



# Pavers Versus Concrete

**DeVries**

Design + Landscape



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# Which should you choose for your pool deck or patio?

Pavers vs. concrete is probably the #1 most-asked-question when it comes to designing and building an outdoor space for our clients. We want to give you a clear guide explaining the pros and cons of each.

There are a lot of scenarios where pavers or concrete are used. For the purposes of this guide, we'll focus on backyard patios and driveways. Since this guide is intended for homeowners—not contractors—we'll also try to avoid getting too technical.

## What's the difference? Is there a difference?



### Concrete

Basically, concrete is anything poured in place. There are different styles of concrete (e.g. broom swept, stamped, exposed aggregate) but they are all poured in place. Imagine pancake batter poured out of big truck, smoothed off and then left to harden overnight.



### Pavers

A paver is typically made of concrete or traditional clay brick but it is an individual segmented unit, laid together with other individual segmented units to create a cohesive surface. Imagine LEGO's laid out together all across the floor; that's a paver patio. Pavers can be as small as 2"x2" or as large as 3'x4'.

# Which one do I want?

That's going to depend. Either will work for most projects, but pavers are often the better overall value. Let us explain why.

## Concrete (poured in place)

### Pros

- ▶ **Cost.** Concrete is generally cheaper than pavers. There are variations in style that add or reduce cost, but almost all concrete options are cheaper than pavers.

This a big pro. That is why large parking lots and city sidewalks are generally concrete.

Cheaper is the only pro we see for concrete.

### Cons

- ▶ **Cracks.** There have been technological advances to help reduce cracking in concrete, but at some point, almost all concrete will crack. This never looks good and can't really be fixed without ripping it all out and replacing it.
- ▶ **No warranties.** Because concrete cracks and because no two pours will ever be the exact same color, even the best installers cannot warranty the work. When it cracks, it cracks, and that's it.
- ▶ **Lack of Durability.** After it cracks, freeze thaw cycles in the Indiana climate make it heave and settle, creating an uneven surface. This creates trip hazards. Salt from the winter months will also erode and weaken concrete.
- ▶ **Lack of Aesthetic.** Poured-in-place concrete is really limited on colors and styles. There are only a few options, and they generally don't look as nice as pavers.
- ▶ **Maintenance.** Concrete patios require regular cleaning and sealing.



## Pavers (individual segmented units laid together)

### Pros

- ▶ **Durability.** Most pavers come with a manufacturer's lifetime warranty, and with proper maintenance they will look new for years to come. Contractors can also offer installation warranties. At DeVries Design and Landscape we offer five-year warranties on our paver patios, because installation is different than concrete, and we can eliminate freeze-thaw cycles under the patio completely.

In a worst case scenario, if a paver patio does settle; the individual units can be lifted and fixed in place. Concrete does not allow that

- ▶ **Aesthetic.** Pavers can really bring your space to life. There are hundreds of styles and colors, giving us an unlimited number of creative combinations. Borders/bandings and decorative inlays all allow for a truly unique and beautiful design.
- ▶ **Functionality.** Certain pavers are designed with certain applications in mind. For example, there are pavers designed for pool decks with 'grit' for your feet and heat-reflecting aggregate that keeps them cool to the touch.

Pavers also allow you to phase a project. Individual units are made in factory-controlled settings, so five years after initial installation, phase two can be added to your patio without looking like phase two.

Some pavers come 'factory sealed', with the sealer baked into the paver. This allows for ease of maintenance greater longevity. Wine, mustard and ketchup spills wipe right off!

### Cons

- ▶ **Cost.** Pavers are generally more expensive than concrete.
- ▶ **Maintenance.** Paver patios require regular cleaning and re-sanding of the joints; and some pavers require sealing.



# Example Paver Combinations

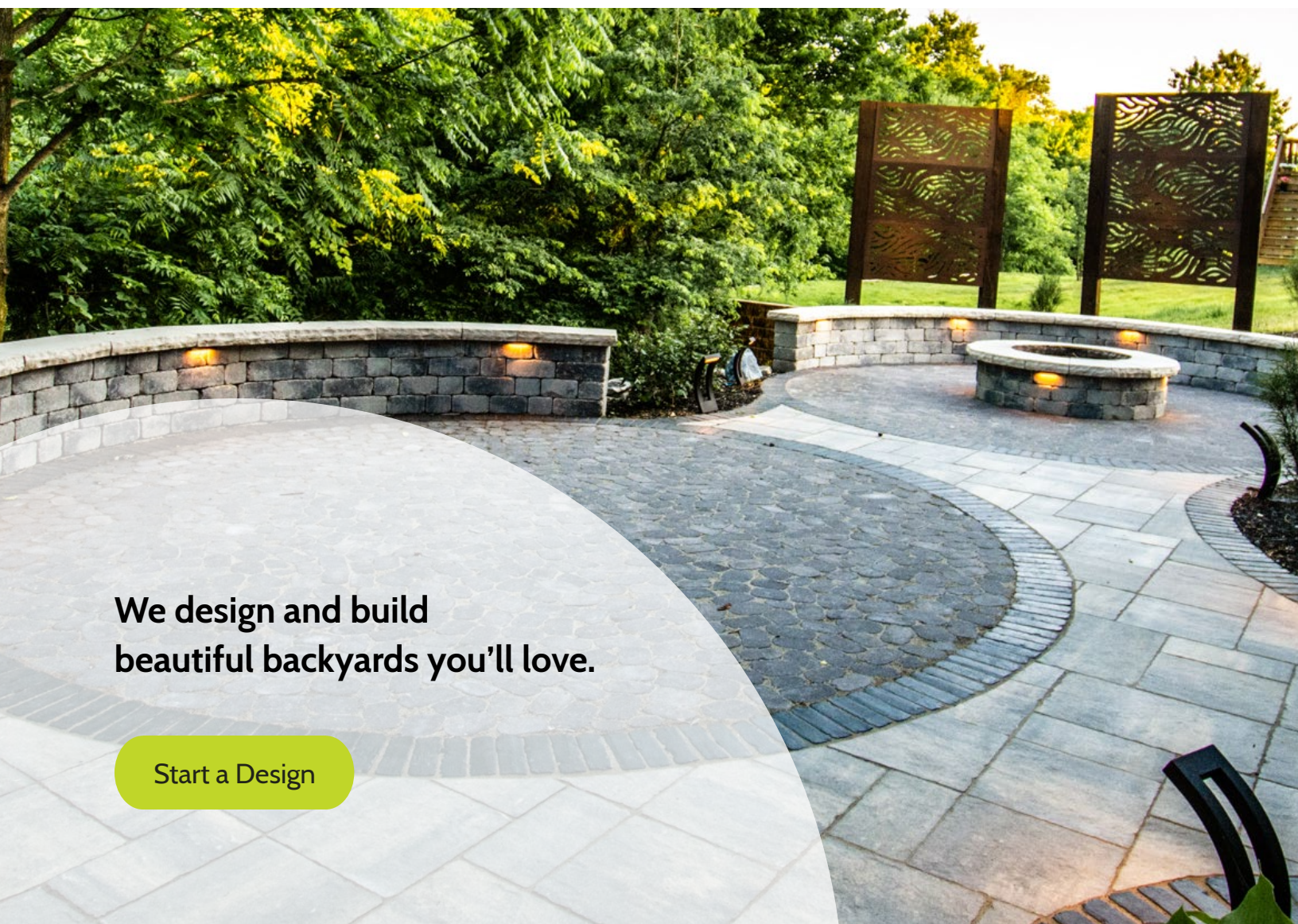


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# Our Advice

Pavers are higher quality, give you more design options and will last a lifetime. They are generally more expensive, but we believe pavers are usually the better option.

*If you have questions about what might be possible in your space or if you feel like you need inspiration, let us know. We can help.*

A large, curved stone patio with a fire pit and decorative screens. The patio is made of light-colored stone pavers and is surrounded by a low stone wall. In the background, there are two tall, dark metal screens with intricate cutout designs. The patio is set in a lush, green backyard with trees and a wooden deck visible in the distance.

**We design and build  
beautiful backyards you'll love.**

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