

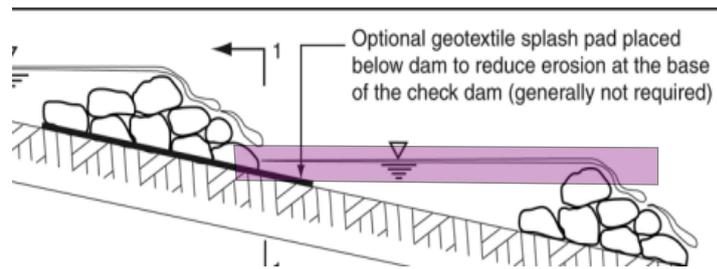
Quick Reference Guide

Installing Check Dams

Why Install check dams? To slow down water flow in open channels, reducing erosion, promoting sediment deposition, and protecting the channel bed and banks during construction or vegetation establishment phases.

Step One - Start at the bottom and space them right

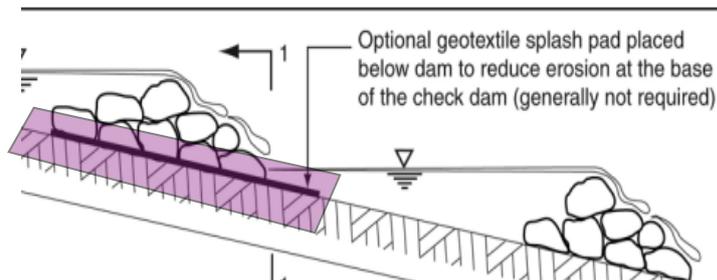
- * Put first dam at bottom of drain.
- * Line up each dam with bottom of one above.



Slows water
Reduces erosion.

Step Two - Use geotextile if needed

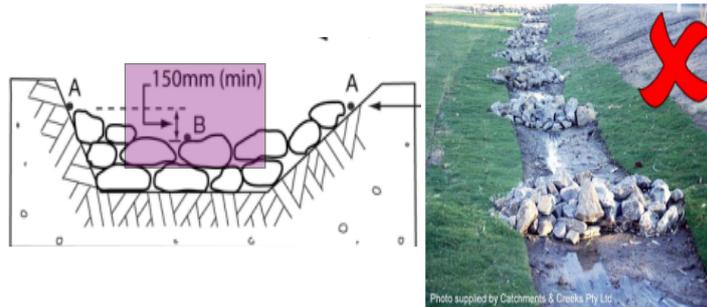
- * If plans say, lay fabric under dam.
- * Stretch it downhill to stop water washing underneath



Fabric stops water making a channel under the dam.

Step three - Build the right shape and height

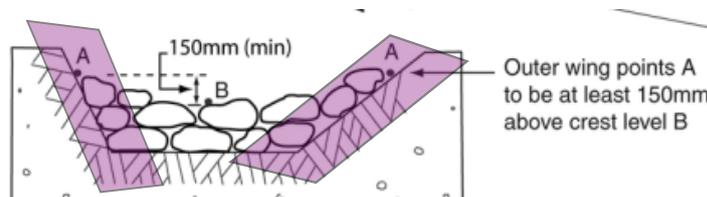
- * Make dam middle (B) at least 150mm lower than sides (A).
- * Keep dam under 500mm high, unless plans say more.



Makes water flow through the centre, not around.

Step Four - Build up the sides

- * Build dam up at both sides of the drain bank.
- * Sides (A) should be at least 150mm higher than the middle.



Stops water flowing around the ends.

Reminder - Have the right channel conditions

- * Use check dams only in drains with gentle slopes (under 10%).
- * Avoid use on dispersive soils, cover with good soil or fabric if needed.



Typical erosion problem when placed on dispersive soils.

Pro Tips

- ~ **Use a level** to line up dam tops with upstream toes for proper flow control.
- ~ **Pack rocks or bags tightly** to prevent water from seeping through and causing erosion.
- ~ **Avoid building a flat dam**, always dip the middle to direct flow through the centre
- ~ **Remember monitoring:**
- weekly, before and after rainfall.

References

IECA Sediment control Fact Sheet - Check Dams.

Pictures and technical details sourced from:
IECA 2008, Best Practice Erosion and Sediment Control.
International Erosion Control Association (Australasia), Picton, NSW.



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