

Fire Pit Building ABC's

By Troy Wahl (a customer)

Step 1 → Mark the center of the fire pit by driving a stake (or rebar) into it, then attach one end of string to the rebar and another to landscape spray paint to create the circle. My pit has a diameter of 5 ft, so the string was cut to 2 ½ feet (1/2 the diameter). I then came in from the sides (1 ft) to create the 6 inch footing for the fire brick and stone. The actual size of the fire pit (center), where the 30" gas ring will be is 3 ft (36 in.) You want to leave at least 3 inches on each side of the ring.



Step 2 → The sitting area was then dug out around the pit. I didn't want to be too far from the heat that will be generated from the pit, so it is fairly close. I don't have exact measurements, because I just used my eye to be my guide. Again, I attached string from the rebar to the outside part of my sitting area (wall). I left the front open so you could see the pit itself, as well as walk around it. I then came in 20" or so to create the inside of the wall. I dug down between 6 – 8 inches to create a good concrete base. There was a 3" slope from front to back, so I had to compensate for that.



Step 3 → I then laid down 2 feet sections of rebar for the footing around the fire pit. I also placed my cinder blocks in the sitting area and drove in rebar.



Step 4 → I wanted a drain for the sitting area because I didn't want water to gather at the back, where someone's feet would be. I created a slight slope so the water would drain through the PVC and under my fence.



Step 5 → I decided to create a concrete base for under my Gas ring so I extended out the PVC pipe to reach to the Pit, and then I put in another drain.



Step 6 → Running the Natural Gas line from the house to the pit was very expensive so I decided to go the propane route. I dug a deep hole in one of the adjacent flowerbeds, placed a plastic pot in it and then put in the propane tank. One piece of flagstone will be laid on top to conceal the tank.



Step 7 → A form (plastic border for flowerbeds) was put around the inner circle of the fire pit to hold in the concrete. 4 bags of Quikrete were used, it dried over night and then the form was broken free.



Step 8 → A trench was dug to run the gas line from the Propane tank to the fire pit. I dug down about 8 inches and placed 2" PVC pipe in the ground.



Step 9 → The footing for the sitting area was poured. It took 18 bags of the 80lb variety of Quickrete. It took 2 ½ hours to pour and level, and I discovered this is a job that I would not want on a daily basis.



Step 10 → Mortar was placed on the footing and then the wall of Cinder blocks was constructed, with a layer of mortar also placed between the 1st and 2nd row. All blocks were lined up and leveled. A total of 3 bags of mortar mix was used.



Step 11 → The cinder blocks were filled with concrete to make the wall more stable. Taylor and Brendan added a few pennies and dimes to the top of the concrete, so the wall was a little more than I had budgeted 😊



Step 12 → I installed a Moderustic FPPK (fire pit propane kit) and a 36" triple stainless steel ring. The ring is calibrated with the air mixer to burn the propane properly with 6 parts of air and 1 part of propane. Amerigas came out to hook up the line and test it. All went well and as you can see the gas ring worked exactly as it should have.



Step 13 → The footing for the fire brick and stone was poured and then the fire brick were put in. First a row of horizontal bricks and then the soldiers (vertical brick) were put into place to form a circle.



Step 14 → I laid out the first row of stones to see what the best fit would be. It was basically like putting a puzzle together. Some required me to break off some ends in order for them to fit better against the adjacent stones. Once that was done, I threw down some mud (Mortar) and started setting the stones. After it had a chance to dry a little, I went in with a flat head screw driver and scraped away some of the mortar that you could see between the stones. Then I used an old brush or broom to get out the ‘crumbs’



Step 15 → I finished the stone work and then poured mortar in between the fire brick and the stone for extra stability. Then I laid out the flagstone in the yard and tried to piece together this very difficult puzzle. Getting them to fit, in a circular pattern was not easy and it took about 2 hours to get a design that I was comfortable with. Once complete, I topped off the pit with more lava rock and then cleaned the stone and flagstone.



Step 16 → I could not find a cover to fit the pit, so my Mom made me one out of Vinyl. She put elastic at the bottom to hug the sides of the pit. I still might add a draw string for a more tight fit for when those high winds roar through Oklahoma with the spring thunderstorms. I will be painting a large OU on the top of the cover.



I like the lava rock but I am thinking that I will switch to the Aquatic Glassel the first part of the year. Does it burn hotter than lava rock, because I don't seem to be generating a lot of heat from the lava rock. The flames are nice but the heat is lacking. When I switch to glass, I will take more pics and email them to you. I want on that website of yours!!

Thanks for your time!

Troy D. Wahl

Operations Analyst
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Troy:

Yes it will generate several times more heat as the glass does not dissipate the heat as lava rock does. Actually the glass radiates heat because it is a solid. Yes you are already on the website now for fire pit building ABC's.

Thank you

Ed

There was an issue, which was resolved with the propane. Here are the letters, which were written:

From: Troy Wahl [<mailto:twahl@bancfirst.com>]

Sent: Friday, May 29, 2009 6:50 AM

To: ed@moderustic.com

Subject: fire pit question

Hello again Ed,

I have emailed and spoken to you several times during my Fire pit construction, and

also ordered the FPPK from you as well. In fact you still have my Fire pit construction plans on your site. My seating area is almost complete so I will shoot you another picture of that when it is finished.

My question though is concerning the gas (propane). The pit fires up just fine, but after about 10 minutes it goes out. I am not sure what the cause of this is. I light the pit and turn the gas up to just a few clicks shy of all the way, it gives a nice size flame and then all of the sudden without warning goes really low. The flames are still lit, but they are very, very low, only a small blue flame is burning. I then try to turn the gas low and back up and it goes out. The whole time the pilot is still lit and never goes out. I shut off completely and wait 5 minutes but it will not light back up, only the pilot will light. I then wait a day and the whole process starts over. It stays lit for 10 minutes +/- and then goes really low. Do you have any idea what could be happening? I appreciate your feedback.

Thanks!

Troy D. Wahl

Operations Analyst
Fidelity National Information Services

Troy:

I will call you today to discuss the issues.

Ed

Ed:

I found out the problem and it was bigger than I thought. Are you ready for this??? I was out of Propane! Amazing what a little gas will do for a fire pit :-)

I finished the seating area around the pit, this past weekend and am waiting on my end caps for the small pillars I have at the ends of the wall. When that is complete, I will send you a picture.

Thanks again for all of your help on this project; I couldn't have done it without you!

Troy D. Wahl

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Troy created this document for us to share with all of our customers. Thank you so much Troy and I hope all of our customers enjoy it as much as we did and do.

Ed Jaunzemis