

Retaining walls rough-in inspection checklist

Retaining walls rough-in is the last time the work is fully visible. Once the cover inspection passes and the walls, ceilings and slabs close, every defect left behind becomes a demolition bill. This checklist walks the rough-in in the order the work goes in, with the photo each item needs before it gets buried. Work is commonly verified against the project geotechnical report and specifications, the applicable building code. Confirm the edition your authority having jurisdiction has adopted.

Who runs it: The GC's superintendent walking the wall with the installing crew's foreman, releasing each lift before backfill covers it. When: As the wall is built — the leveling pad and base course before the second course goes on, then each geogrid or reinforcement layer and drainage detail before the lift above it is backfilled and lost.

Foundation and base course

- ☐ **Leveling pad on approved subgrade, to line and grade**
Bearing soil at the design elevation and approved by the geotech, pad material and thickness per the plan, top screeded level. 2 photos required
- ☐ **Base course level, aligned and seated**
First course checked level end to end and front to back, units in full contact with the pad, alignment string set for the batter. 2 photos required

Reinforcement

- ☐ **Geogrid or reinforcement layer at the correct elevation**
Layer placed at the course called out on the design, correct grid strength and roll orientation for the section of wall. 2 photos required
- ☐ **Embedment length into the backfill zone verified**
Grid run back the full design length into the reinforced zone, pulled taut with no wrinkles, before any fill covers it. 2 photos required

Drainage

- ☐ **Drainage aggregate and pipe placed behind the wall**
Free-draining aggregate zone the specified width directly behind the units, perforated collector pipe laid to drain, wrapped or bedded per the detail. 2 photos required

Backfill and compaction

- ☐ **Backfill placed and compacted in lifts as the wall rises**
Fill built up in the specified lift thickness, compacted each lift, heavy equipment kept back off the reinforced zone near the face. 2 photos required