

# Boulder Wall Construction

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Many golf courses have areas that are in need of a retaining wall. It may be on the course itself, or in another conspicuous area such as the clubhouse entryway. When considering the different types of retaining walls and their respective costs, consider a boulder retaining wall. Boulder walls add a natural element of beauty that a good timber or prefab wall cannot. A well-built boulder wall will last a lifetime and more.



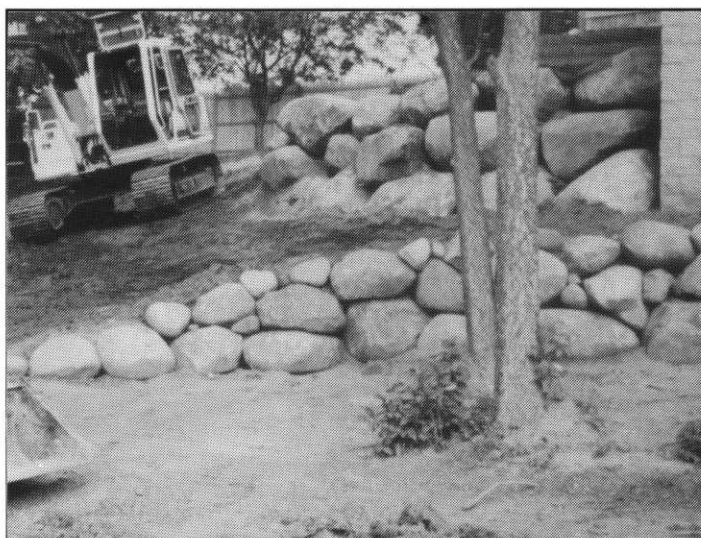
Boulder walls will provide good soil retaining strength and provide a look that golfers will love. The expense of a boulder wall is not much more than that of a properly constructed timber wall, and usually cheaper than prefab or “keystone” walls. Considering how long it will last, the extra cost of a stone wall is worth the extra expense over a wood wall.

When looking for boulders you must shop around and make lots of calls, as there is a great difference in price. A large portion of the expense is trucking the stone to the site.

Before beginning construction you must consider the size of the stones you need. Bigger, taller walls require large stones and large machinery. The stones are much heavier than they look so forget about elbow grease. A skid loader will move stones up to 30” in diameter, although it will not lift them very high. Stones larger than that can weigh 3000-5000 pounds, and therefore you need larger equipment, such as a trackhoe.

Next you should buy drain tile, crushed limestone and

pea gravel, as well as a good quality erosion control fabric in large sheets. As in all construction, the foundation is the first and most important part of the wall. One half to three quarters of the first tier should be underground on top of a foot of well-compacted crushed limestone. The edge of the erosion fabric can now be buried so that it can be unrolled against the stone as you build upward. Back fill and compact with enough soil to hold the first tier in



place. The drain tile can now be installed behind the first tier and the fabric. It is vital to remember to compact the soil thoroughly behind each tier as you go. This is extremely important.

As you build your wall, you will see that the process of selecting the stones is the most time-consuming. The stones must fit together well — somewhat like a jigsaw puzzle. The majority of each stone’s weight must be on the stones below it, not on the soil behind it. In this manner the wall will be mixed in with the large ones periodically and randomly as you go up. The same principle applies to colors. Do not start with large stones on the bottom and end with small ones on top. The object is to avoid a wall that looks organized. The stone should also be laid more horizontally than vertically, as this creates a pleasing flow to the eye. Also remember to step back and view your progress. It is helpful.

When you finish, you should have a beautiful new structure that will hold the soil and be a center of attention for much longer than any timber wall.