Start with your strata council and property manager before any design work begins.** Most strata corporations require an alteration agreement for any common property improvements, and many have specific architectural guidelines that dictate acceptable paver colours, patterns, and materials. Some stratas require engineered drawings even for at-grade installations, while others have pre-approved material palettes that streamline the approval process. Review your strata bylaws and previous council meeting minutes to understand the approval requirements and timeline — some councils only meet monthly, so factor approval time into your project schedule.

**Budget for professional design drawings and engineering.** Many strata councils require scaled drawings showing the proposed paver layout, drainage plan, and integration with existing landscaping and building systems. If the courtyard renovation involves grading changes, retaining walls over 4 feet, or connections to the building's storm drainage system, you'll need engineered drawings from a professional engineer licensed in BC. The strata corporation's insurance may also require professional design to maintain coverage.

## Drainage Engineering for Common Property

**Courtyard drainage is the critical engineering challenge** because water from the paved area, surrounding buildings, and potentially roof downspouts must be managed without creating drainage problems for individual units or neighbouring properties. Metro Vancouver's 1,200mm+ annual rainfall means every courtyard needs a comprehensive drainage strategy. The paver surface must slope away from all building foundations at minimum 2% grade, and low points need collection systems connected to the municipal storm drain or an approved infiltration system.

**Coordinate with the building's existing drainage infrastructure.** Many older strata buildings in Vancouver, Burnaby, and Richmond have undersized or aging storm drainage systems that cannot handle additional runoff from new paved areas. A drainage engineer may need to assess the existing system capacity and design upgrades. If the courtyard includes permeable pavers to reduce runoff — increasingly favoured by municipalities — the subsurface infiltration system requires careful design to prevent water from reaching building foundations or underground parkades.

## Material Selection for High-Traffic Strata Use

**Choose commercial-grade concrete pavers rated for heavy pedestrian traffic and minimal maintenance.** Strata courtyards experience constant use from multiple households, delivery personnel, maintenance crews, and visitors. Standard 60mm residential pavers may not withstand this traffic level — consider 80mm commercial-grade pavers or large-format slabs that provide better load distribution and fewer joints to maintain. Textured surfaces

provide better slip resistance during Vancouver's wet season but avoid deep textures that trap debris and become difficult to clean.

**Select neutral colours and classic patterns that age well and complement the building architecture.** Avoid trendy colours or complex patterns that may look dated in 5-10 years when the strata faces major repair or replacement costs. Charcoal, grey, and earth-tone pavers work well with most Vancouver-area building styles and hide staining from moss, leaves, and urban grime better than light colours. Simple running bond or herringbone patterns are timeless, easier to repair, and less likely to highlight individual paver replacement when maintenance is needed.

## Maintenance Planning and Strata Responsibilities

**Design for low-maintenance performance because strata maintenance budgets are limited.** Specify high-quality polymeric sand that resists washout in Vancouver's heavy rains and inhibits weed growth. Plan for accessible cleaning — ensure the paver layout allows efficient pressure washing and moss treatment without damaging adjacent landscaping. Include adequate drainage to prevent standing water that accelerates moss and algae growth, particularly in shaded areas common in courtyard settings.

**Establish a maintenance schedule and budget allocation.** Strata courtyards typically need polymeric sand replenishment every 3-4 years, annual moss and weed treatment, and periodic pressure washing. Include these costs in the strata's depreciation report and annual budget planning. Consider specifying sealed pavers in high-traffic areas to reduce staining and simplify cleaning, though sealing adds upfront cost and requires reapplication every 3-5 years.

## Municipal and Code Considerations

**Check municipal requirements for strata common property improvements.** Some Metro Vancouver municipalities require development permits for significant courtyard renovations, especially if they involve grading changes, new drainage connections, or increased impervious surface area. The City of Vancouver and other municipalities offer stormwater fee reductions for properties that install permeable paving or other green infrastructure — worth investigating for larger strata complexes looking to reduce operating costs.

**Ensure accessibility compliance for common property.** Strata courtyards must meet BC accessibility standards, including maximum slope gradients, slip-resistant surfaces, and barrier-free pathways to building entrances. This may influence paver selection and layout design, particularly for older buildings undergoing accessibility upgrades.

**Professional installation is essential for strata courtyard projects** due to the complexity of drainage integration, the liability exposure for the strata corporation, and the need for warranty coverage. A poorly installed courtyard becomes a major special assessment burden for all owners. Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced

commercial hardscape contractors from the Vancouver Construction Network who understand strata requirements and municipal approval processes.

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## Can I see examples of completed interlock projects in my Vancouver neighbourhood?

**Yes, you can view completed interlock projects in your Vancouver neighbourhood through several approaches, though there's no single comprehensive database of residential hardscaping work across Metro Vancouver.**

The most effective way to see local examples is to simply walk or drive through your neighbourhood, particularly focusing on recently built or renovated homes. **Interlock driveways, front walkways, and visible patios are excellent indicators of local contractor work and material choices that perform well in Vancouver's marine climate.** Pay attention to how installations have aged — well-built interlock from 5-10 years ago will still look level, have intact joint sand, and show minimal settling or moss growth.

**Take photos of installations you like and note the addresses** — this gives you concrete examples to discuss with potential contractors. Many homeowners are happy to share their contractor's name and project experience if you knock and ask politely. This is particularly valuable because you can learn about the contractor's communication, timeliness, cleanup, and how the installation has performed through several Vancouver winters.

**Check contractor websites and social media for local project galleries.** Most established interlock contractors in Metro Vancouver showcase recent projects on their websites, often organized by neighbourhood or project type. Instagram and Facebook are particularly useful for seeing before-and-after photos and customer testimonials. Search hashtags like #VancouverInterlock, #MetroVancouverHardscaping, or location-specific tags like #WestVancouverPatios or #BurnabyDriveways.

**Visit local hardscape supply yards** like Mutual Materials, Expocrete, or Barkman locations in Metro Vancouver. These suppliers often have display areas showing different paver styles, colours, and patterns installed properly. They can also recommend contractors who regularly purchase quality materials and have good reputations for workmanship. Supply yard staff see the results of different installation approaches and know which contractors consistently do quality work.

**Municipal building permit records** can reveal larger retaining wall and hardscape projects in your area, though this requires more effort. Most Metro Vancouver municipalities have online permit databases where you can search by address or neighbourhood to see what hardscape work has been permitted recently.

**Consider the specific challenges of your neighbourhood** when evaluating examples. North Shore properties with steep slopes and heavy rainfall require different drainage solutions than flat Richmond lots with clay soil. Coastal properties in West Vancouver or White Rock need materials and hardware that resist salt air corrosion.

Older Vancouver neighbourhoods with narrow lot access present different installation challenges than newer Surrey subdivisions with truck access to backyards.

**Look for signs of quality installation versus shortcuts** when viewing neighbourhood examples. Well-built interlock maintains level surfaces, has clean joint lines with intact polymeric sand, shows proper drainage slope away from buildings, and ages gracefully with minimal moss or weed intrusion. Poor installations show settling, uneven surfaces, missing joint sand, ponding water, and excessive moss growth — especially common on north-facing installations in Vancouver's humid climate.

**Strata-governed townhouse and condo complexes** often showcase coordinated hardscape designs that comply with strata architectural guidelines. If you live in a strata property, these examples show what materials and colours are typically approved and how they perform in a managed landscape setting.

Need help finding an interlock installer who can show you their local portfolio? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced contractors from the Vancouver Construction Network who have extensive photo galleries of completed Metro Vancouver projects and can provide references from your specific neighbourhood.

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Q17

## How do you plan for utility access under a paver driveway?

**Planning for utility access under a paver driveway requires mapping existing utilities, creating accessible service points, and using proper installation techniques that allow for future excavation without destroying the entire driveway.** This is critical planning that must happen before any excavation begins.

### Utility Location and Mapping

Before breaking ground, call BC One Call (1-800-474-6886) at least three business days before excavation to have all underground utilities marked. This free service maps gas lines, electrical, water, sewer, telecommunications, and cable TV lines on your property. In Metro Vancouver, most residential driveways cross at least one utility line — typically the water service from the street to your house, and often gas, electrical, or telecommunications services as well.

Take detailed photos and measurements of all utility markings before they fade. Create a simple sketch showing distances from permanent landmarks like your house foundation, property pins, or existing concrete. This documentation becomes invaluable if you need to locate utilities years later for repairs or renovations.

### Creating Service Access Points

For utilities that run directly under your planned driveway, consider installing **service access chambers** at key points. These are concrete or polymer boxes (typically 24" x 36") that sit flush with the paver surface and can be lifted to access valve boxes, cleanouts, or junction points below. Utilities like water shut-off valves, gas meter connections, and electrical junction boxes can be housed in these chambers.

Access chambers must be integrated into the driveway design during installation — they cannot be retrofitted easily. The chamber frame sits on the compacted base, and pavers are cut to fit around it. Quality access chambers cost \$200-500 each but prevent the need to excavate through your driveway for routine utility maintenance.

### **Installation Techniques for Future Access**

Use **mechanical edge restraints** (snap-edge or aluminum L-channel) rather than concrete curbing along driveway edges. Mechanical restraints can be temporarily removed to allow utility excavation and then reinstalled, while concrete curbing requires jackhammering and replacement.

Install your driveway in **logical sections** with clear joint lines every 12-15 feet. This allows utility contractors to remove and replace discrete sections rather than disrupting the entire driveway. Mark these section boundaries with a different paver pattern or soldier course for easy identification.

Consider **permeable pavers** for driveways that cross multiple utilities. The open-graded base used in permeable installations drains faster after utility excavation and is easier to restore to proper compaction than dense-graded base material.

### **Metro Vancouver Considerations**

Clay soils prevalent in Surrey, Richmond, Delta, and Langley make utility excavation more challenging and increase the risk of base contamination during repairs. Document your base material specifications (type of gravel, compaction achieved, geotextile fabric used) so utility contractors can restore the base properly.

Winter utility emergencies are common in Metro Vancouver due to heavy rainfall and ground saturation. Gas leaks, water main breaks, and electrical faults often require immediate excavation regardless of weather. Having a documented utility plan and accessible service points can mean the difference between a small repair patch and rebuilding half your driveway.

### **Working with Utility Companies**

Contact utility companies directly during your planning phase. BC Hydro, FortisBC, and municipal water departments often have specific requirements for excavation over their infrastructure. Some utilities require hand-digging within certain distances of their lines, while others may need to relocate services if your driveway design conflicts with their access requirements.

## When to Hire Professionals

Any driveway installation crossing utilities should be done by experienced contractors familiar with utility protection protocols. Professional installers carry liability insurance for utility damage and understand proper excavation techniques around gas, electrical, and water services. The cost of repairing a severed gas line or water main far exceeds any savings from DIY installation.

Need help finding an interlock contractor experienced with utility planning? Vancouver Interlock can match you with professionals who understand Metro Vancouver's utility infrastructure and municipal requirements.

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Q18

## What paver brands are available from suppliers in Metro Vancouver?

**Metro Vancouver has excellent access to both premium North American paver manufacturers and local BC producers, with most major brands available through landscape supply yards and contractor networks across the region.**

The **premium tier includes Unilock, Belgard, Techo-Bloc, and Permacon** — these manufacturers offer the widest selection of colours, textures, and specialty products like tumbled pavers, large-format slabs, and permeable systems. Unilock is particularly well-represented in Metro Vancouver through multiple dealers and offers their Elegance collection (wet-cast pavers with natural stone textures) and EnduraColor technology for fade-resistant colour. Belgard's Elements collection and Techo-Bloc's sophisticated colour blends are popular for upscale residential projects in West Vancouver, North Vancouver, and Vancouver's west side.

**Regional manufacturers include Expocrete (BC-based), Mutual Materials (Washington state), and Barkman (Manitoba)** — these brands offer excellent quality at more accessible price points while still providing good colour selection and proven performance in Pacific Northwest conditions. Expocrete is manufactured in Surrey and offers the advantage of local production, shorter delivery times, and products specifically designed for BC's marine climate. Their pavers perform exceptionally well in Metro Vancouver's wet conditions and are a favourite among local contractors.

**Allan Block and Versa-Lok dominate the retaining wall market** in Metro Vancouver, with Allan Block being particularly popular for residential projects under 6 feet in height. Both systems are engineered for BC soil conditions and seismic requirements. For natural stone, **BC has outstanding local quarries producing basalt, granite, and sandstone** that complement the region's natural landscape beautifully.

**Most landscape supply yards in Burnaby, Surrey, Richmond, and Langley carry multiple brands**, allowing homeowners and contractors to compare options side-by-side. Pricing varies significantly — budget concrete pavers start around \$3-5 per sq ft for materials only, while premium wet-cast pavers with specialty finishes can reach \$8-15 per sq ft before installation. **The key in Metro Vancouver is choosing pavers from manufacturers who understand coastal climate requirements** — proper concrete mix design, adequate curing, and quality control that ensures pavers won't spall or deteriorate in our persistent moisture and occasional freeze-thaw cycles.

When selecting pavers, **focus on the installer's experience with your chosen brand rather than the brand name alone**. A skilled contractor familiar with proper base preparation, drainage design, and polymeric sand application will create a superior installation regardless of whether you choose premium Unilock or regional Expocrete pavers.

Need help finding an interlock installer familiar with these brands? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced contractors from the Vancouver Construction Network who work with the full range of paver manufacturers available in Metro Vancouver.

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## How do you design interlock to match a modern Vancouver home style?

**Modern Vancouver homes demand clean, geometric interlock designs that complement the city's contemporary West Coast architecture.** The key is selecting large-format pavers in neutral tones with minimal joint lines, creating seamless outdoor spaces that extend the home's modern aesthetic into the landscape.

### Large-Format Pavers Are Essential for Modern Design

Modern Vancouver homes — whether they're sleek Kitsilano townhouses, contemporary North Shore residences, or minimalist Richmond builds — feature clean lines, large windows, and uncluttered facades. Your interlock should mirror these design principles. Choose large-format pavers (24" x 24", 24" x 36", or even 36" x 36") rather than traditional small Holland pavers. These create fewer joint lines and a more seamless, contemporary appearance. Slimline pavers (40-50mm thick) work well for patios and walkways, giving a sleek profile that doesn't compete with the home's architecture.

Porcelain pavers are increasingly popular for high-end modern installations in Metro Vancouver. They're available in large formats up to 48" x 48", offer consistent colour and texture, resist staining, and can mimic natural materials like concrete, wood, or stone. Expect to pay \$35-\$50 per square foot installed for porcelain pavers, but they deliver the ultra-modern aesthetic that concrete pavers can't match.

### Colour Palette Should Complement West Coast Modern Architecture

Modern Vancouver homes typically feature neutral colour schemes — whites, greys, blacks, and natural wood tones. Your interlock should work within this palette rather than competing with it. **Charcoal grey, light grey, and off-white concrete pavers** are the most versatile choices. They complement both the grey-stained cedar siding common on West Coast modern homes and the white stucco or concrete panels popular in contemporary Vancouver architecture.

Avoid warm-toned pavers (reds, browns, oranges) that clash with modern colour schemes. Skip multi-coloured blends that create visual noise. Instead, consider subtle variations within a single colour family — light grey pavers with darker grey accents, or charcoal pavers with black borders. The goal is sophistication and restraint, not visual complexity.

### Geometric Patterns and Clean Lines

Traditional interlock patterns like herringbone or basket weave feel too busy for modern design. Instead, use **running bond patterns** (pavers laid in straight, offset rows like subway tiles) or **stack bond patterns** (pavers aligned in perfect grid formation). Stack bond creates the most modern, architectural appearance but requires precise installation — any slight variation in paver size becomes immediately visible.

For added visual interest without compromising the clean aesthetic, consider **contrasting borders or accent strips**. A charcoal grey patio with a single row of black border pavers creates definition without complexity. Linear accent strips can guide movement through the space or highlight specific areas like seating zones or fire pit surrounds.

### **Integration with Modern Landscaping**

Modern Vancouver homes often feature minimalist landscaping — architectural plants like ornamental grasses, boxwood hedges, and specimen trees rather than busy flower beds. Your interlock should support this aesthetic.

**Straight edges and geometric shapes** work better than curved, organic forms. Rectangular patios, linear walkways, and square landing areas complement modern architecture.

Consider how your interlock interfaces with other hardscape elements. Modern homes often feature concrete retaining walls, steel planters, or glass railings. Choose interlock colours and textures that harmonize with these materials. A light grey paver patio looks stunning against a charcoal concrete retaining wall, while dark pavers can ground a home with extensive glass and white stucco.

### **Metro Vancouver Climate Considerations for Modern Design**

Vancouver's persistent rainfall means that **surface texture becomes critical for safety** on modern interlock installations. Smooth pavers that look sleek when dry become dangerously slippery when wet. Choose pavers with subtle texture — not heavily textured surfaces that trap dirt and moss, but enough surface texture to provide grip during Vancouver's rainy season from October through March.

**Polymeric sand in neutral tones** (grey or tan, never white) maintains the clean joint lines essential to modern design while resisting the weed growth and moss intrusion common in Vancouver's humid climate. White polymeric sand creates harsh contrast lines that break up the seamless appearance you're trying to achieve.

### **Lighting Integration**

Modern interlock designs should incorporate **LED strip lighting or recessed fixtures** from the planning stage. Linear LED strips along paver edges, under coping stones, or integrated into retaining walls create dramatic nighttime effects that enhance the modern aesthetic. Recessed LED fixtures can be built into the paver surface itself, though this requires careful waterproofing in Vancouver's wet climate.

### **Typical Costs for Modern Interlock in Metro Vancouver**

A modern 400 square foot patio using large-format concrete pavers runs **\$8,000-\$15,000 installed**, including excavation, base preparation, and polymeric sand. Premium porcelain pavers increase costs to **\$14,000-\$20,000** for the same area. The precise installation required for modern geometric patterns adds 10-15% to labour costs compared to traditional random patterns.

## When to Hire a Professional

Modern interlock design requires **precision installation that's beyond most DIY capabilities**. Stack bond patterns show every imperfection. Large-format pavers are heavy and require specialized handling. The clean lines essential to modern design demand laser-level accuracy in base preparation and screeding. Professional installation ensures the geometric precision that makes modern interlock successful.

Need help finding an interlock contractor experienced with modern design? Vancouver Interlock can match you with professionals who understand contemporary West Coast architecture and can execute the precise installation modern interlock demands.

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## Should I get multiple quotes for my interlock project in Vancouver?

**Absolutely yes — getting 3-4 quotes is essential for any interlock project in Metro Vancouver.** Quality hardscaping represents a significant investment (\$6,000-\$24,000+ for most residential projects), and quotes can vary dramatically based on material choices, base preparation methods, drainage design, and contractor experience levels.

### Why Multiple Quotes Matter in Vancouver's Market

Metro Vancouver's interlock market has enormous variation in both pricing and quality standards. You'll find contractors quoting \$15 per square foot for a paver patio while others quote \$30 for what appears to be the same project. The difference usually lies in base preparation depth, compaction methods, drainage design, edge restraint quality, and material specifications — factors that determine whether your installation lasts 5 years or 25+ years.

Vancouver's marine climate makes proper base preparation and drainage design absolutely critical. A contractor who skips geotextile fabric, reduces base depth from 8 inches to 4 inches, or uses standard sand instead of polymeric sand might quote 20-30% lower, but you'll face settling, shifting, and joint sand washout within 1-3 years. The cheapest quote often becomes the most expensive when you factor in premature repairs or complete reinstallation.

### What to Compare Beyond Price

**Base preparation specifications** are the most important comparison point. Legitimate quotes should specify excavation depth (6-8 inches for patios, 10-12 inches for driveways), base material type (3/4-inch minus crushed gravel), compaction method (plate compactor in 2-inch lifts), and geotextile fabric between clay subgrade and base.

Vague descriptions like "proper base preparation" are red flags.

**Drainage design** varies significantly between contractors. Quality installers specify minimum 2% surface slope away from buildings, perforated drain pipe at low points, and connection to storm drains or dry wells where needed. In Metro Vancouver's wet climate, inadequate drainage destroys even well-built installations.

**Material specifications** should include paver thickness (60mm for patios, 80mm for driveways), manufacturer and style, edge restraint type (snap-edge or aluminum), and joint sand type (polymeric sand from Techniseal, Alliance, or equivalent). Generic descriptions suggest the contractor will substitute cheaper materials.

### **What Each Quote Should Include**

A professional quote should detail excavation and disposal, base material quantity and compaction specs, geotextile fabric, bedding sand depth, paver specifications, edge restraints, polymeric sand application, and cleanup. Labour should be itemized separately from materials when possible. The quote should specify warranty terms — typically 2-3 years for workmanship and 1 year for settling.

### **Red Flags to Avoid**

Be wary of quotes significantly below market rates (\$10-12 per square foot for standard paver patios), cash-only pricing, door-to-door solicitation, or contractors without WorkSafeBC coverage. Quotes that don't specify base depth, skip edge restraints, or use "sand" instead of "polymeric sand" indicate corners will be cut. Contractors who can't explain why Metro Vancouver's climate requires specific drainage considerations likely lack local experience.

### **When to Hire a Professional**

Get multiple quotes for any paver installation over 100 square feet, all driveway projects, retaining walls over 2 feet high, or permeable paver systems. The complexity of proper base preparation, drainage design, and material specifications in Vancouver's wet climate makes professional installation essential for lasting results.

Need help finding qualified interlock contractors? Vancouver Interlock can match you with experienced professionals from the Vancouver Construction Network who understand Metro Vancouver's unique climate challenges and provide detailed, comparable quotes for your project.

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**Disclaimer:** This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Vancouver Interlock. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any interlock or paving project. Information is current as of March 15, 2026 and may change. Visit [vancouverinterlock.com](https://vancouverinterlock.com) for the latest answers.