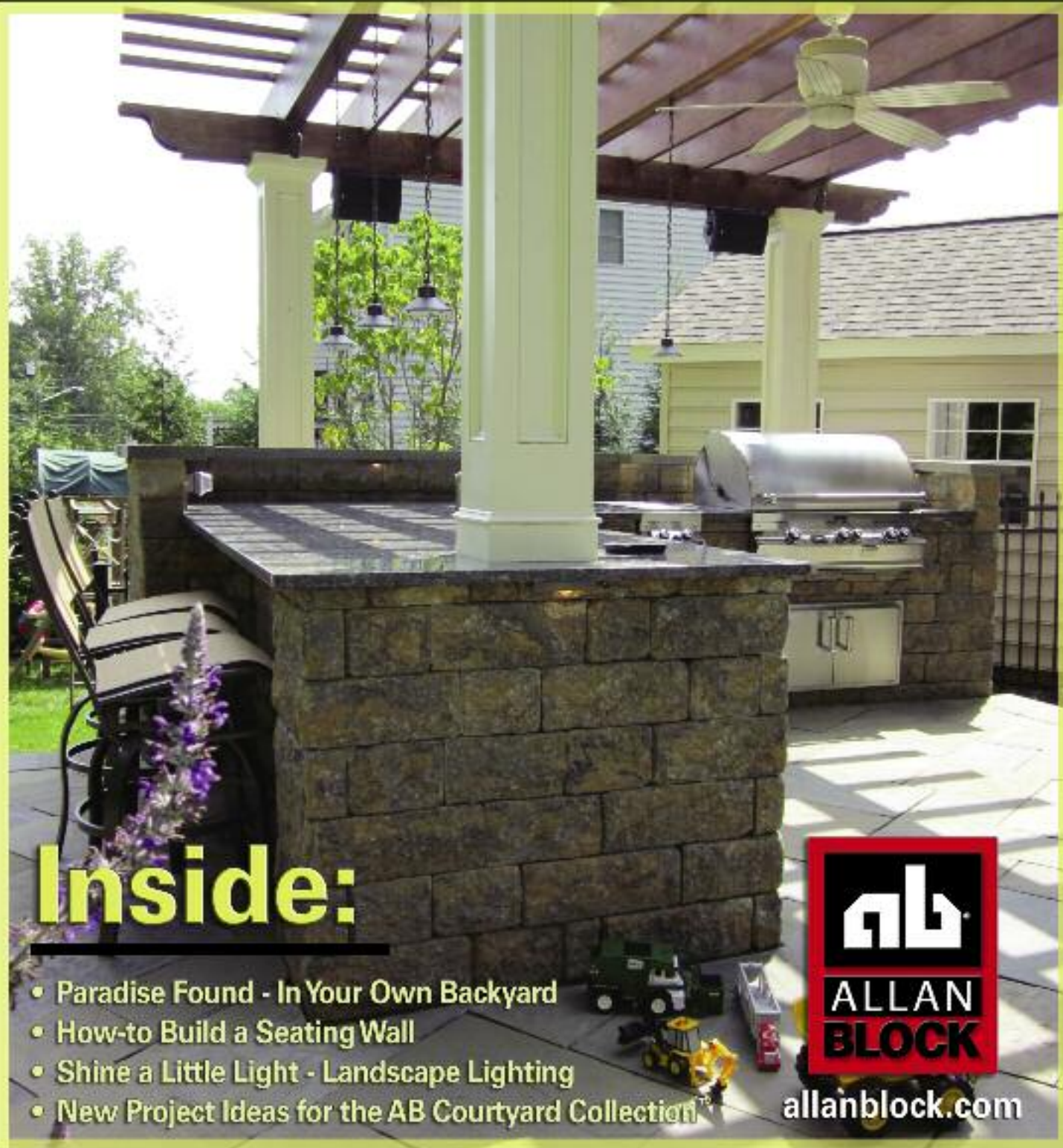


ALLAN BLOCK LANDSCAPES

Newsletter for the Landscape Professional

Issue 29

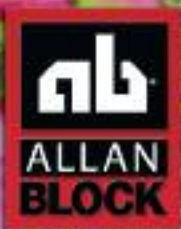


Inside:

- Paradise Found - In Your Own Backyard
- How-to Build a Seating Wall
- Shine a Little Light - Landscape Lighting
- New Project Ideas for the AB Courtyard Collection



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Paradise Found

Immediately upon walking through the black cast-iron gate at this magnificent Vienna, VA private residence, a breathtaking landscape quickly comes into view. Initially greeted by large concrete planters filled with colorful plants and lush greenery along the flagstone walkway, guests are quickly introduced to a spectacular outdoor living space.

The homeowners did a lot of research using the internet, talking with contractors, and evaluating many different types of products and construction options. Using what they learned, they developed most of the design themselves, and knew exactly what they wanted before they even started the work.



They were extremely pleased and impressed with Allan Block's website. They loved the photos and it offered much more information than other sites. One photo showed almost the exact look they wanted to achieve. The site also helped them to develop a visual image of what the finished project would look like.

After studying all the options on Allan Block's site- the products, the photos, how the blocks were pre-engineered, how to install them, etc. - they hired an independent engineer to put it all down on paper.

The entire project was completed in three separate phases. The walkway and window wells were constructed first, followed by the custom-built sculptured pool. The third and

final phase included the installation of a massive S-curved Allan Block Courtyard seating wall and an AB Dover retaining wall that surrounds the entire perimeter.

The homeowners added a built-in waterfall that flows from the top of the wall into the pool below, creating a soothing sound to compliment the tranquil setting. The steps from the pool lead to a large patio area flanked by more curved seating walls, a large outdoor fireplace and fully-equipped kitchen – both constructed using AB Courtyard .

Shaded beneath a stunning, natural wood pergola supported by white columns, the magnificent outdoor kitchen features a stainless steel sink, appliances, and amenities. The back support wall located behind the kitchen was also constructed using AB Courtyard block topped with flagstone wall cap. The kitchen features built-in, under-counter lighting, as well as a ceiling fan and pendant lights.

The homeowners were delighted with the outcome. "We threw a huge back-yard, open-house party for our friends, neighbors, and relatives. Everyone loved how it turned out and enjoyed it as much as we do."



AB Courtyard Collection™:



Building Patios and Seating Walls

The AB Courtyard Collection is a versatile two-sided wall system that can enhance the beauty of your landscape and backyard. Build AB Courtyard wall panels to create beautiful patio enclosures or flowing curves to give your new outdoor room a graceful and spacious feel. Using these steps you can build a seating wall or patio enclosure.

Installation on an Existing Patio or Pavement

Step 1: Layout

Determine the location of the wall panel. To ensure that the placement of the wall is straight, and in the location desired, use a string line. Go to Step 5.

Installation on Soil

Step 1: Layout

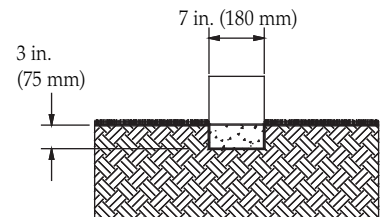
Determine the location of the wall panel and lay the first course of block to determine the shape of the wall and to establish where to dig the trench. AB Dublin, AB York or both blocks together can be used for the base course.

If you are building walls with curves, corners or posts, check out the AB Courtyard Collection Installation Guide (available at allanblock.com) for more information.



Step 2: Build Foundation*

Mark the location of the wall with a shovel, remove the blocks and dig a level trench 3 in. deep and 7 in. wide (75 mm x 180mm).



***NOTE:**

The soil beneath the foundation pad must be a good quality compactible material. If soft soils are encountered, they will need to be removed and replaced with additional crushed rock. A good foundation will ensure a stable wall for years to come.

Keep in mind that the AB Courtyard Collection is not designed to retain soils. If your project needs a retaining wall, see our AB Landscape Walls Guide (available at allanblock.com) for information on retaining walls.

Step 3: Fill

Place 3 in. (75 mm) of crushed rock in the trench and compact using a hand tamper.



Building A Wall Panel



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Step 4: Level

Level the base rock. We recommend using a straight 2 x 4 and a level to ensure the entire base is level. Make any adjustments as needed by adding or removing the crushed rock.



Step 5: Build

Install the first two courses of block at the same time, tamping and leveling into place. Place 3-5 blocks in the trench, level, then place 3-5 blocks on the second course. Installing the first two courses at the same time will ensure that the blocks line up properly. The raised rings on the top of the blocks lock the courses together by fitting into the blocks above.



Step 6: Continue Building

Continue stacking courses of blocks in the pattern you have chosen until the desired height is achieved. Remember to offset the block seams on each course of blocks from the course below.

Step 7: Finish

Finish the wall with Wall Caps. On straight sections alternate the direction of the Wall Cap, on curved walls, place the short side of the caps on the inside of the curve. Secure the Wall Caps in place with a bead of masonry adhesive along both sides of the raised rings and along the side of each Wall Cap (adhesive optional).

Additional Information:

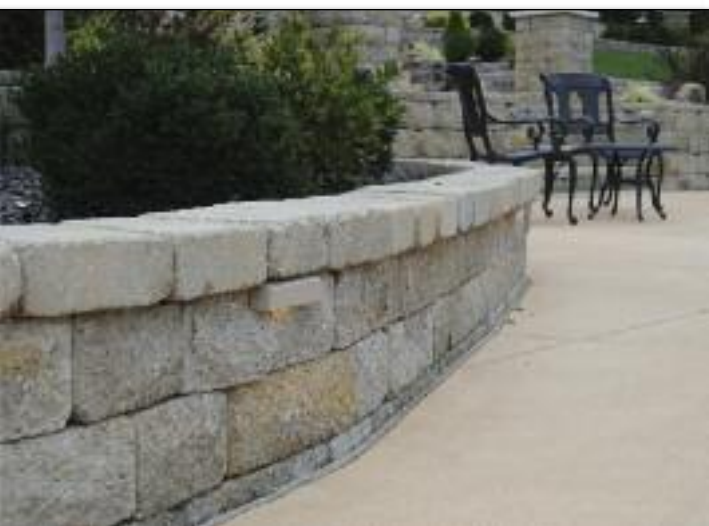
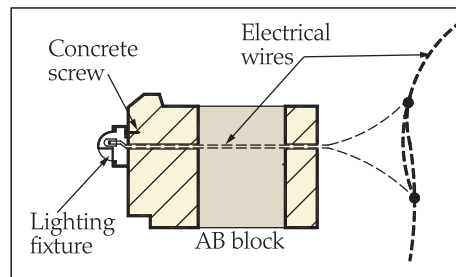
If taller walls are desired, see How-to sheet #150 for additional construction information to ensure stability. If building your wall panel with posts/pillars, for added stability or to interlock them together, see our library of How-to sheets and other instructional materials at allanblock.com.

Shine a Little Light on the Subject...

Adding a Dramatic Effect to Your Projects

Lighting brings new possibilities to any landscape. Add a dramatic look with ground mounted lighting or illuminate stairways and pathways with recessed lighting. Allan Block walls with decorative lighting fixtures provide not only a distinctive design, but add safety and security to the landscape.

Allan Block's patented hollow core design makes it easy to add lighting into any wall. Simply run the wiring directly behind the AB blocks (follow local electrical codes) to the light locations. Depending on the light fixture you have chosen, you may need to use a masonry saw to cut out sections of the block to accommodate the lighting fixture and run the wiring through the blocks out to the light fixture.



Where Do I Find Outdoor Lighting?

A wide variety of outdoor lighting options can be found on the market today. The layout of your landscape and how it is utilized will determine what lighting options are best for your project. Standard lighting options can be found at your local hardscape dealer, visit our "Where to Buy" dealer locator at allanblock.com for more information.

For lighting that is designed specifically for retaining wall use, Check out IC Lights LLC (www.iclightsllc.com). Their low voltage lighting options are designed specifically to be used with Allan Block retaining walls, pillars, courtyard walls, outdoor kitchens and many other landscape applications.



New Project Ideas for AB Courtyard Collection



Have A Great Idea? We Want To Hear About It!

Allan Block's AB Courtyard Collection is a two-sided wall and post system that can be used in a wide variety of ways. You can build everything from ponds and kitchens to seating walls and outdoor bars, but there is so much more that you can build with AB Courtyard. We here at Allan Block are always looking for new and imaginative ways to build with this versatile product and we want to hear from you!

If you or someone you know has a project idea that you would like us to know about, we would love to hear from you. So think about the projects you have built or want to build and send us your pictures, your ideas and your feedback.

Post your ideas on our blog at allanblockblog.com, find us on Facebook at facebook.com/allanblockwalls or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/allanblockwalls.

We can't wait to see the great ideas - *So Be Creative with AB Courtyard!*



Sign up at allanblock.com to receive the *Allan Block Landscapes* newsletter by e-mail.

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