



# 26' GROWING DOME BUILDING THE GRAVEL BASE

## BUILDING THE GRAVEL BASE

The purpose of the gravel base is to provide not only a level surface on which the foundation wall sits, but a surface which allows moisture from inside or outside the Growing Dome® to drain away from the bottom plate of the wall, thus extending its life.

Begin by adding an approximately 2" high by 9" wide strip of 3/4" washed gravel base in between any two layout stakes. In a straight line from stake to stake, place approximately 6" of the 9" strip of gravel to the inside (dome side) of that line, and approximately 3" to the outside. Alternate between compacting and checking for level, adding or removing gravel as required. Ideally, this strip should be well compacted using a compactor or tamper. If not available, use one of the bottom plates to compact the gravel while continually checking for level.

### **1<sup>st</sup> IMPORTANT ASPECT:**

*It is critical that the ground where the foundation wall sections sit be exactly level for the foundation wall to sit correctly. It is best to use a transit, laser, or builder's level at this stage to ensure accuracy. If the surface for the foundation wall is not level (not just flat), the foundation wall will not provide a level surface for the Growing Dome structure to sit on. This will cause the Growing Dome structure to "rise and sink" on the foundation wall, which will "push and pull" the struts out of alignment and thus make it difficult for the glazing triangles to fit accurately.*

Once the first section is done, move to the next section, leveling it to the first. Continue until all sections are well compacted and level to each other. The foundation wall sections are placed in a circle on top of this ring of leveled, compacted gravel. The outer points of the foundation wall meet at the points of the initially created layout.

**NOTE:** If you are concerned with burrowing rodents and are planning on the Rodent Protection Option as described in Step 17, an option available if using the gravel ring foundation is to lay out the hardware cloth prior to setting up for foundation construction and extending the hardware cloth 12" beyond the dome radius on all sides.