

Alternatives to Limestone Pavement

There are some authentic artificial alternatives available from retailers offering a wide range of colours, shapes, sizes and textures that will complement most gardens.

Or why not create your own stones by using the simple instructions below. This way you can create the stones to the exact size and shape to suit your needs and leave the natural limestone pavements in their normal surroundings for us all to enjoy.

How to make Limestone Pavement alternative.

Ingredients:

- 2 parts coir
- 2 parts sharp sand
- 1 part fresh cement concrete (neutral for best effect)
- water
- a sheet of Hessian sack or polythene

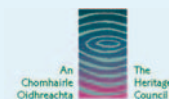
Instructions:

1. Dig an irregularly shaped hole in the ground to be a mould for your rock.
2. Line it with the Hessian sack, or polythene with lots of crinkles to create the texture of the surface of the rock
3. Mix the ingredients together to a porridge consistency, pour into the hole. Wait until thoroughly dry - about 3 days, depending on the weather.
4. Lift out the rock and move to desired site.
5. Paint with yoghurt or liquid manure to encourage weathering.

Rare areas of limestone pavement across the UK and Ireland are still under threat for use as a garden feature.

For more information about the sale of limestone pavement read "Shattered Stone," a report produced on behalf of the Limestone Pavement Biodiversity Habitat Action Plan steering group. Available from www.limestone-pavements.org.uk/threats

For more information about the limestone pavement action plan visit www.ukbap.org.uk



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In between a rockery and a hard place



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Once removed limestone pavement cannot be replaced

Limestone pavement is one of the UK and Ireland's rarest and most treasured landscape features, creating a natural habitat for a rich diversity of wild flowers, ferns and woodland plants.



The characteristics of this wonderful feature have taken some fifteen thousand years of exposure to form.

Sadly, large areas of limestone pavement have been lost due to the practice of breaking up and removing limestone blocks to provide water-worn limestone for use in garden rockeries and for landscaping materials.

Once removed, limestone pavement can never be replaced.

Only 3% of limestone pavement in the UK now remains in pristine condition.

Almost all limestone pavement in the UK is legally protected. For example, in England it is an offence to damage or remove stone from pavement areas covered by Limestone Pavement Orders.

Research carried out on behalf of the Limestone Pavement Biodiversity Action Plan steering group has shown that limestone pavement is still being sold by garden centres and stone merchants to meet demand for water-worn limestone in the UK.



This demand can lead to the damage of unprotected limestone pavements, for example those in Ireland.



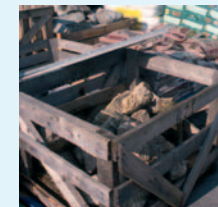
Think before you buy

Buying water-worn limestone for use as a garden feature leads to environmental damage caused by the removal of the stone from its natural habitat.

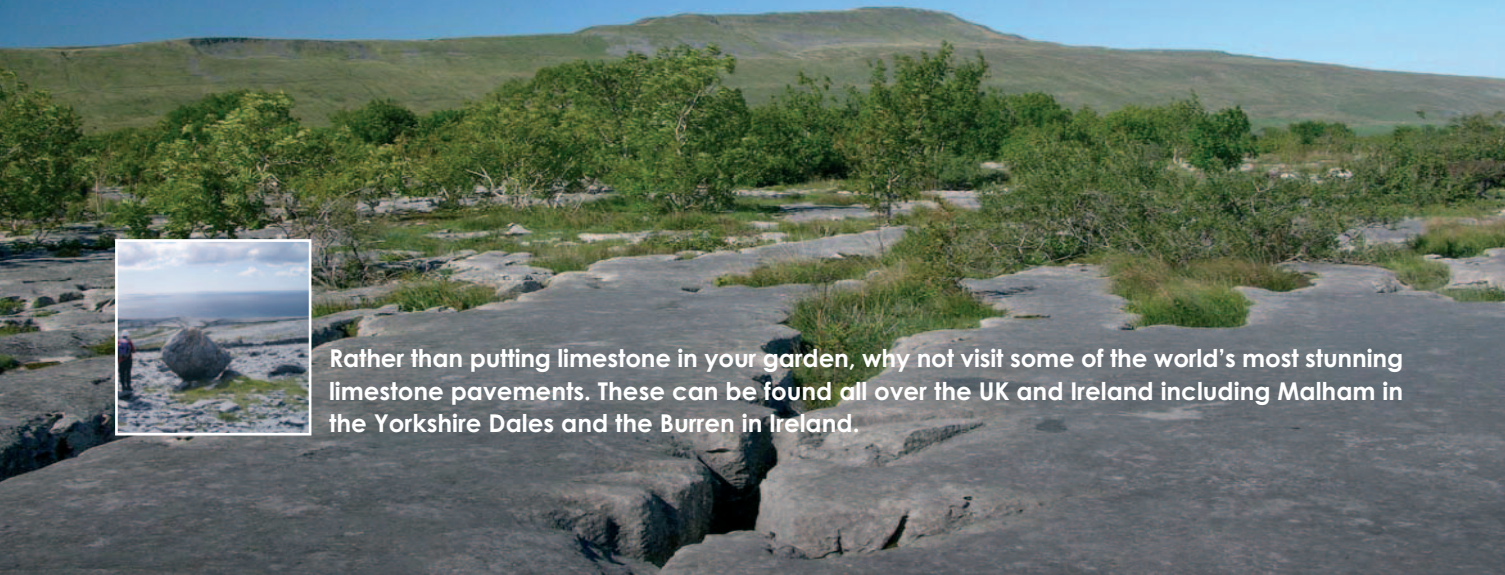


The stone is also sold under names that may disguise the fact that it is water-worn limestone.

These names include weathered limestone, Westmorland stone, Cumberland stone and Irish limestone.



So, before you buy please ask retailers and garden centres about the sources of any limestone on sale.



Rather than putting limestone in your garden, why not visit some of the world's most stunning limestone pavements. These can be found all over the UK and Ireland including Malham in the Yorkshire Dales and the Burren in Ireland.