Step by step instructions for assembling P-16A P-20A on a prepared surface/base.
All sizes in this document are approximate.

Freestanding piers are a bit of a tricky animal. The column of block is simple to build. It is the footing that needs the most attention here. A pier is essentially a balancing act. Since there is no other support for the pier, you need to have a sturdy base.

When creating a base (footing) for your piers, be sure to use #411 crushed stone or equivalent. Fill to about 4" deep of stone. Compact the stone and fill again. Repeat this until you reach the desired grade. Make sure the top is trowel level and smooth. You can use a small amount of coarse sand for leveling.

Make sure your base is 8" thick and 8-12" wider than your pier around all sides. That makes the foundation for a 20" pier 36"+ wide. Also, be sure to bury 1/6 to 1/4 the exposed height of your pier in the ground. You can start by leveling a stepping stone and building off of that. It will make starting out level much easier.

**Materials needed:**
- 32+ Dakota Stone™ (4x8x12)
- 2+ Tubes Adhesive
- 14 6x9 for 16x16 Pier (5sf)

**Tools Needed:**
- Dead Blow Hammer
- Caulk Gun
- 4 Foot Level
- Torpedo Level
- Square

**GRADE**

When constructing your project, be sure to keep all blocks level, square, and plumb. Use a four foot level and check often. Starting on a level foundation is key. When gluing blocks together, be sure not to use too much adhesive - this will cause the blocks to "swim." A small bead is ideal.
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The "Square Foot Unit." consists of three blocks as shown. By rotating this unit (SFU) we are able to build quickly and easily while keeping bond lines broken up. These will always be shown in a tan color.

Sometimes SFUs are broken up or can’t be used. The Double Unit is the next preferred unit. Double Units are grouped for strength and speed in construction. They are always represented in green.

The Single Unit is the basis for all the construction, of course. When used in a single or non-standard configuration, you will see Dakota Stone™ depicted in red.

6" x 9" Ledge Rock paver.
Great to use as a small cap. Always shown in light blue.

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Any time you see a block with just the wide top showing, fret not, it is a Square Foot Unit (SFU). The unit is just turned where the that is the only block you see.

The 20" pier will have a 4" x 4" chase in the center. This is ideal for running electric service for adding lights on the top of the pier. You can also wrap a 4x4 treated lumber post with a 20" pier using this chase.

Lay out the first course of your pier. This is the "foundation" on which you will build your 16" Pier and 20" Pier. Take time to make sure it is as perfect as possible. Be sure this course is level and square. Any mistakes made here will continue to show up as you build.

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Use your level to keep all sides of your pier plumb. Check often with your square, too. By keeping all sides plumb, you will keep your pier from twisting or leaning as you build.

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16" Pier and 20" Pier

REVISIONS

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The 20" pier is the most versatile pier. You can easily adjust the height in 4" increments by adding or substituting a course of SFUs with a course of double or single units.