

Pavement Layers

Civil Engineering

What each layer of a road does.

Each layer spreads the wheel load a little wider than the one above.

Bound layers

Surface course: texture and sealing

Binder course: shape and load spread

Base: the main structural layer

Bound layers resist load in bending

Fatigue cracking starts at the base

Unbound and below

Sub-base: platform and drainage layer

Capping where the subgrade is weak

Subgrade: the natural ground itself

Load arrives here as a low pressure

Wet subgrade undoes everything above

Educational reference. Layer thicknesses come from a pavement design method, never from a typical section drawing.