

Asphalt Millings Planning Checklist

A practical pre-project checklist for driveways, road base, and resurfacing jobs using recycled asphalt pavement (RAP). Reviewed by Dave Whitaker, second-generation paving contractor.

1. Before You Order

- ✓ Measured length, width, and target depth of the project area
- ✓ Confirmed whether millings will be **compacted** or **loose** at delivery (density differs — 140 lb/ft³ compacted vs. 120 lb/ft³ loose)
- ✓ Calculated tonnage needed, plus 5–10% extra for settling and uneven terrain
- ✓ Confirmed local supplier's actual density figure, since RAP varies by moisture and gradation
- ✓ Checked whether delivery access (truck size, turning radius) is possible on site

2. Site & Base Preparation

- ✓ Working surface cleared of vegetation, debris, and loose topsoil
- ✓ Grade graded to the correct slope for drainage (typically 1–2% away from structures)
- ✓ If clay soil identified — consider a geotextile fabric layer to stop millings from working into the subgrade over time
- ✓ Elevation depth allows for full compacted depth plus any base layer
- ✓ Spots or drainage paths addressed before material is delivered

3. Depth Guide by Application

Use case	Recommended compacted depth
Light residential vehicles	2–3 inches
RVs, work trucks, farm equipment	4–6 inches
Rural roads / heavy-duty base	6 inches, in multiple lifts

Always compact in lifts no thicker than 3 inches at a time — a single thick pass leaves soft spots in the middle of the layer.

4. Compaction

- ✓ Compaction equipment on site and appropriate for the project size (plate compactor for small areas, roller for larger driveways)
- ✓ Material compacted in lifts no thicker than 3 inches
- ✓ Each lift compacted before adding the next

• Density checked for even density — no visibly soft or loose patches

• Surface graded and crowned slightly for water runoff

5. Drainage

• All slope directs water away from the house or structure

• Points or culverts added where runoff could pool

• Ridges of the milled surface won't trap water against grass or landscaping

6. Questions to Ask Your Supplier or Contractor

• What is the actual density of this batch of millings (compacted and loose)?

• Price per ton or per cubic yard, and does it include delivery?

• Base layer or geotextile fabric recommended for this soil type?

• What compaction equipment will be used, and how many passes/lifts?

• How long before the surface can handle regular vehicle traffic?

• Any follow-up top-dressing or re-compaction included if the surface settles?

7. After Installation

• Allow surface to settle before regular heavy traffic, per your contractor's guidance

• Check for spots or rutting checked after the first few weeks of use and topped up if needed

• Areas monitored for material migration onto grass or landscaping

• Note for periodic re-grading (millings surfaces benefit from occasional maintenance, similar to gravel)

Quick reference — density assumptions used in our calculator

Compacted RAP: 140 lb/ft³ (≈1.89 tons/yd³) | Loose millings: 120 lb/ft³ (≈1.62 tons/yd³)

Coverage at 3" depth: roughly 55–65 sq ft per ton. Always add 5–10% for waste and uneven ground.

For planning use only — not a paving or engineering specification. Actual requirements vary by site conditions, climate, and local supplier material. Always confirm density, depth, and compaction requirements with a licensed contractor before starting your project.

Home Project Calculator — homeprojectcalculator.com/asphalt-milling-calculator/