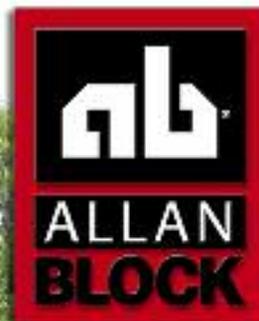


ALLAN BLOCK LANDSCAPES

Newsletter for the Landscape Professional

Issue 24



allanblock.com

Inside:

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- ◆ Important Steps Before Building Any Project
- ◆ Tips and Tricks for Capping Curves
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Get Curvy With Allan Block Walls

Does your landscape need a retaining wall? Not sure how to tackle a slope or add a planter? Unsure of where to begin your design ideas? Then why not make your project as attractive and functional as possible, by building with curves. Curved walls offer many benefits that just about every project can use, the process is simple.

Why Build with Curves?

So why build with curves you ask? A beautiful addition to almost any landscape, curves offer a seamless strength that you simply don't see with any other application. Why settle for straight and narrow when you can get curvy with your landscape. Flowing lines soften edges in ways corners never do.



Curves can benefit your landscape by adding curb appeal to your home. Use them when building raised patios and flowing gardens, or when creating water features. Curves soften entryways and stairways and are a great way to add dimension and spirit to long straight walls.

Another added benefit to using curves, is how easily they come together. In fact, most curved walls can be built with no cutting involved, making them simple to build.

With all the benefits a curved wall can offer, you are sure to get the look and function you need for just about any project.

**Are you ready to add a curve to
your next landscape project?**



Getting Ready To Build

You are planning to build a retaining wall, you have the design laid out, and have even picked out the block style and color, you're all set right? - well not quite.

Building a retaining wall no matter the size takes a little planning and preparation before you build. With just a few simple, but important steps, you can make your next Allan Block retaining wall project stack up like a dream.

HAVE A PLAN

Having a detailed plan drawn to scale will help you locate any areas in the design that could be potential challenges on the jobsite and give you a more accurate number when estimating the amount of material for your project. Be sure to get a copy of the projects lot survey. The city should have a copy available for you to determine where the lot lines are which can provide an accurate template for your site plan.



HAVE THE RIGHT TOOLS

Having the right tools when starting any project is important. This extra planning ahead of time will save you time, money and frustration during construction. Make a list of all the tools you need and remember safety always comes first. Depending on the scope and style of your project you may need to rent additional equipment such as a plate compactor, concrete saw or even a Bobcat to move dirt around.



CONSIDER YOUR SITE

Take the time to consider the jobsite to avoid common time crunchers and other pitfalls. Here are just a few things to be sure to consider:

- **Site Access** - Make sure you can get your equipment and materials to the project site. Keep in mind where you will store your materials and plan any special needs your site may have.
- **Soil Type** - Be sure to determine the type of soil on your project prior to construction. If poor soils are present, you will have to make arrangements to have the poor soil removed and proper soils brought in to replace them.

GET READY... GET SET... GO!

Now that you have your plan, your design and all the site preparations complete you are ready to get out there and build your Allan Block wall. Make sure you contact the local utility company and have your lines mark before you dig - and a way you go, with just a little bit of planning your project will be a snap!

Using Curves and Serpentine

Now that you have decided to add curves to your landscape, there are just a few steps you need to follow to get your landscape project rolling. Let's start by selecting the right curve style to compliment your landscape.

Picking Your Curve

When planning your project you must first decide whether you need inside or outside curves or a combination of both to make a serpentine wall. Choose the curve option that best fits your landscape and overall style.

Inside Curves are achieved by creating consistent spacing between the backs of the blocks as you build. A great option when trying to add more usable space.

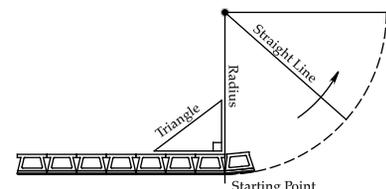


Outside Curves are created by removing one or both of the wings on the back of the block to create a smooth and flowing radius.



Designing Your Style

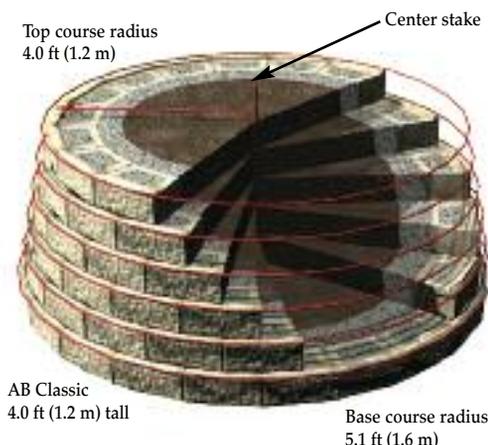
Before constructing your wall, layout your design using a garden hose or paint. This will help you determine how tight or gentle each curve will need to be. Knowing this information ahead of time can help you make the best selection when ordering the blocks for your project. Choose blocks that will fit your design or adjust your design to fit the blocks you have selected.



Before You Build

Whether you decide to build it yourself or hire an AB Certified Contractor to do the heavy lifting, determining your radius or curve before you build will help the build process go more smoothly.

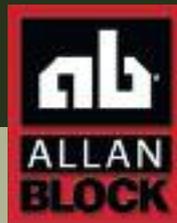
Curved walls have a greater setback, so the radius at the bottom of the wall will be different than the one at the top. You will need to determine the minimum radius for your base course before you begin to ensure the top of your wall has the radius you desire (see the Radius Chart on page 28 of the AB Landscape Walls Guide).



Building Tighter Curves

Tighter curves will require a bit of work to modify the blocks to fit. Whenever possible use a more flowing design. If a flowing curve doesn't fit in your design. Try using the AB Jumbo Junior or the AB Palermo to make the tighter curve.

in Your Landscape



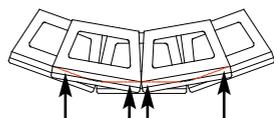
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Serpentines are achieved by using a combination of both inside and outside curves to creating a beautiful flow to the landscape.

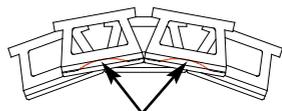


Starting A Curve

Start from the point of where the curve will begin and measure straight back from the wall the required amount (shown in the Radius Chart on page 28 of the AB Landscape Walls Guide) and drive a stake into the ground. This will be the center of the curve. Then attach a string line to the stake the length of the radius and rotate it around to mark the location of the base course. This will give you a guide for installing the blocks. Then simply lay the blocks along the marked area, and away you go. For more detailed instructions on installing curves, check out the information in the AB Landscape Walls Guide or visit allanblock.com.



Area of notch to remove on bottom of block



Area of notch to remove on bottom of block

Cutting Caps For Curves

Capping a curved wall is easy. A few simple modifications and the caps will fit beautifully to any curve.

STEP 1

Place two caps on top of the wall, spaced so a third cap will fit tightly between their widest point.



STEP 2

Set another cap on top of the first two caps and mark where they overlap on the bottom of the center cap.



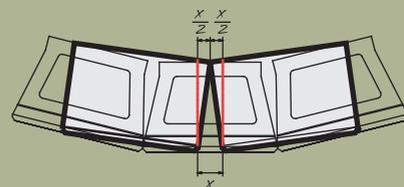
STEP 3

Remove the center cap and cut along the marks. Set the cut cap in place.



Capping Tighter Curves

- Place two caps on the wall with the back of each cap tight together. A gap will appear in the front.
- Measure the distance of the gap between the 2 caps (x) at the front of the wall.
- Measure out this distance ($x/2$) on the back of each of the cap and mark.
- Draw a line from the mark to the front corner.
- Use a masonry saw to cut each cap.



For more information on curves and other installation instructions, check out the Landscape Walls Guide by Allan Block or visit our website at allanblock.com





***Have A Great
Landscape Wall
Project?***

Get Your Project Promoted for Free

Have a great Allan Block project and want to show it off? Well here is your chance to let your project shine. Allan Block is looking for Allan Block landscape projects that show the beauty and versatility of building with Allan Block.

YOUR JOB IS SIMPLE

Submit your project photos to Allan Block Corporation via email at info@allanblock.com. Submitted projects have the opportunity to be featured on the cover of the next **ALLAN BLOCK LANDSCAPES Newsletter**. Get your project selected and enjoy the benefits of **FREE** advertising for your company within this internationally circulated publication. In addition, you will receive free copies of the publication to hand out in your community.

BUT THERE IS MORE!

All projects submitted have the opportunity to be featured within a wide variety of literature, videos, tools and even on the Allan Block website. Some of our projects have even been featured within the National Concrete Masonry Association (NCMA) national publications. So the possibilities for **FREE** exposure are limitless!

Don't let your beautiful landscape go unrecognized. Submit your Allan Block projects and let the world see the beauty and versatility you can create using Allan Block products.



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To receive this *Landscape Lifestyles* newsletter by e-mail, sign up at allanblock.com.

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