

Make Your Own Via Romana:

Needed materials:

- Clear plastic shoe box (cheap at a 99 Cent Store!)
- Dirt, sand, rocks, broken pottery, etc.
- A mortar of some sort, see notes below.

The clear plastic box will be your fossa, or ditch. Then create layers to represent the different layers of the Roman road. You should have **four layers:**

1. *pavimentum*
2. *statument*
3. *rudus*
4. *summum dorsum*

Read at the right what each layer is made of and try to find similar materials to make your layers. Make them proportional in size (i.e. the *statument* being the thickest layer, the *summum dorsum* the thinnest, etc.).

Here are some ideas for **mortar**: You could try real cement (with your parents' approval!), plaster of paris, flour and water paste, mud, or just leave it out. If you do use a mortar, make sure you allow time for each layer to dry!

Make the top layer higher in the middle than on the sides, so the road is curved.

Although it's not shown in the picture, you can add a row of **curbstones** on each side of the road. Most Roman roads had these.

Also add a **stone mile marker**, if you like, with the distance to the next town, the distance from Rome, and the builder's name, yours, of course.

On the outside of the box, **label your layers** with the Latin names.

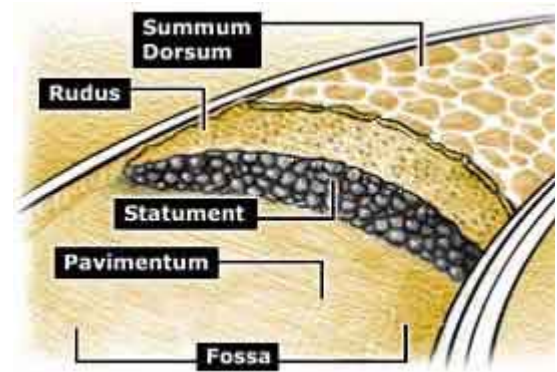
Here are some websites on Roman roads.

http://www.history.com/media.do?action=clip&id=rome_appian_way_broadband&gclid=CObw1ame24kCFSNQYwodO3if9w --short video on Appian Way

<http://www.crystalinks.com/romeroads.html>

<http://www.historylink102.com/Rome/roman-roads.htm>

<http://www.dl.ket.org/latin3/mores/techno/roads/construction.htm>



A plow was used to loosen the soil and mark the trench (*fossa*) margins.

Workmen dug trenches for a roadbed with a depth of 6 to 9 feet, carrying away the dirt in baskets.

The earthen bed was tamped firm. The foundation of lime mortar or sand was laid to form a level base (*pavimentum*). Next came stones of about 4 to 5 in. in diameter, cemented together with mortar or clay (*statument*). This layer could be anywhere from 10 inches to 2 feet deep.

The next course (*rudus*) was 9 to 12 inches of concrete filled with shards of pottery or stone. Atop this layer was the nucleus, a concrete made of gravel or sand and lime, poured in layers with each layer compacted with a roller. This layer was one foot at the sides and 18 in. at the crown of the road. The curvature was to allow good drainage to the finished road.

The top course was the *summum dorsum*, polygonal blocks of stone that were 6 inches or more thick and carefully fitted atop the still moist concrete. When a road bed became overly worn, this top course was removed, the stones turned over and replaced. A road was 9 to 12 feet wide which allowed 2 chariots to pass in each direction. Sometimes the road was edged with a high stone walkway. Milemarkers indicated the distance to the next town and to Rome.

Above info found on this website.