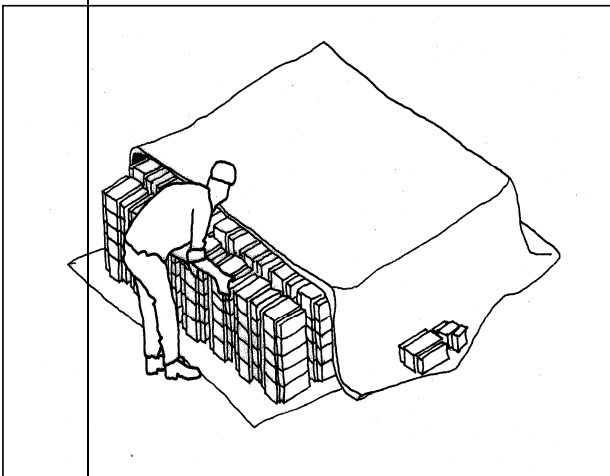


Stacking & Curing Hydraform Blocks

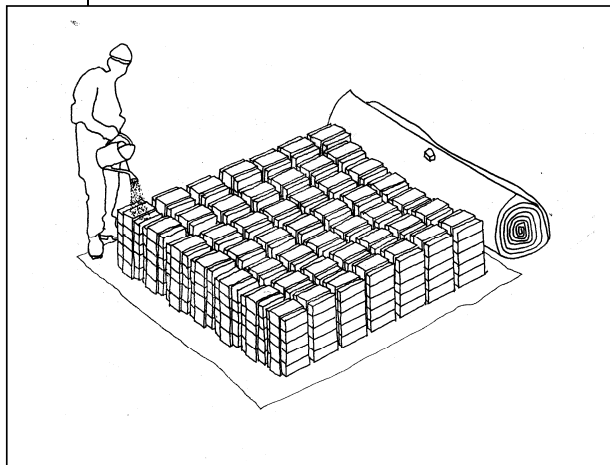
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Wherever cement is used, it is vitally important that it be properly 'cured' (kept wet). Cement needs water to gain strength (to hydrate). Cement requires 28 days to achieve full strength; it achieves only about 65% strength in the first 7 days, and about 85% in 14 days. Curing is particularly important with Hydraform blocks where the cement requirement is low.

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See Hydraform 500-Block Stack on next page.



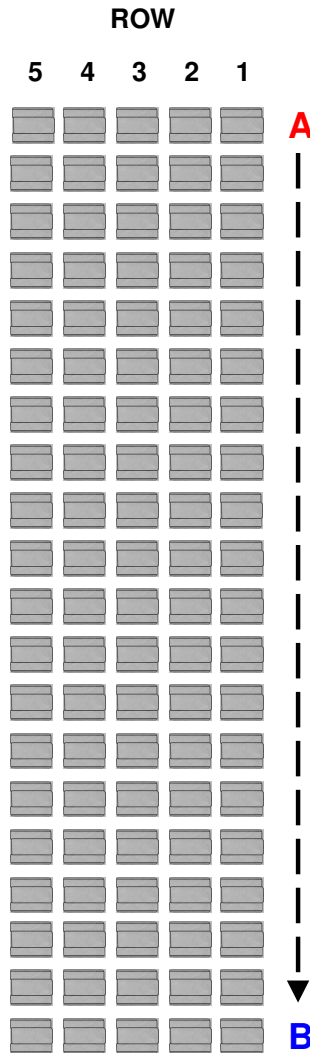
- ◆ **Make and stack the blocks where you are going to build.** It is much less expensive, and easier, to move soil than it is to move blocks.
- ◆ Level and wet the ground on which the blocks are to be stacked.
- ◆ Stack the blocks 5 high, and 5 to 7 rows wide (depending on the width of the polythene or tarpaulin).
- ◆ **Cover the blocks from the first row laid down.** Blocks cannot be cured without being covered. This prevents them from drying out and cracking.
- ◆ **The DAY AFTER the blocks are made, uncover and water them generously twice a day** – once in the morning and once in the evening, then cover again immediately.
- ◆ **Keep the blocks covered and watered for at least 14 days.** Additional block strength will be achieved by curing for longer.
- ◆ Make sure that the blocks are properly covered so that they do not dry out – seal the edges of the plastic or tarpaulin carefully. A groundsheet (as illustrated) improves the retention of water within the stack.
- ◆ **Remember that the better the blocks are cured, the stronger and more durable they become.**

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Hydraform 500-Block Stack Layout

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Hydraform
Machine



- ◆ Lay the whole bottom course of 20 blocks for Row 1 from A to B.
- ◆ When the first course of blocks is completed, start the second course of Row 1 at A again.
- ◆ Stack each row no more than 5 blocks high.
- ◆ When Row 1 is complete (100 blocks), then lay Row 2 exactly as Row 1.
- ◆ Continue with Rows 3, 4 and 5 exactly as for Rows 1 and 2.
- ◆ The rows and stacks should be 2 finger-widths (40 mm) apart.
- ◆ Begin covering the stack from the first row laid – do not wait until the stack is complete (see photograph below).

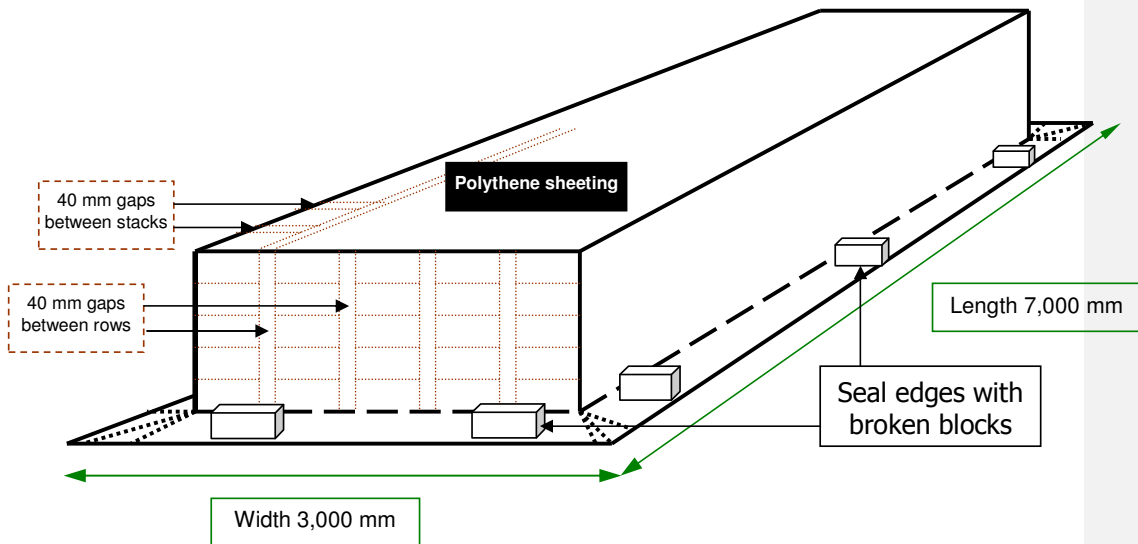
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Curing Hydraform blocks under cover, or in a shed, does **not** mean that you do not need to use polythene – the blocks will dry out almost as quickly under shade. Unless you have a sprinkler system which will keep the blocks wet all the time, covering them with polythene is essential. The polythene may be clear or black – sunlight does not affect the curing process.

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Covering the Stack

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POLYTHENE SHEETING / TARPAULINS & GROUNDSHEETS

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- ◆ One roll of 3 x 100 metres of 100-micron black polythene sheeting will cover 14 x 500-block stacks = 7,000 blocks = approximate weekly production.
- ◆ The polythene sheeting should be reusable 3 to 5 times.
- ◆ Better moisture retention and, therefore, a better cure, will be achieved by using a 3 x 7 metre tarpaulin with a 2 x 6 metre groundsheet.

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Newly-made Hydraform blocks being stacked under a tarpaulin

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