

## Fire Pit

**NOTE:** It is important to allow your fire pit to cure for at least 30 days before building a fire in it. Heat can cause concrete with a high moisture content to greatly expand and contract, causing the material to severely crack or fragment.

### TOOLS & MATERIALS

- Hammer or hand maul
- Tape measure
- Shovel
- Hand tamp
- Wheelbarrow or mixing box
- Mason's trowel
- Spray bottle
- Jointing tool
- Square-end trowel
- Tuck-point trowel
- Circular saw with an abrasive masonry blade
- Eye & ear protection
- Wire brush
- 2 × 2 wooden stakes (2)
- Mason's string
- Spray paint
- Compactible gravel
- 60-lb. concrete (12)
- Sheet plastic
- 6" manhole blocks
- ¾" wood spacers (3)
- Chalk
- Refractory mortar
- Surface-bonding cement
- Mortar tinting agent
- ½" plywood
- 8 × 16" landscape pavers (10)

### HOW TO BUILD A FIRE PIT

#### Step A: Excavate the Site

1. Use a hammer or a hand maul to drive a wooden stake into the centerpoint of the planned fire pit location. Then drive a temporary stake into the ground 10½" from the center stake.

2. Tie a mason's string to the center stake—the string should be just long enough to reach the temporary stake. Hold or tie a can of spray paint to the end of the string. Pull the string taut and spray paint a circle on the ground.

3. Remove the temporary stake and drive it into the ground 22½" from the center stake. Pull the string taut, and spray a second circle on the ground.

4. Strip away the grass between the two circles and dig a trench 10" deep.

5. Fill the base of the trench with 2" of compactible gravel. Tamp the gravel thoroughly.

#### Step B: Pour the Footing

1. Mix concrete in a wheelbarrow or mixing box and shovel it into the trench until the concrete reaches ground level. Work the concrete with a shovel to remove any air pockets.

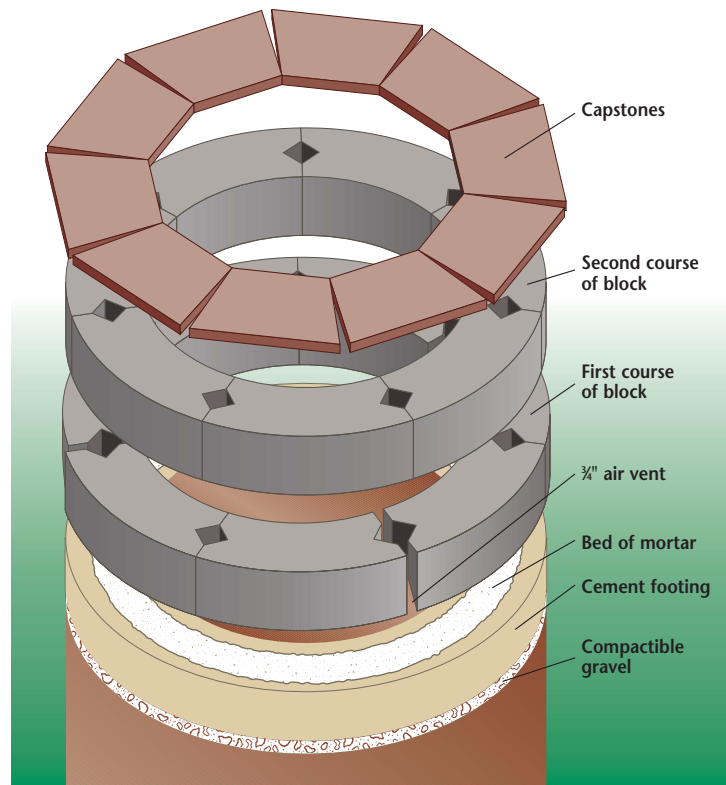
2. Screed the surface of the concrete by dragging a short 2 × 4 along the top of the natural form. Add concrete to any low areas and screed the surface again. Finish the concrete with a trowel.

3. When the concrete is hard to the touch, cover it with a sheet of plastic and let it cure for 2 to 3 days. Remove the plastic and let the concrete cure for an additional week.

#### Step C: Lay the First Course

1. When the concrete has sufficiently cured, lay out the first course of 6" manhole blocks with three ¾" gaps for air vents, using ¾" wood spacers.

2. Mark the internal and external circumference of the first course on the footing with chalk, and remove the blocks. Take



**A.** Outline the location of the footing using spray paint and a piece of string. Then dig a circular trench 10" deep.