

When Are French Drains Necessary

By: William Hauselberg

French drain construction consists of a slightly sloped trench filled with round gravel and perforated pipe. A 4 inch plastic pipe is used in French drain construction which has taken the place of clay. A French drain is used to carry water away from your house. It is the proper solution for ground that is soggy or a constantly wet basement.

Shallow French Drain

A shallow French drain, also called a curtain drain, is used to divert surface water away from an area where water has a tendency to stand, making the ground soggy. If you've noticed that your driveway often gets washed out, a curtain drain may be useful. This type of drain is easy to install as it is usually only 2 feet deep and 1.5 feet across. It costs about \$12 to \$16 per linear foot.

Deep French Drain

A deep French drain trench, or a footing drain, is used if you have a problem with a wet basement. This type of drain is easy to install during home construction, but is more difficult if installed at a later time. This type of French drain trench runs around the perimeter of the house and helps to carry water away from your basement. The cost to install this type of drain is approximately \$12,000 for a 1,500 square foot basement that is 6 feet deep or \$4,000 for a crawl space with footings that are 2 feet deep.

Interior French Drain

If you find it impossible to keep water out of the basement, you have the option of installing an interior French drain. This type of drain intercepts water where it is entering and carries it away from your home. It is installed by cutting a channel around the basement floor and inserting perforated pipe. A solid pipe then carries the water to a tank that has been sunk into the floor, and then a sump pump sends the water away from the basement to a storm drain. Installation of an interior French drain will cost approximately \$3,000.

Building a French Drain Into a Retaining Wall

If you are building a retaining wall, you should install a French drain in behind the first set of stones. Failing to do so will allow water moving down the hill to collect and could cause the retaining wall to collapse. Installation of this type of drain into a retaining wall can be done for the cost of gravel and pipe if done during construction.

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