



**Foundation Drainage &
Drainage Swale Design Tips**

Foundation Drainage – Drainage Swale Design Tips

Help lessen the need for foundation repairs with a drainage swale or vegetated swale. Drainage swales are easy to install shallow ditches that drain excess water away from foundations. Often over looked and under used, drainage swales are simple and inexpensive foundation maintenance option that Advanced Foundation Repair, a foundation repair company in located in Dallas Texas, often recommends.

A drainage swale, also known as a vegetated swale or grass swale, is just a fancy term for a wide shallow ditch that is designed to carry away run-off water from rain, sprinklers, and so on. From a landscaping perspective, swales are barely noticeable because they are both wide and shallow. Drainage swales are often the easiest drainage system to install and can help prevent the possible need for expensive foundation repairs.



The first place to start is to see if a drainage swale is needed. One easy test is to check one hour after a rain fall. Look to see if there is a standing pool of water no more than 10 feet from the house foundation. This excessive moisture causes soil to expand which can cause undo pressure on the foundation. Excess pressure on the foundation may cause foundation damage that requires expensive foundation repair.

Once installed, drainage swales are virtually maintenance free as they blend in with the grass and are easy to mow.

Here are a few swale design tips for DIY homeowners looking to install a drainage swale:

- Because swales must slope downhill, they should be deeper as they get longer. For a relatively flat yard, a swale will generally drop 2 inches for every 10 feet of length. With this in mind, map out where drainage is needed by marking the ground along where the swale will run.
- Remember keep water 10 feet from the house foundation. Since gravity is needed to drain water away, the drainage swale will need to get deeper as it gets longer.
- Use a shovel and cut a line along where the swale will go.
- Then, without breaking the grass apart, run another cut so that the grass is marked off in 2-foot-wide strips. This will help in lifting the grass up undamaged so that it can be laid back down after the swale is created.
- Using a shovel, gently lift the grass up.
- Wet down the grass pieces and set them aside.
- Check on the pieces often while working to ensure they are stay moist. Water them if needed.
- Dig a trench in the marked area. The trench should be a shallow V shape leading away from the foundation to an adequate run off point such as a French drain or street drainage point.



- To keep the swale from being too noticeable, it should gradually widen as it approaches the final drainage point.



- Round off the sides to create a smooth, rounded trench.
- Wet the soil down in the swale.
- Place the grass pieces back into the dampened swale by laying them smoothly out and pressing firmly back into the damp soil. If you need more grass try to find an inconspicuous area of your yard to take more grass pieces from.

- Make sure your grass and trench are thoroughly soaked to insure the grass attaches and flourishes.



- Make sure that nothing is blocking water flow as it moves out to the street or to a drain.



Advanced Foundation Repair offers home repairs from the foundation up including foundation repair, plumbing and general construction services. Advanced Foundation Repair has specialized in foundation repair needs of Texas homeowners for over 100 years. Advanced Foundation Repair specialists' reputations for prompt and honest service assure customers reliable service. Find additional home owner tips and DIY white papers at <http://www.foundationrepairs.com>.