

Introduction

Here's a pic of the simple kind of basement garage we'll be building with this tutorial. You'll need Nightlife, of course. When Nightlife first came out I even called this house *Basement Garage Starter* I know, it's really imaginative, isn't it?! ;)

At the time of publishing this, TSR already has 2 tutorials on Basement Garages in its library of tutorials, by Cerulean Talon and Mistress666. I'm only adding this particular tutorial to the TSR library after speaking with them a fair bit and with their generous encouragement and enthusiasm! The method I share here is slightly different and a little quicker, and also explores some different aspects of basements too. ☺



Basement garages are simply garages built lower than ground level. They're a great way to start to develop the foundations of a house for living, storage and other uses, particularly when building on a small lot. The rest of the house can be built on standard Foundation, or as we'll see we can develop larger, deeper basements.

Basement Garages are also an effective addition to any large city home, where space is at a premium, as in this 2-garage city mansion called *Ashbury Summit* which like my *Basement Garage Starter* you can find at TSR.

One thing to mention about these garages at the beginning is that cars work perfectly well with them, but you should know that the game isn't designed around *sloping* roads, so cars sort of do a little **skip or hop** down and up the driveways! Once you know it's coming, it's very cute, and Sims don't mind at all. ☺

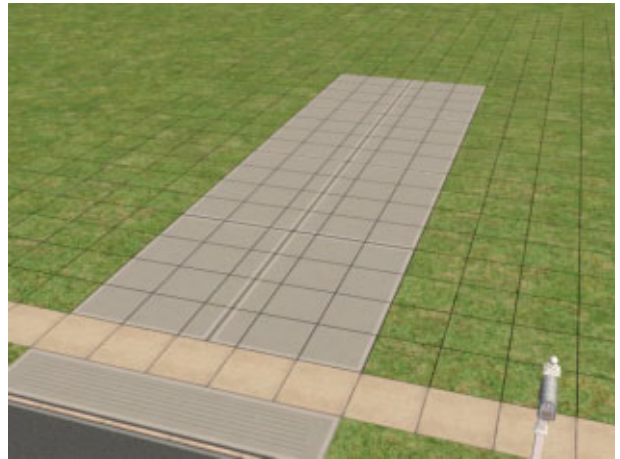


To make a basement garage, we have to place the driveway first. Before building, have a think about how steep you want your driveway to be. And after you've read this tutorial, have a think about how deep you want to go – 'cos as you'll see in the second part, we can build multi-level basements!

Step 1.

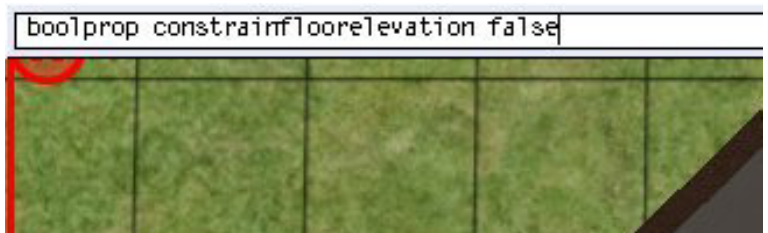
Here's our driveway, which must have at least one *Extension Piece*. The number of extensions you add is up to you, of course, but in this simple tutorial we'll just add one, placing the garage door at the join of driveway and extension.

Each driveway or extension measures 8 gridsquares by 5 on the lot area, and we'll need to keep the row of squares in front of the door flat. So work out the slope of your driveway first. Straight line or curve? How low? This one will be a straight line, going 12 clicks down.



Step 2.

Now we need to turn on the building command which allows us to modify the heights of floors and walls. Hold down Ctrl+Shift and tap C. In the white Commands window that opens at the top of your screen, type:



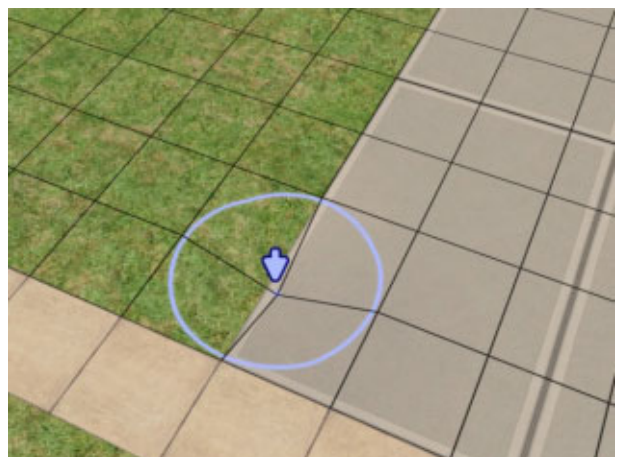
boolProp constrainFloorElevation false

and press Enter. If you've got the words right (the command is almost always called 'CFE' because of the middle phrase), the window will close. (The capital letters don't matter - it's just easier to read.)

Step 3.

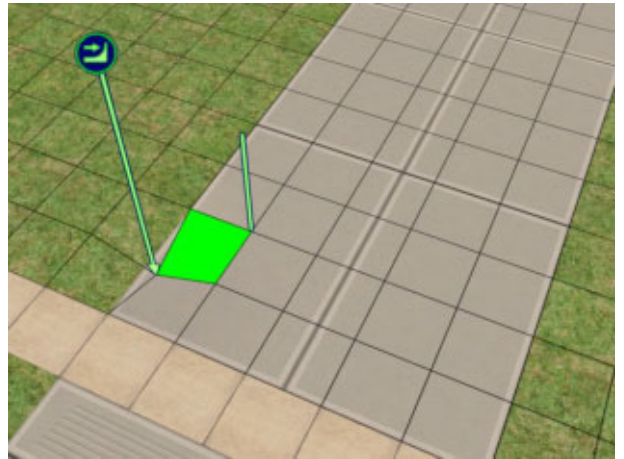
Planning on a slope of 12 clicks in a straight line, we'll start to 'dig out' the sloping driveway. Go to the corner of the second row of gridsquares in from the sidewalk (see this pic).

Using the LowerTerrain tool, we click twice. With the CFE command operating, the ground goes down 2 clicks. (Sorry – maths was never my strong point!!!)



Step 4.

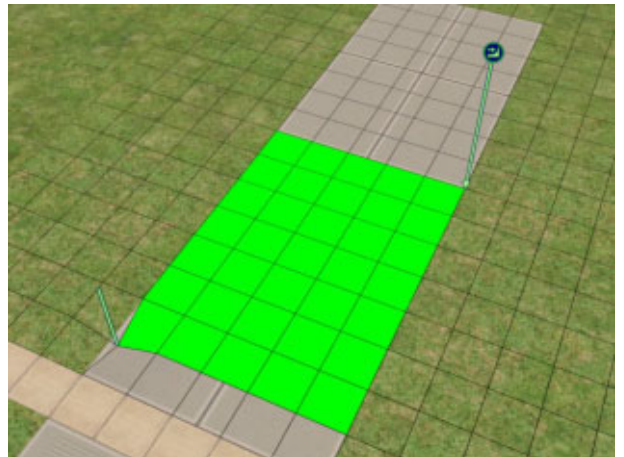
Now use the LevelTerrain tool, placing the cursor at the corner you've just lowered, as in this pic



Step 5.

..... and keeping your mouse button pressed slide the cursor across to the diagonally opposite corner of the first section of driveway, as shown here.

(Don't let go of the mouse button till you're happy that you're now in the correct corner! You'll soon get the hang of moving around with the cursor – just keep the button **pressed**.)

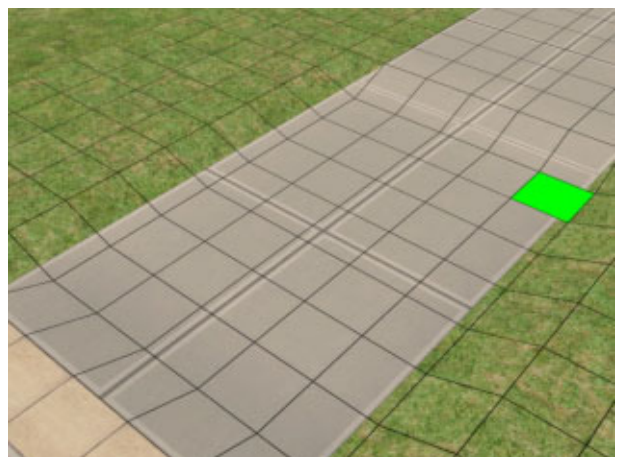


Step 6.

Once you know you're in the right corner, let go of the mouse button, and the whole section is levelled.

Of course you could just go along the line of corners, clicking enthusiastically to lower each one, but it's really worth getting confident with this speedy way of sloping the ground. Otherwise with steeper slopes you'd be clicking, and clicking, and clicking

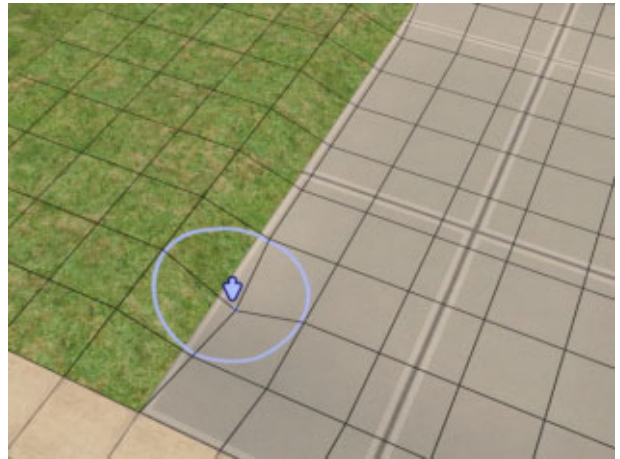
(yawn)! ☺.



Step 7.

Then repeat Steps #3-6 on the next row (the third) of gridsquares in from the sidewalk, lowering the row 2 more clicks, which puts it 4 clicks lower than the ground. And so on

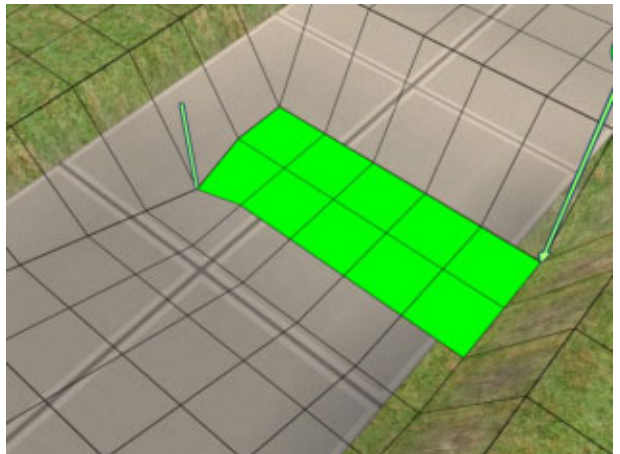
As you can see, you'll be starting to wonder why the driveway still seems to be flat, even though the ground is definitely sloping!!!! Don't worry – this is fine, as we'll discover. ☺



Step 8.

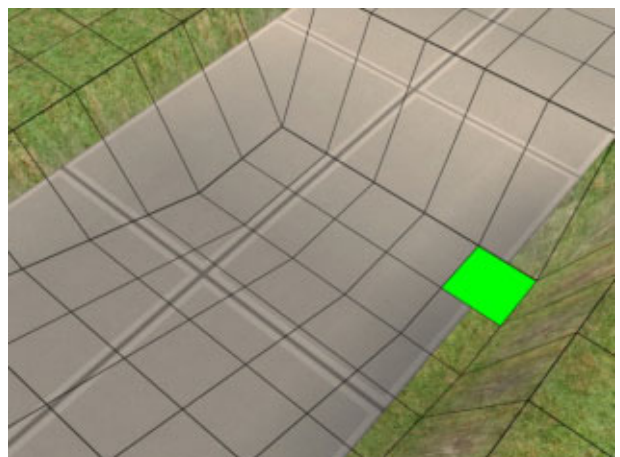
When you've lowered and leveled the sixth row in, move onto the seventh row, remembering that since we're only going down 12 clicks in total, we can level off the last 2 rows at the same depth.

So click the first corner down with the LowerTerrain tool as before and then spread the LevelTerrain tool over the last 2 rows



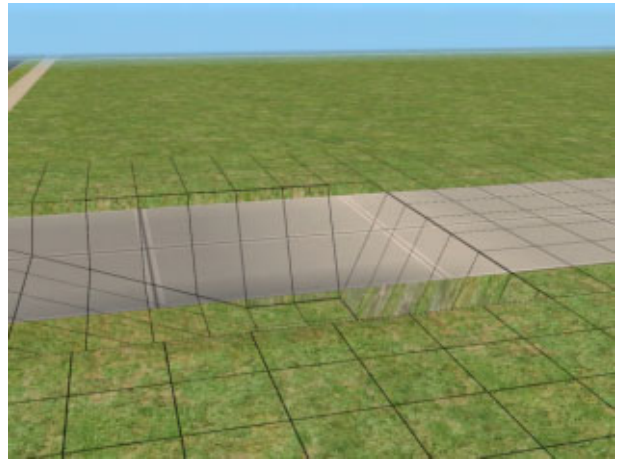
Step 9.

..... let go, and we have the lowest level of the driveway in place. Garage doors need a row of flat squares in front to work – we've given it two.



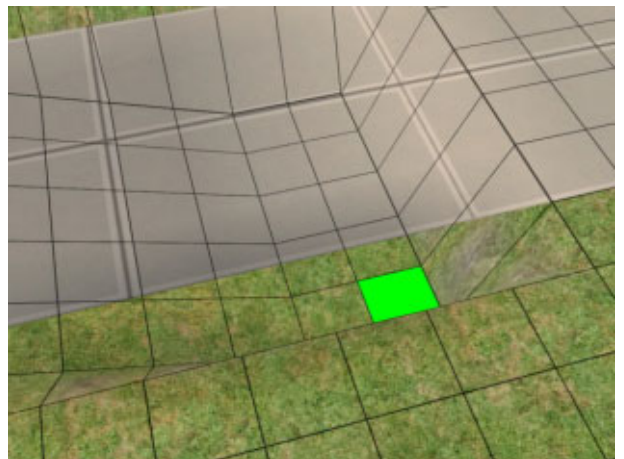
Step 10.

Now, as I mentioned at Step #7, you'll be wondering why the dickens the driveway is still flat. "Hey, you dumb driveway, haven't you noticed I've been lowering you? "!!!



Step 11.

Looked at from the side, you can see clearly that at least the Terrain tools are shaping the **ground** well enough.

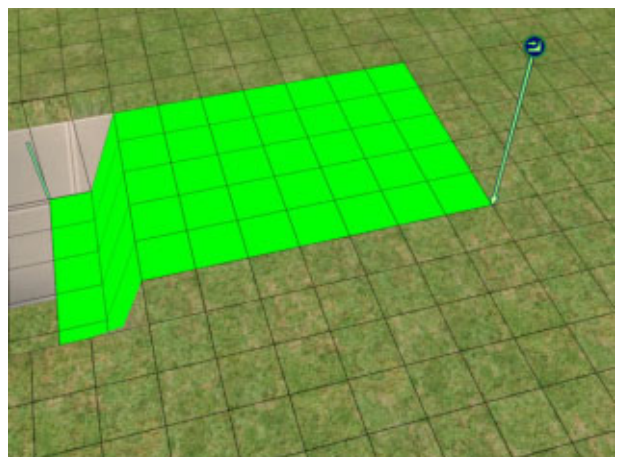


Step 12.

Be bold. Don't let it get you down. It'll all be well. How? "It's a mystery!" (as a lovely movie tells us). ☺

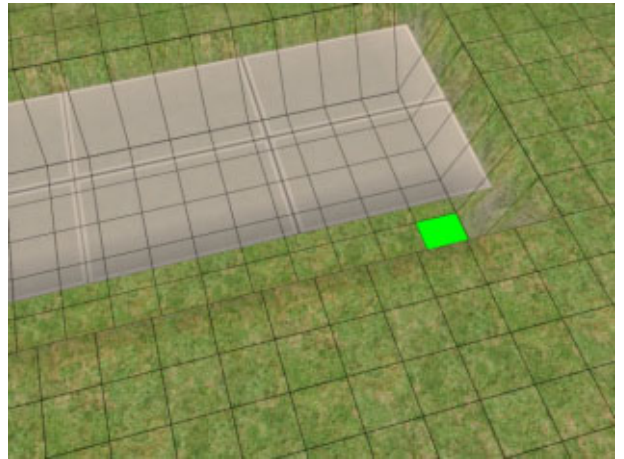
Meantime, use the LevelTerrain tool to lower the whole of the driveway extension, to the same level as the last 2 rows of the main piece of driveway.

And Yup – we could have done this at Steps #8-9, or before that – it's just easier to get closeup pics doing it in separate stages! ;)



Step 13.

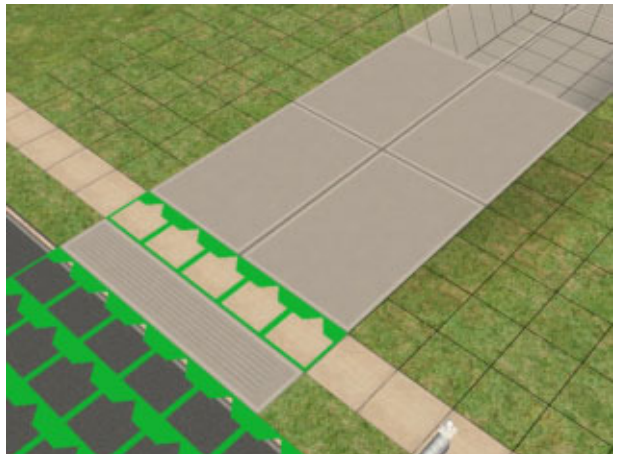
Here's the result, with the whole driveway floating above it. ☹️ 😊



Step 14.

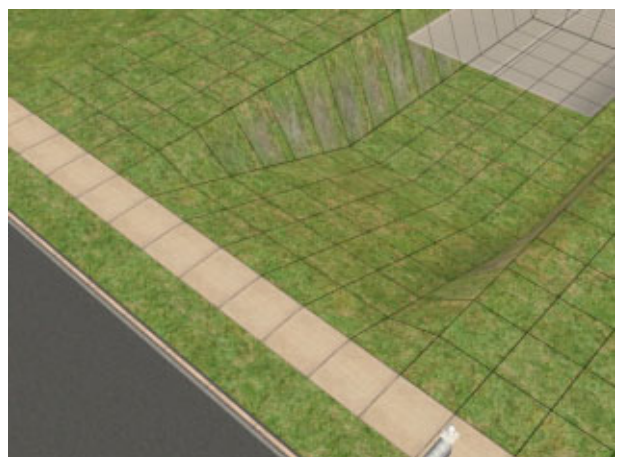
OK – let's fix this now. It doesn't matter whether you leave the CFE command still **on**, or turn it **off** at this point (see how to at Step #19).

Use the Select tool (the Hand) to select or pick up the main section of driveway. Press the Delete key on your keyboard



Step 15.

..... and it's gone. Huh! Oh brilliant! – fat lot of use that is, Tiko!

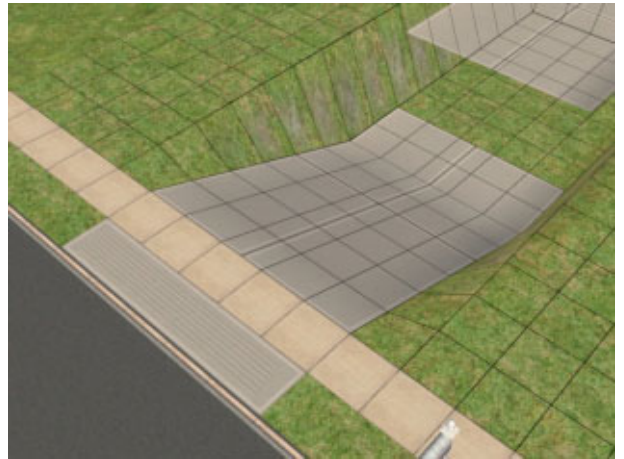


Step 15.

Well, simply click Undo on your Control Panel (or Ctrl+Z on your keyboard).

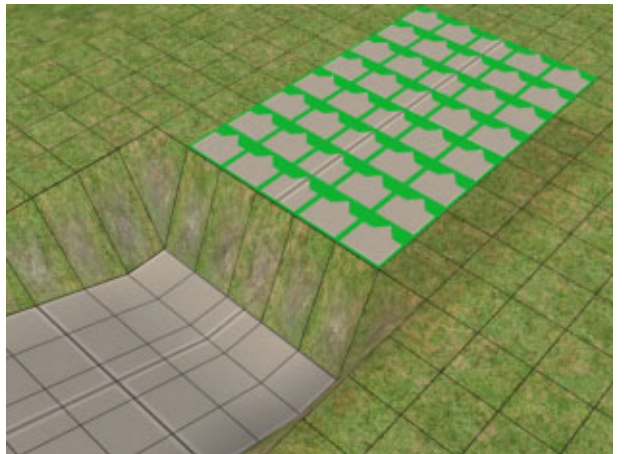
Presto – the driveway is now contoured to the ground we dug for it.

The 'hanging-in-the-air' effect is a graphic glitch, which can also be removed by saving, exiting to the neighborhood and reurning, but I've found that it's quicker and easier to do it this way. ☺



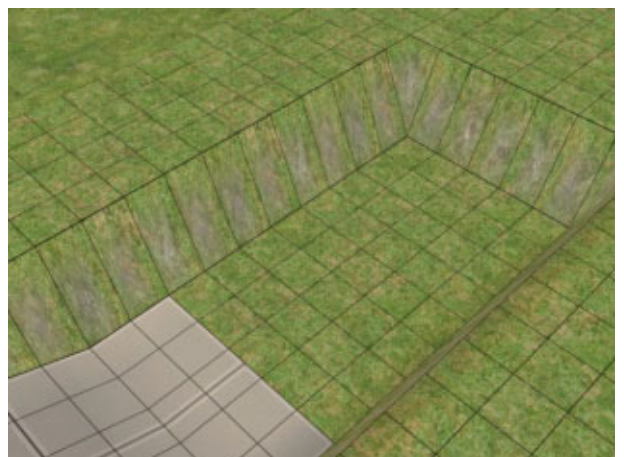
Step 17.

Now repeat Steps #14-16 on the extension section of driveway. *Select* (notice how when you select a driveway section it immediately tries to level everything under it!!!)



Step 18.

..... then *Delete*



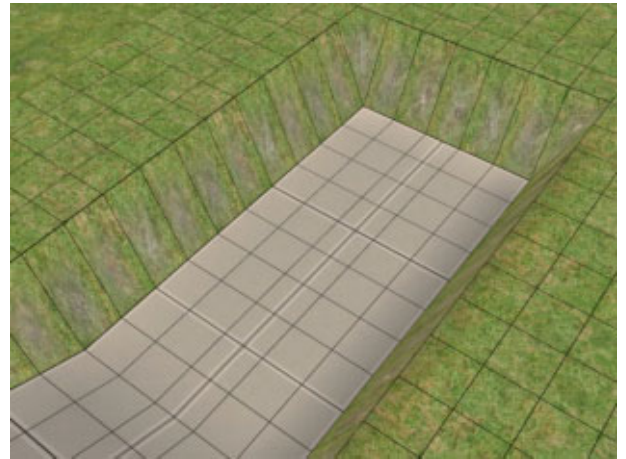
Step 19.

..... and *Undo*. Here's the result.

Now we just need to switch off the CFE command, if you didn't at Step #14. Open the white Commands window again and type in

boolProp constrainFloorElevation true

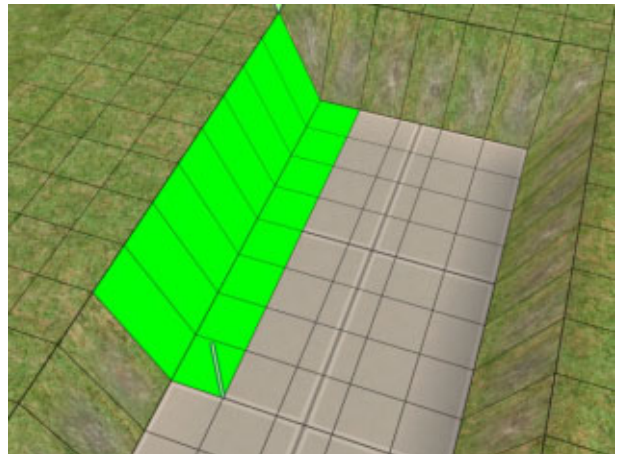
and press Enter. The built levels are locked or 'constrained'.



Step 20.

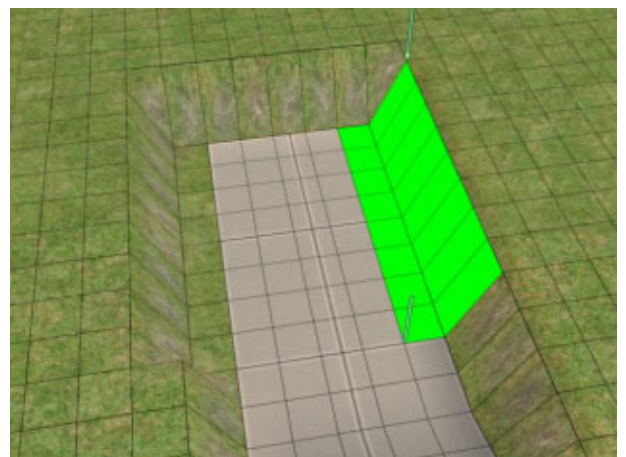
You've probably noticed how Sims sometimes get out of the car after a trip and walk round to the outside of the garage. Why? Stretching their legs? Brushing off fleas? We'll never know, I guess!

But to spare them a long uphill walk, give an extra flat space each side of the extension section where the garage will be. Just use the LevelTerrain tool on one side



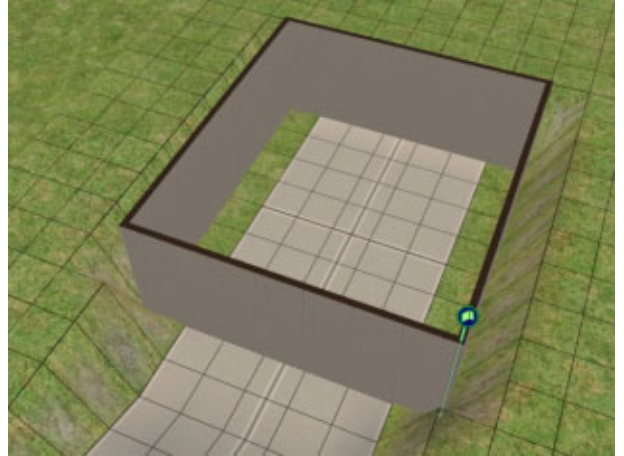
Step 21.

..... and then on the other.



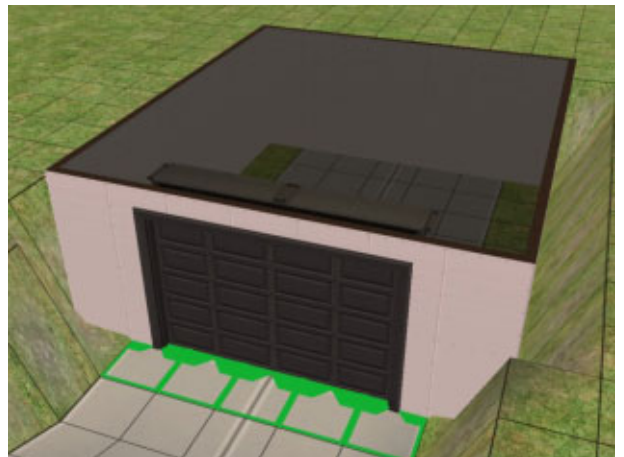
Step 22.

Then place a simple rectangle of room walls around the extension section of driveway, plus the 2 rows of flattened squares.



Step 23.

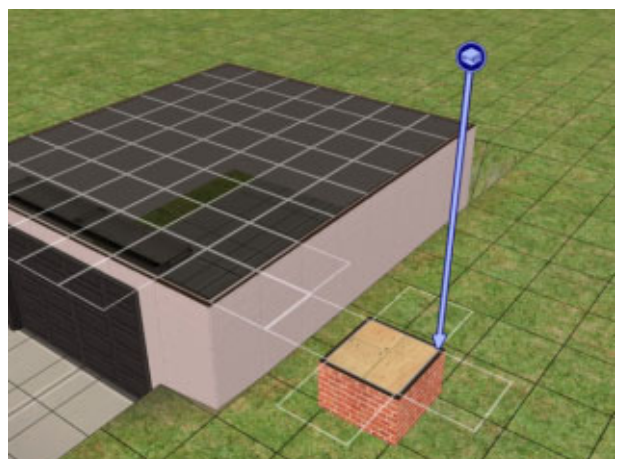
And add a garage door.



Step 24.

Because the garage level is 12 clicks or steps down, and a standard wall is 16 clicks high, when we place a block of brick Foundation near our garage their tops are at the same height. So straight away we can build a house that extends both above the garage and on the nearby ground.

If your driveway isn't as deep, turn the CFE command **on** for a moment and slide the LevelTerrain tool across from the top of the garage, to raise the foundation to the same height – then turn the command **off**.

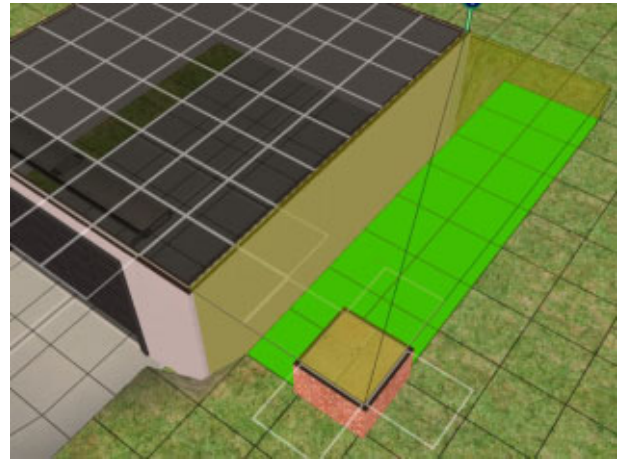


Step 25.

A useful tip, whenever creating a liveable basement area – garage or not – is to use walls rather than foundation unless you're making a genuine Starter Home for less than \$20K, when foundation is very useful (it costs \$4 per square while walls cost \$70!) We'll see why it's so useful to put walls in a basement in a moment.

So add foundation from the ground level, stretching across to sit alongside the garage wall as shown here

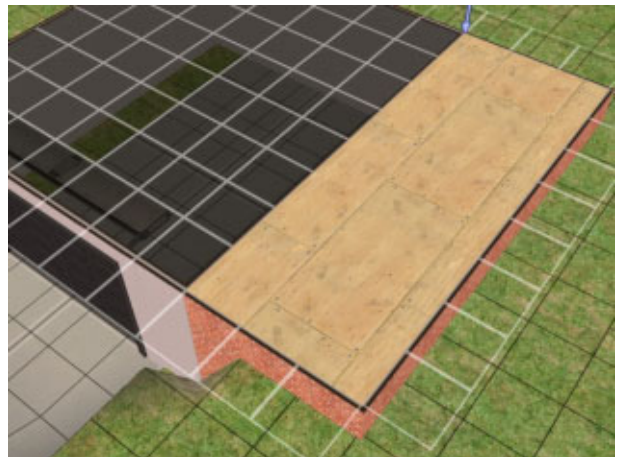
.....



Step 26.

..... with this result.

It's helpful to remember when building that, although walls **can't** be placed alongside foundation, foundation **can** be placed alongside walls – which can inspire many kinds of special fencing, for example!



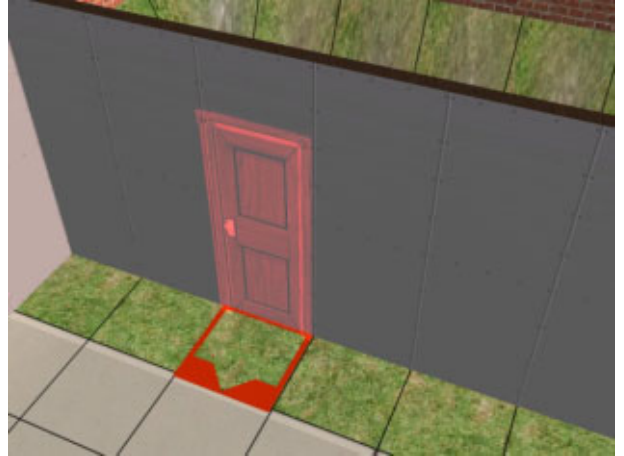
Step 27.

The reason we want to have a wall where the foundation meets the garage is that foundation doesn't allow us to place objects like lights or pictures on it. Whereas wall panels do.



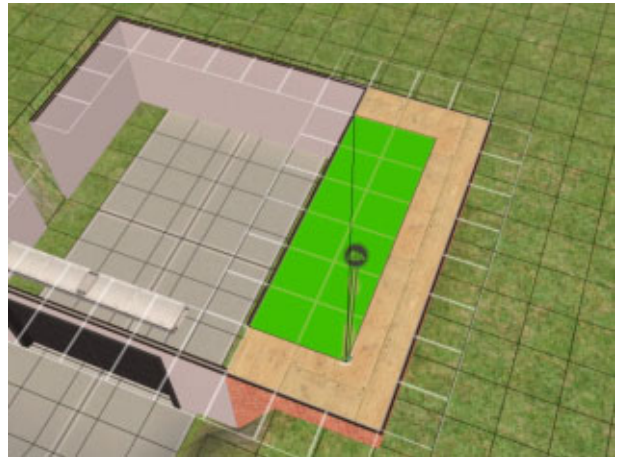
Step 28.

But we can't add doors or windows. This is because on the other side of the wall there isn't open space, but foundation.



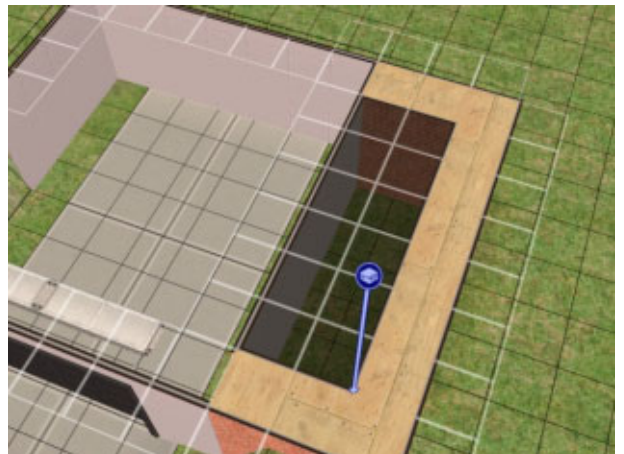
Step 29.

Go up one level (press PageUp) and use Ctrl + the Foundation tool to delete some of the 'inside' of the block of foundation, as shown here.



Step 30.

With the result that a sort of room is formed on the other side of the wall.



Step 31.

And now we can add a door, leading from the garage directly into more liveable basement.

That really finishes the first part of this tutorial. Stop and have a drink or even stretch your legs, brush off a flea or whatever!!! :lol:

* * * * *

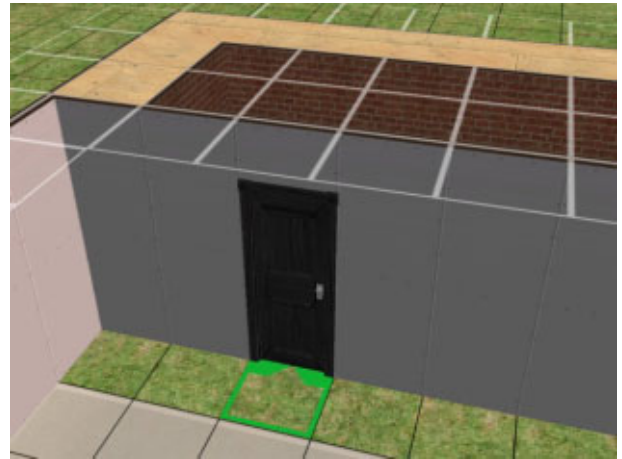
I'm sure you can see how to develop the basement space as much as you want, including replacing the rear line of foundation with wall panels, to create a walk-out basement leading into a sunken garden.

Walk-out basements are usually more effective if you build on a lot which slopes down from the road. In the original game, many sites in Veronaville do this. For example, here's (2nd pic) a walk-out basement under construction that's the same as the garage we've just built, with a larger block of foundation.

And in the 3rd pic you can get an idea (I hope!!!) of a 2-storey basement, which is waiting for a 3rd level and roof. It's basically the same layout as the first house, but the driveway goes down 28 clicks.

The one element in this kind of building that may be *'new'* to you is that in the first house the top of the foundation is level with the top of the garage walls. (The Sims game thinks in 'levels' rather than heights, so 4-click high foundation and 16-click high wall are both 'first level' to the game.) ----- Whereas in the second house the foundation can't be joined to the top of the upper storey of the garage. Why not? Because the foundation is first level, the upper storey is second level.

So here's a few more steps to give an idea of **how to join them**. I'm not going to detail every step – the tutorial would become too long – but I hope I can give you a good idea how to plan this out.

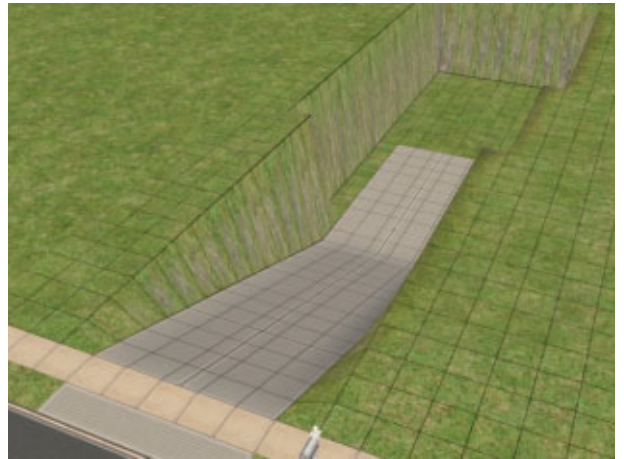


Step 32.

How deep can your basement garage be? Well, there's almost no limit – though the game sets a final depth to stop endless clicking!!! Try it to see. 😊

But here's the driveway that runs down 28 clicks, which will allow us to add a 2-level basement under the house.

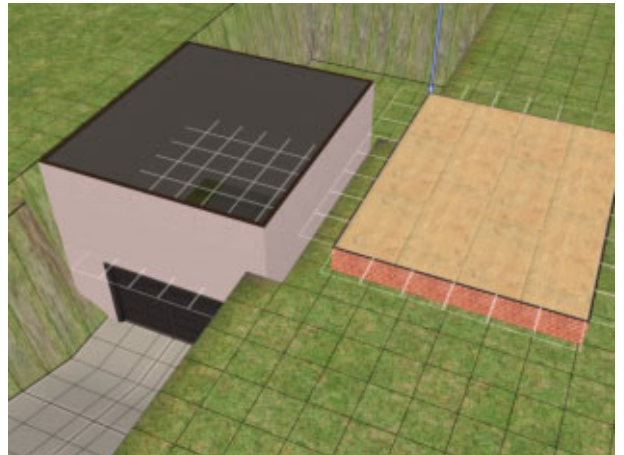
Cars manage this fine, but please know that they take a **bigger jump** with a deeper driveway. 😊



Step 33.

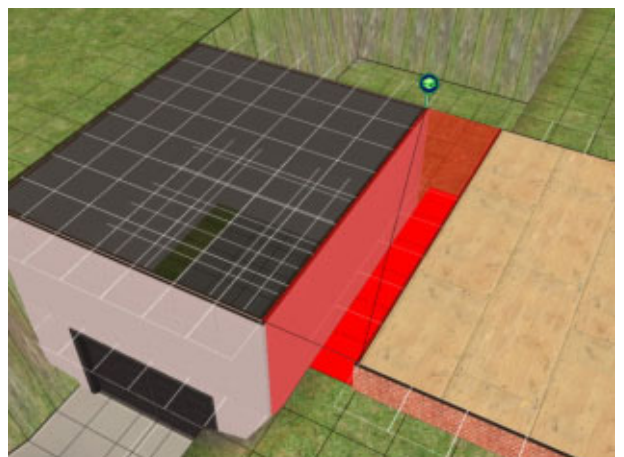
Build the driveway as before, and add in a garage. Then PageUp one level, and place another room' of standard walls on top of the garage. Then add a block of standard brick foundation, in roughly the size you want. The house will sit on both areas.

If you have room, you can add a bit of foundation on the other side of the garage too – to really enclose the garage in basement.



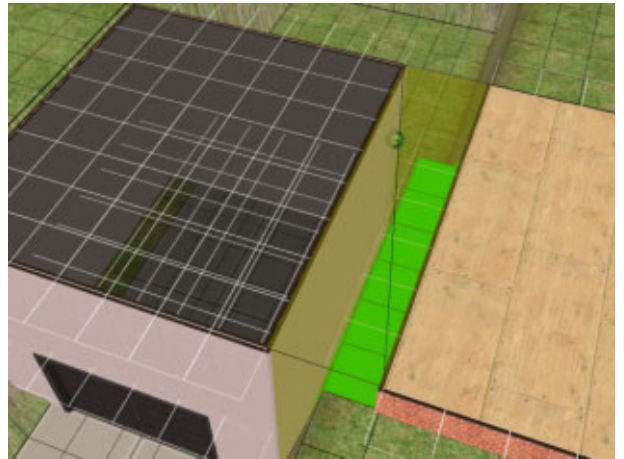
Step 34.

With the CFE command **off**, you can see that the game refuses to allow us to take the step we took above at Step #25 – to join the foundation to the garage wall – they're at different levels.



Step 35.

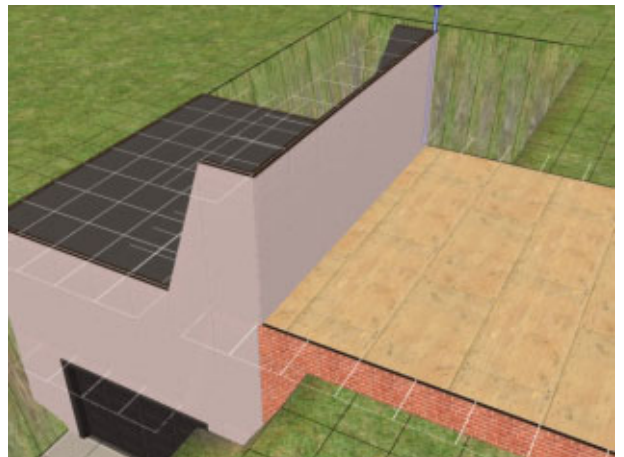
And if we turn the CFE command **on** – just to try it out – we can get next to the garage wall OK, as in Step #25, but when we let go the mouse button



Step 36.

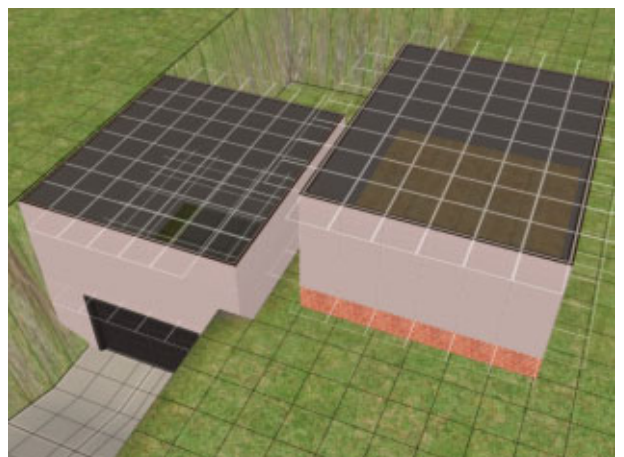
..... the foundation raises the lower section of garage wall up to its own height, and also pushes the upper section of garage wall above it.

The upper section of wall is at the 2nd level, and the foundation knows the wall should be sitting on top!!!



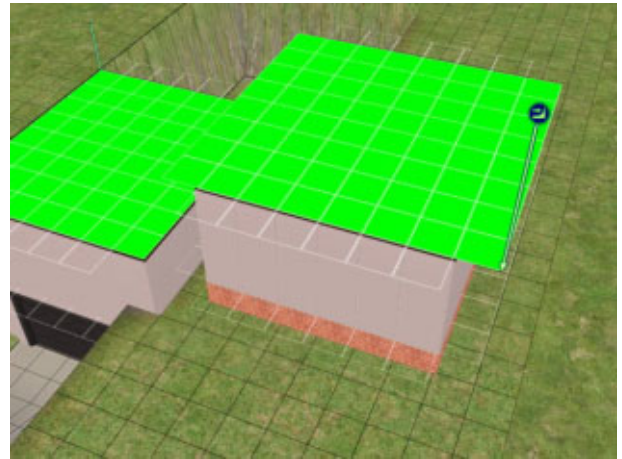
Step 37.

So let's try to join them. Firstly, after Step #33 go on to add an outer wall on top of the block of foundation.



Step 38.

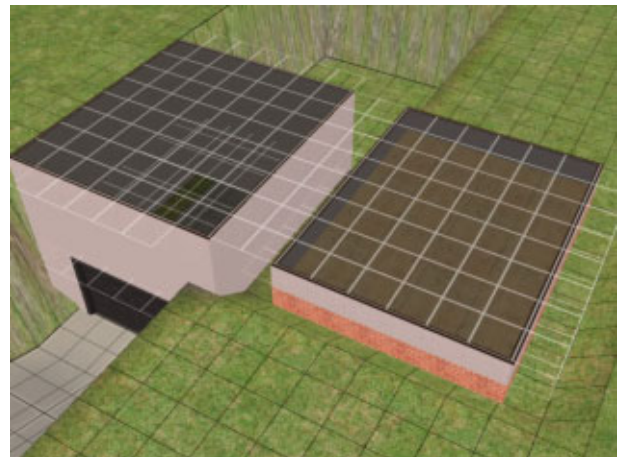
Turn the CFE command **on**, and slide the LevelTerrain tool from the top of the upper level of garage across the top of this new outer wall we've just added.



Step 39.

This will lower the house wall down to a height of 4 clicks (the game's standard minimum height for a wall). But the garage is 28 clicks lower than the ground, leaving the top of the upper floor only 4 clicks above ground level. And the house section has a 4-click high wall AND a 4-click high foundation ----- shock! horror!

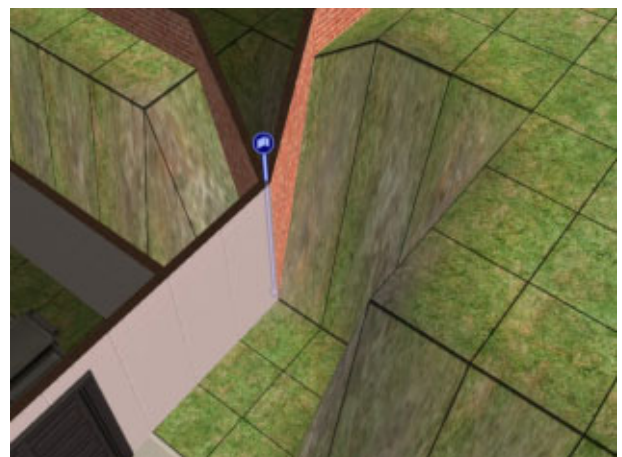
So since we've told it the height of its top, it pushes the ground underneath down by 4 clicks. That's rather attractive, I think – we can add a sloping path or a little step leading from the road. But if you want to keep things level, lower your driveway by 24 clicks.



Step 40.

Now PageDown to the lowest level and use the wall tool to run wall panels from the front and back of the garage, across to the foundation. In this house there's a gap of 2 gridsquares – I've dug out some of the ground to show this more clearly.

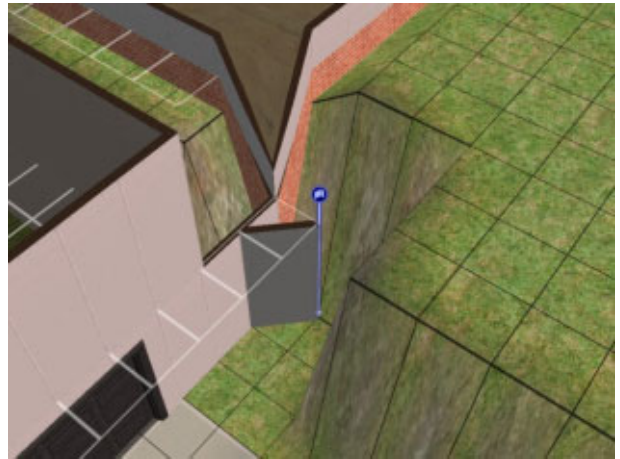
The corner of the foundation plunges down.



Step 41.

PageUp one level. We want to add wall panels to join the upper level of garage to the house wall. You'll see that there are no empty white gridsquares on top of the lower wall join – when we raise or lower the ground next to the wall they disappear.

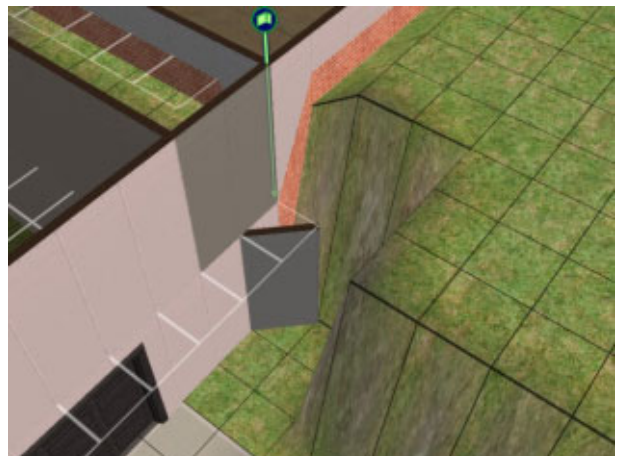
To bring them back, add a diagonal wall panel as shown here – diagonal just because it's quicker to delete than a little box of wall. Diagonals always bring a white gridsquare with them.



Step 42.

Now we can add the upper wall join.

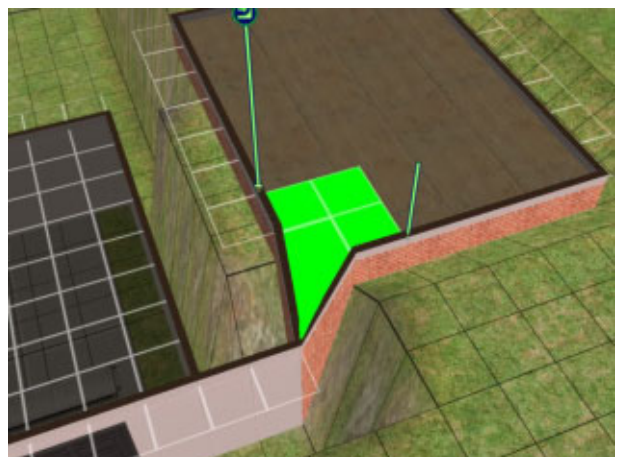
Repeat these steps (#40-42) at the back of the house too.



Step 43.

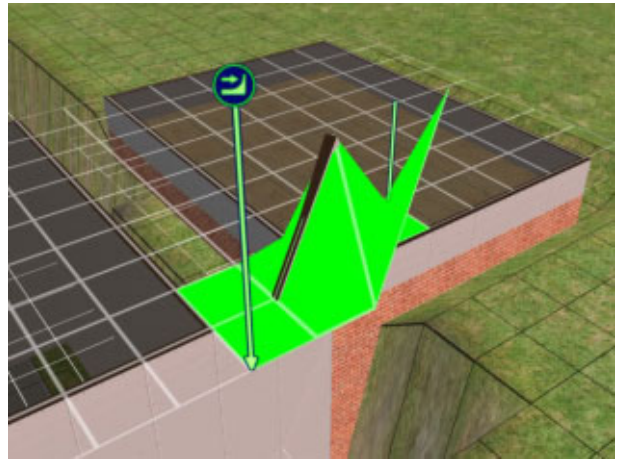
At this stage the foundation's corners are dragged down. Since the tops of the upper level are flat, you may not mind this – but to neaten things up let's level the foundation top too.

I've set the walls to WallsDown to see what we're doing. Slide the LevelTerrain tool as shown here, from one flat piece of foundation across the corner to another flat piece.



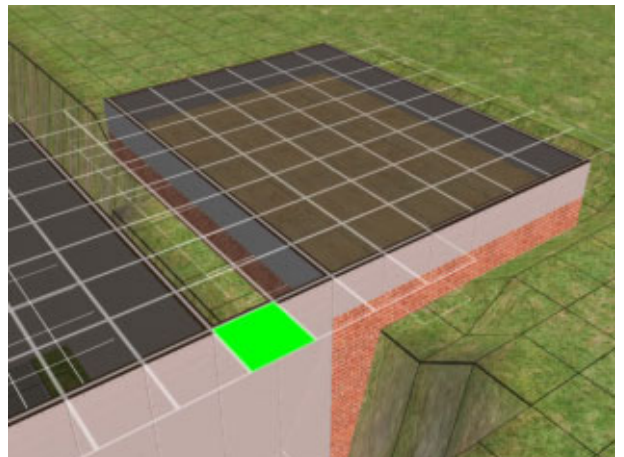
Step 44.

By levelling off the foundation, we also thrust the wall above upwards in a spike. No matter – just PageUp one level and repeat this levelling step, slide across the spike from one flat empty white gridsquare to another, as shown here.



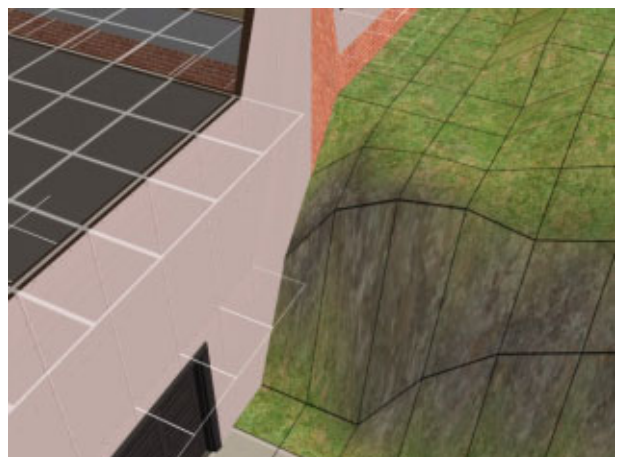
Step 45.

Here's the neater result.



Step 46.

You'll probably want to give the ground more gentle, natural curves and slopes. Foundation will move with the ground, but walls won't. So to soften the ground under the walls, keep the CFE command turned **on** and shape the ground to a more pleasing curve.

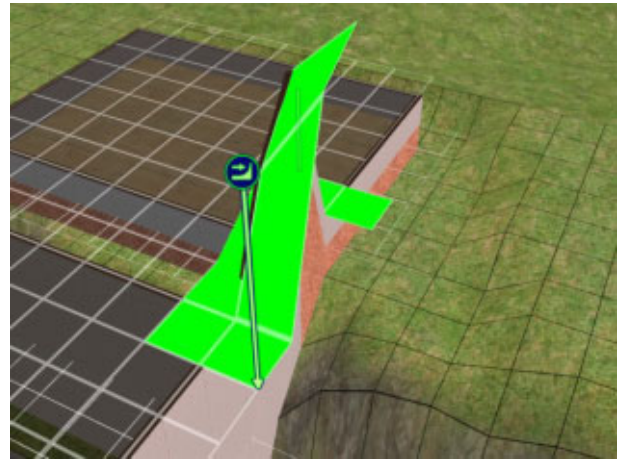


Step 47.

This will again spike or bend the levels above. So repeat Steps #43-45 to level everything off.

Or just don't bother to take the steps the first time!!!!!!! Leave it till now – duh! ☺

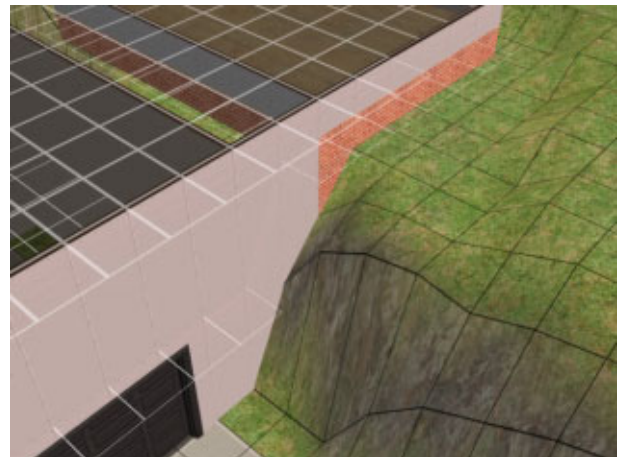
Turn the CFE command **off**.



Step 48.

Here's the final result – a 2-storey garage joined onto the rest of the house foundation. It's ready for you to add floors to the room above the garage and to the whole house. If you want you can treat some of the house part as a **split-level** room, or floor everything at the same level, with an 8-step high foundation.

I haven't shown all these steps, of course, but I hope I've encouraged you to have a go yourself, and let your imagination run riot!



Step 49.

This is the back of the house, finished enough for Sims to live in it and test it.

The main basement leads onto a walled hot tub area, and 3 sets of internal stairs connect it to the floor above and the first level above the garage.



Step 50.

And this is the front of the house, with a pool added.



Step 51.

Lastly (in case you don't think it will work!!!) here is a car returning to the garage, having taken a quick – and refreshing – dip into the tarmac!!!



Bye!

Wishing you lots of enjoyment and pleasure as you explore the magical world of Sims2 architecture! ☺