

UNDERSTANDING & MAINTAINING YOUR DRIVEWAY & DRAINAGE

Simple tips to spot issues early, avoid costly damage, and keep your driveway and drainage in good shape.

A close-up photograph of a dark asphalt driveway surface. The surface is heavily textured and shows significant signs of wear and aging, including numerous small pits, larger potholes, and a network of deep, irregular cracks. A solid blue diagonal line runs across the upper portion of the image, separating the white text area from the asphalt image.

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WELCOME

Winter is tough on driveways and drainage. Small issues like cracks, puddles, or moss can quickly turn into costly problems if left unchecked. This guide shares practical tips and checklists to help you spot early warning signs, maintain your driveway, and plan repairs before damage sets in. Knowing what to look for, and when to act, keeps your property protected and looking sharp.

HEALTH CHECKS.

YOUR DRIVEWAY & DRAINAGE

Things to look out for:

- **Cracks of any size** (small hairline fractures, wide gaps, or ones that are slowly getting bigger)
- **Potholes, depressions,** or ruts (sunken spots, holes, or uneven dips in the driveway surface)
- **Pooling or standing water after rain** (water that doesn't drain properly and just sits on the surface)
- **Loose gravel or surface erosion** (gravel washing away or the top layer of the driveway breaking down)
- **White chalky patches on concrete** (efflorescence) (mineral deposits left behind when moisture comes up through the concrete)
- **Worn or patchy sealer** (sealer that's faded, flaking off, or missing in places, leaving the driveway unprotected)
- **Moss, lichen, or weeds** growing in cracks or edges (plants and green stuff growing where it shouldn't, a sign of trapped moisture and surface damage)
- **Blocked drains or slow water flow** (gutters, channels, or grates that are clogged or not letting water drain properly)
- **Soggy ground near foundations or driveway edges** (soft or waterlogged soil after rain, this can mean poor drainage or water getting under the driveway)

MAINTENANCE TIPS.

A bit of basic upkeep can go a long way. Staying on top of a few simple tasks each year helps prevent bigger issues and keeps your driveway and drainage in good nick.

- Sweep and wash your driveway every so often to clear away moss, dirt, and grime. This helps prevent it getting slippery or wearing out faster.
- Do a general check of your driveway and drains once or twice a year, especially after heavy rain.
- Look out for leaves, weeds, moss build-up, or loose gravel.
- Keep garden edges and overgrown plants trimmed back. Grass and roots creeping in from the sides can slowly cause surface damage.
- Avoid leaving heavy vehicles or trailers parked in one place too long. Constant pressure in one spot can weaken the surface over time.
- After storms, clear out any leaves or build up in drains and channels. This helps keep water flowing where it should.
- Check and tidy up any shrubs or plants growing close to drainage outlets. It doesn't take much for roots or foliage to start causing blockages.

WHEN SMALL ISSUES TURN INTO BIG JOBS.

Some problems might seem small at first, but if they're left too long, they can turn into bigger (and more expensive) jobs. These are the signs worth keeping an eye on – the sooner you act, the easier they usually are to sort.

- **Water pooling or draining toward the house**, if water tends to sit on your driveway or flows back toward the house, it could be a design issue. Over time, this might cause erosion or foundation damage and fixing it usually means more than a quick patch job.
- **Cracks that start growing or spreading**, one small crack on its own might not be serious. But if it starts widening, getting longer, or showing up in multiple places, it could mean the ground underneath is shifting or breaking down.
- **Soft, soggy ground near your driveway or foundation**, if the soil around the edges of your driveway stays damp long after it rains, it might mean water is sitting or pooling under the surface. That kind of moisture can lead to sinking, cracking, or even problems with your house foundations.
- **Drains that keep clogging over and over**, if you're constantly having to clear the same drain, it might be more than just leaves. Things like root damage, collapsed pipes, or poor drainage layout could be hiding under the surface, and they don't fix themselves.

These aren't things to panic about, but it's a good idea to get someone in early if you notice them. Acting on small signs now could save you thousands down the line.

OLDER DRIVEWAYS

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Many driveways built between the 1970s and early 2000s were designed to suit the standards of the time. While some still perform well, others may show signs of wear or fall short of today's drainage and compliance expectations.

1970s-1980s: Bitumen, Asphalt, and Early Concrete Use

- Bitumen and asphalt became common, with concrete used in higher value builds
- Reinforcement was often missing or minimal
- Most driveways relied on slope alone, surface drainage was rarely included
- Narrow widths and lack of edge restraint were the standard

1990s-Early 2000s: A Step Toward Modern Standards

- Reinforced concrete and higher grade asphalt became more common in urban areas
- Some homes added basic surface drains, especially in newer subdivisions
- Wider driveways and more thoughtful layout designs started appearing
- Many older properties still used outdated methods unless council upgrades were required

Common Issues with Driveways Built 20-50 Years Ago

- Cracking, sinking, or lifting due to ageing base materials or lack of reinforcement
- Water pooling where drainage wasn't installed or no longer works as intended
- Edge crumbling or spreading over time
- Driveway repairs triggering upgrade requirements under current council rules

Why It Matters

As older driveways age, some may start to show wear or fall short of today's standards for drainage, safety, or surface condition. If repairs are needed, there's a chance you'll need to bring things up to standard, which can add unexpected cost. Keeping an eye on it now helps you stay ahead of any future work or compliance surprises.

OLDER DRAINAGE

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Drainage systems built between the 1970s and early 2000s were designed for the standards of the time. While some still hold up, others may fall short of modern codes and environmental expectations, especially during heavy rain or property upgrades.

1970s-1980s: Basic Grading and Minimal Integration

- Most homes relied on basic slope (cross-fall) to direct water away
- Subsoil drains were rare, with runoff often spilling into lawns or open drains
- Few systems were connected to council stormwater networks

1990s-Early 2000s: The Start of Smarter Systems

- Surface drains (like channels or grates) became more common in newer subdivisions
- Some properties added swales or subsoil drains for better water flow
- Environmental awareness grew, but practices still varied by region
- Integration with council systems improved but wasn't consistent

Common Issues with Drainage Installed 20-50 Years Ago

- Standing water or soggy ground caused by poor slope or blocked drains
- Subsoil drains may be blocked, broken, or too small to handle current conditions
- Missing or overflowing channel drains can push water onto paths or toward buildings
- Drainage systems might not link properly with modern council upgrades
- Older setups may fall short of today's compliance or environmental standards.

Why It Matters

Older drainage setups can still work, but if they're showing signs of failure, it may lead to pooling water, foundation damage, or compliance issues. If you're planning work on your property or driveway, it's worth checking whether your drainage system needs an upgrade. A few smart fixes now can help avoid bigger costs later.

DRIVEWAY & DRAINAGE

HEALTH CHECKLIST:

Surface Condition:

- ☐ No visible cracks, potholes, or uneven areas
- ☐ Surface isn't lifting, sinking, or breaking away
- ☐ Driveway edges are holding their shape and not crumbling
- ☐ No loose gravel or exposed base layers (for chipseal or asphalt)

Drainage and Water Flow

- ☐ Water runs off the driveway smoothly (no puddles or ponding)
- ☐ Driveway slopes slightly away from the house or garage
- ☐ Surface or channel drains (if installed) are clear and working
- ☐ No soggy patches or constantly damp ground near the driveway
- ☐ Gutters and downpipes direct water away from paved areas

Layout and Function

- ☐ Driveway is wide enough to comfortably use without driving on edges
- ☐ There's enough room to safely reverse or park
- ☐ Access to the property feels smooth, not awkward or squeezed

Maintenance and Upkeep

- ☐ You've had the driveway checked or maintained in the last 5 years
- ☐ You can identify where water goes once it leaves your driveway
- ☐ No signs of plant roots, lifting, or overgrowth across the driveway

RESULTS PAGE COPY

Checklist Results: What Your Score Means

This checklist isn't about passing or failing, it's about understanding how your driveway and drainage setup stacks up with today's standards. Whether your score's high or low, knowing where things sit helps you avoid surprises down the track.

12-14 points: Looking Solid

You've ticked most of the boxes, great stuff. Your setup sounds modern or well-maintained. Keep an eye on things over time, but right now, you're in a good spot.

8-11 points: Worth a Second Look

You've got some solid parts in place, but a few things might be aging or could be improved to prevent future issues. It might be worth having someone take a quick look or doing a small upgrade to stay ahead.

4-7 points: Some Wear and Tear Showing

This is pretty common in properties built 20-50 years ago. It doesn't mean you've got major problems, but it's a good idea to assess what repairs or updates might save you money and hassle long term.

0-3 points: Time for a Plan

If most boxes were left unticked, don't stress, it just means your property might be running on older systems or materials. A quick inspection or chat with a professional can give you clarity and help avoid costly repairs down the track.

GROUNDLED OFFERS FREE DRIVEWAY & DRAINAGE LIFESPAN AND HEALTH CHECKS.

Driveways and drainage systems can quietly wear down over time, and when they do, the fix can be costly. At Grounded, we offer free health checks to help you stay ahead of any issues and avoid surprise expenses.

We'll help you:

- Understand how long your current driveway and drainage will last
- Spot any early signs of wear that could lead to bigger problems
- Get simple, honest advice, no pressure, just clarity

We're here to help you feel confident in your property and avoid any costly surprises later on.

Give us a call and book your free driveway and drainage lifespan assessment and checkup!

 **027 556 2337**

