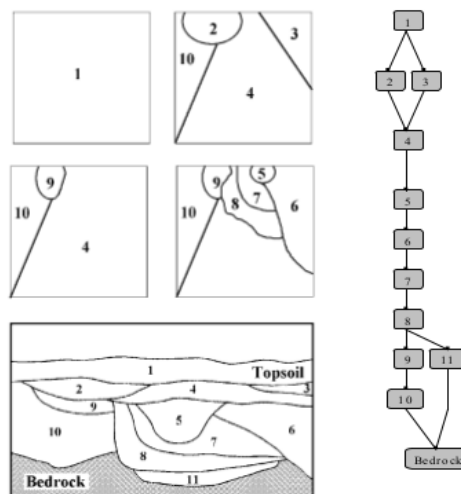


**Figure 1.** Excavation of a pit using A) the baulk-debris method (8 contexts), B) the open area method (1 context) and C) the modified baulk-debris method (2 contexts).

At Corinth, we have recently reassessed our own methodology and abandoned the trench and baulk method in favor of the open area method (Fig 1B), now standard practice all over Britain, much of the US and in other parts of Europe. Instead of arbitrarily sectioning all the stratigraphic contexts on the site and removing them based on what trench they happen to be located in, open-area excavation, in a sense, treats the entire excavation area as one large trench, and each individual context is identified, recorded and removed (if possible) in chronological and stratigraphic sequence. This method allows us to see more if not all of any given context at the same time and thus have more information at the moment of excavation with which to interpret context formation, finds and stratigraphic relationships. It also allows for more chronological control of the site, that is, it is possible to concentrate all attention on the stratigraphic relationships and the material record of the chronological period being excavated instead of having one trench at early modern levels, another at Roman and another at Mycenaean and trying to piece these disparate records back together after the excavation season has ended.

**Example:** In the section illustrated below, the topsoil (context 1) is the latest context present. 1 overlies several discrete deposits, 2, 3, 4 and 10, physically touching all of them. But through further excavation it is revealed that 2 cuts 10 and thus has to be later in time. Further, 2 and 3 are both cutting into context 4, 4 overlies 5, 5 cuts 6 and 7...and so on. However, if you look at the Harris matrix for this hypothetical situation, you will see that the relationships have been streamlined so that redundant relationships are not expressed. For example, even though we've already established that 1 is later than 2, 3, 4 and 10, it is unnecessary to draw additional lines from 1 to 4 and from 1 to 10 since the matrix is already expressing the fact that 1 is later in time than both 4 and 10 as it is situated above them in the diagram. (Note, in this example, cuts are not included.)



**Figure 2.** Hypothetical plans and vertical section showing several strata overlying bedrock. The Harris matrix expresses these relationships in a diagram.

## 5.2 DEPOSITS

All contexts are classified as deposits, cuts or structures. Deposits are positive contexts (opposed to cuts) and are not built features (like structures). Most contexts are deposits. Pit fills, surfaces, agricultural plow zone, natural events like flood wash and grave fills are all examples of deposits.

### 5.2.1 TITLE TAG

This is the essential summary of the context. The best way to write a title tag is to keep it short and to the point. Use keywords and phrases that not only describe the deposit, but define it. Say what you mean, and call the context what it is. You should never use more than 10 words and strive to use as few as possible, recording only the essence of the context. These title tags can be modified if new information allows for more precise interpretation later. Title tags are most useful as a quick reference tool.

Describe the defining characteristics of the context but do not simply reference other contexts. If referencing a related context, use its title tag in a shortened form and **do not reference context numbers unless they are wall numbers**. There is no need to mention the chronological date of the context as this information will appear in the Chronological Range field. However, it may be important to note earlier or later relative phases. Likewise, avoid referencing any database field (color, compaction, sorting, composition, etc.) that has a pull down menu unless

you find it absolutely definitive of the context (i.e. there is literally nothing else that you could say about it to define it). Avoid abbreviations. **Put the most important and definitive words first.** Here are some examples of good and bad title tags:

#### Good Title Tags

Pit fill, third deposit from top  
Dumped fill  
Agricultural zone cut by modern plow furrows  
Ashy fill of small pit  
N-S partition wall  
E-W property boundary wall  
Destruction debris: tile scatter  
Floor of packed earth  
Leveling fill below clay floor  
Exterior surface repair  
Robbing trench fill of wall 5604  
Well fill, tenth deposit from top  
Floor over wall 5604  
Floor cut by foundation trench of wall 5604  
Natural deposit

#### Bad Title Tags

Fill of orange tree pit (pit cut = context 9)  
Third deposit of fill in pit  
Reddish soil E of context 43  
Middle Roman destruction debris  
Fill of well  
Silty soil 10m east of wall 5302  
Northern floor patch

### **5.2.2 CHRONOLOGICAL RANGE**

This field can only be filled in after all pottery has been read and recorded, all coins read by the numismatist and recorded, and all other finds that could potentially date the context examined in the museum. This date field takes the LATEST date supplied by all the evidence collected for each context. You must also take stratigraphic relationships into account by keeping an up-to-date Harris matrix. For example, if the pottery from a context dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, a 6<sup>th</sup> century coin was also found in it and it was lying above a floor with a pottery date of ca. AD 700, the Chronological Range of the context is ca. AD 700 since the stratigraphic relationship dictates that the context must be dated to ca. AD 700 or later. It might be wise to wait until several contexts that are stratigraphically BELOW your context are excavated with pottery and coins read to make sure that you have a good idea of the dates of strata below your context. Note which body of

evidence dated the context: pottery, coin, stratigraphic relationship or other (and then elaborate). Pottery dates are recorded separately in the pottery fields in the database.

### 5.2.3 ELEVATIONS

You must take elevations on top of every context you record – take the highest of the top elevations and enter that number in the **Top** Elevation field. **When you are finished excavating a context**, take the lowest of the bottom elevations and enter that number in the **Bottom** Elevation field. Elevations can be taken with the total station or with the dumpy level if it is in the field. Although the recording sheets only ask for “highest of the high” and “lowest of the low” it will take several elevations to adequately describe a basket and these should be recorded on your top plan.

### 5.2.4 SLOPE DOWN TO AND DEGREE

By comparing the different elevations you take at the top of your context, you will be able to see if the surface slopes down towards any particular cardinal direction (**N, NE, E, SE, S**, etc). The Slope Degree is an estimate of the degree to which the top surface slopes: chose one of the following options:

**level, slight, moderate, steep, vertical, or uneven.**

### 5.2.5 COORDINATES

Based on your measurements of the size and shape of your context, determine the North, South, East, and West extents of your context. This field is used to determine a bounding box for the context and its location. Your top plan will be useful here.

### 5.2.6 SOIL COLOR

A Munsell chart is not required - who has ever seen Munsell Colors of soils used to draw meaningful conclusions about a deposit? Ideally the sample should be moist but that is difficult in mid-summer in Greece, so spray the soil if needed. Color should always be assessed when the deposit is moist but not waterlogged. This should be kept as simple as possible and standardized. Use the terms below (from C. Spence ed. (1990) section 3.1.1.2 and the Munsell Soil Color Charts, 1994). There are 3 components to describing soil color: a modifier, a hue and a color. Chose from the following options, **choose one term from each component**:

**MODIFIER:** Light, Dark, Very Dark

**HUE:** Brownish, Greenish, Greyish, Pinkish, Reddish, Yellowish

**COLOR:** Black, Brown, Green, Grey, Pink, Red, White, Yellow

If your basket is not uniform in color, select **MIXED**. You should then describe the different colors that you see in the Excavation Notes field below. ‘Mixed,’ as a rule, should be reserved for soils that truly are mixed and have more than one

distinct color component. It is much more important to describe the color of a deposit in order to define it as different from surrounding contexts than it is to try and analyze its color down to the individual particle level.

### 5.2.7 SOIL COMPOSITION

All soils will be made up from a combination of sand, silt or clay. Sand feels gritty and you can see the individual grains with the naked eye. Silt is smooth and slippery to the touch when wet and like powder when dry; the individual particles are much smaller than those of sand and can only be seen with the aid of a microscope. Clay is sticky and plastic-like to handle when wet and like extremely hard and compact when dry. The individual particles are extremely small and can only be seen with the aid of an electron microscope. You have to physically touch and feel the soil to be able to describe the texture and composition of a deposit.

This field asks for the majority elements of a deposit. Inspect the soil with care, but there is no need to go overboard describing percentages of sand or silt here. You may choose from the following options:

**Fine sand, coarse sand, clay, or silt**

**Silty sand** (very common) or **clayey sand**

**Sandy silt** (very common) or **clayey silt**

**Sandy clay** or **silty clay**

Or **MIXED** (if mixed, please elaborate in the Excavation Notes section).

RUB MOIST SEDIMENT BETWEEN FINGERS	
1. Is the sediment sandy or gritty?	YES > 2 NO > 6
2. Can the sediment be formed into a ball?	YES > 3 NO > 4
3. Will it form a U-shape without breaking?	YES > CLAYEY SAND
	NO > SILTY SAND
4. Are the sand grains like granular sugar?	YES > COARSE SAND
	NO > 5
5. Are they the size of castor sugar?	YES > FINE SAND
	NO > FINE SAND
6. Does the sediment stain the fingers?	YES > 7 NO > 9
7. Sediment texture is smooth and silky?	YES > 8
	NO > SANDY SILT
8. Is it also sticky?	YES > CLAYEY SILT
	NO > SILT
9. Is it sticky and hard to break?	YES > CLAY NO > 10
10. Does it break easily and cleanly?	YES > SANDY CLAY
	NO > SILTY CLAY

Figure 6. Diagnostic questions for soil (after C. Spence 1994).

### 5.2.8 SOIL COMPACTION

This describes how compact the soil in a deposit is. You should excavate some of the deposit and discuss compaction with the excavator in order to make this observation. **First you must determine the composition of the soil.**

If the MAIN component is fine-grained (silt or clay), choose from:

**Hard, firm, soft, or very soft.**

If the MAIN component is coarse-grained (sand), choose from:

**Strongly cemented, weakly cemented, compact, or loose.**

SEDIMENT	TERM	DEFINITION TYPE
COARSE-GRAINED	STRONGLY CEMENTED	Cannot be broken with hands.
	WEAKLY CEMENTED	Pick removes sediment in lumps which can be broken with hands.
	COMPACT	Requires pick for excavation.
	LOOSE	Can be excavated with trowel.
FINE-GRAINED	HARD	Brittle or very tough.
	FIRM	Molded by strong finger pressure.
	SOFT	Easily molded with fingers.
	VERY SOFT	Non-plastic, crumbles in fingers

Figure 7. Chart for describing soil compaction (after C. Spence 1994).

### 5.2.9 INCLUSIONS

Inclusions are anything in the soil that is not soil (ceramic sherds, glass fragments, stones, shell, bone and other organics like carbon or land shells, plaster fragments, mudbrick fragments, tile [small or large fragments] and other building materials).

List all inclusions that are present and to estimate the % of inclusions in the soil.

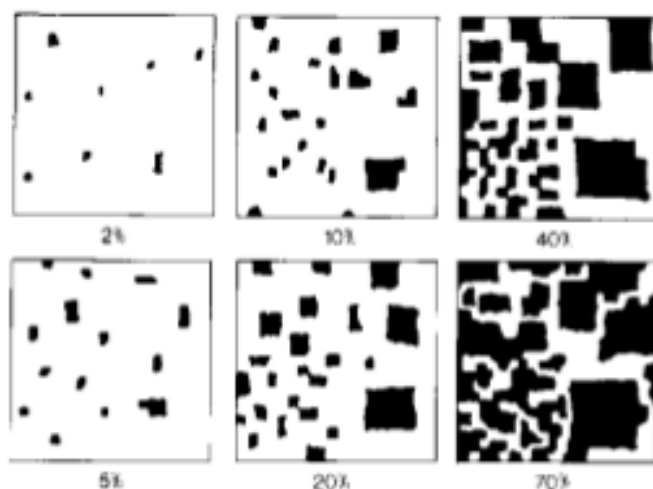


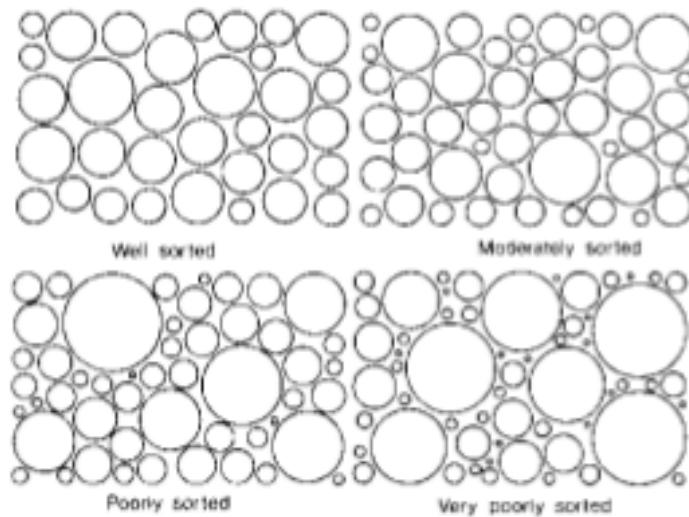
Figure 8. Chart for estimating percentage composition of inclusions. Each square equals the percentage. (Redrawn after Hodgson 1974).

#### 5.2.9.1 SORTING

This term refers to the distribution of inclusions in your soil; usually random in the case of dumped fill, water-sorted in the case of water-laid sediments, gravity sorted

in tipped fill, etc. A complex depositional history often produces a complex particle distribution in a single stratum. The degree of sorting is a measure of the frequency with which particles of the same size occur. For example, if the deposit consists mainly of fine pebbles, it is 'well sorted'. An appreciation of sorting gives some idea of the processes responsible for deposition. When describing the level of sorting of the inclusions in your context, chose from the following options:

**well, moderately, poorly, very poorly**



**Figure 9. Chart for estimating degree of sorting (redrawn after Folk 1988).**

### 5.2.9.2 SIZE

This is not a field on your recording sheet (or in the database) but should be described in the Inclusions field. Describe the size of the **primary** inclusions in a deposit. For stones, use the chart below to standardize your vocabulary in your descriptions. For other inclusion it is more useful to give average dimensions (in meters).

FINE PEBBLES	0.002m - 0.006m
MEDIUM PEBBLES	0.006m - 0.02m
COARSE PEBBLES	0.02m - 0.06m
COBBLES	0.06m - 0.2m.
BOULDERS	0.2m.

**Figure 10. Modified Wentworth Scale for describing the size of stones.**

### 5.2.9.3 SHAPE AND ROUNDNESS

This is not a field on your recording sheet (or in the database) but should be described in the Inclusions field. Describe the shape and roundness of stone inclusions. This information helps to determine the nature and origin of the deposit.



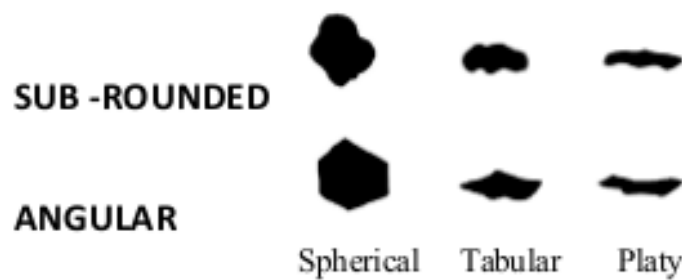


Figure 11. Guide to describing the shapes of stones.

### 5.2.10 THE HARRIS MATRIX AND STRATIGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS

See §1.4 for an explanation of the principles behind the Harris matrix. Use this field to begin assembling the overall Harris matrix for the site, by focusing on the context you are recording (the center rectangle) and any and all other contexts **physically related** (that means actually touching). You will use this information as well as the physical relationships of other contexts to refine this preliminary field matrix into a proper Harris matrix that maps chronological relationships rather than purely physical ones.

In the matrix, Context numbers ABOVE the context you are recording are LATER in time than your context. Context numbers BELOW the context you are recording are EARLIER in time than your context.

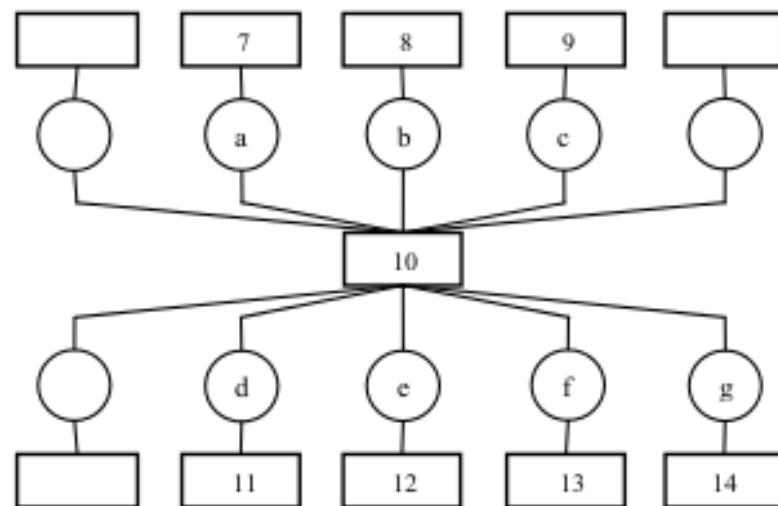


Figure 12. A modified Harris matrix with hypothetical contexts.

When the overall site Harris matrix is composed, positive features (deposits, structures, skeletons) will be represented as a context number inside a rectangle (as shown above), and negative features (cuts) with an oval. However, for the field version – a work in progress – all contexts besides the context being recorded will be represented with rectangles.



Use the empty **circles** incorporated into the lines that connect contexts to describe physical characteristics and relationships between contexts, WHY and HOW you interpret one context as being distinct from another and how they related to each other.

#### 5.2.10.1 CHARACTERISTICS

This field asks you to justify the reasons why the context you are recording is a distinct unit and different from the soils around it. This should take the form of simple comparisons based on your description of the soil of the context. So, for the example matrix shown above, in the Characteristics field, it might read:

- a) 7 is harder than 10
- b) 8 is blacker than 10
- c) 9 is blacker and has fewer inclusions than 10
- d) 10 is softer and redder than 11
- e) 10 is very slightly redder than 12
- f) 10 is softer and redder and has more inclusions than 13
- g) 14 is a cut

#### 5.2.10.2 RELATIONSHIPS

Use this field to record how the contexts in your Harris matrix physically relate to each other. As is explained in the manual in §1.4, there are only a few relationships that can exist between contexts. These relationships should be recorded in this field as well as in the appropriate database fields:

If the context you are recording is **EARLIER** than another context:

- Your context is **filled by** it, or
- Your context is **overlaid by** it, or
- Your context is **cut by** it.

The context you are recording is **EQUAL TO** another context when you can prove that a single context has been truncated by later action and now exists in two or more parts, i.e. separated by the later activity, or when you have sectioned a single context and excavated it in two or more parts each with separate context numbers. When you have an equivalent relationship, write in the equivalent context number with an equal sign next to the central rectangle in the matrix.

If the context you are recording is **LATER THAN** another context:

- Your context is **laid on** it, or
- Your context is **laid against** it, or
- Your context **cuts** it.

So, for the example matrix shown above, in the Relationships field, it might read:

- a) 7 is laid on 10
- b) 8 is laid on 10
- c) 9 cuts 10
- d) 10 cuts 11
- e) 10 is laid on 12
- f) 10 is laid against 13
- g) 10 is laid on 14

The Harris matrix relationship fields in the database will be used to generate a master matrix for the entire site and are extremely important. The information entered into the database fields should be considered the final product of the Harris matrix process that started in the field and should be updated any time a new interpretation of stratigraphic relationships is made.

### **5.2.11 BOUNDARIES WITH OTHER CONTEXTS**

This field can only be filled-in when your basket has been completely dug. This describes how dramatic the change was between the context you are recording and the context(s) revealed below it. Please choose from:

**Sharp:** the change is dramatic and very easy to see (a major change in color, texture, inclusions or all of the above).

**Clear:** the change is clear, but not dramatic (a clear change in color or texture or inclusions).

**Diffuse:** the change is not clear or easy to see, but it is perceived by a slight change in color or texture or inclusions.

If more than one context is revealed below the one you are recording and they differ in how distinctly different they are from your context, leave this field blank and elaborate in the Excavation Notes section.

### **5.2.12 FORMATION/INTERPRETATION**

This is your interpretation of the nature of the context, what it is and how it got there. Sometimes this is easy, like when you are digging the fill of a pit.

Sometimes it is difficult to determine in the field during excavation before all finds are analyzed and stratigraphic relationships are determined and you will only be able to describe your context in general terms, like "Deposit accumulated over N-S wall", "Dumped debris", or "Possibly a leveling operation?". See §2.5 Excavating Special Deposits for more in depth descriptions of different deposits and features that you will encounter in the field. This information will be helpful when coming up with a title tag for your context when you enter it into the database. If the nature of the formation of the deposit is not clear at the time of excavation, state this clearly – it is better to be honest than to force an interpretation with no evidence to back it up. You can always add to or modify this field later, just make sure you note that this is a 'Later Note' and date and initial it so that is clear to anyone

consulting your records in the future what was a field interpretation and what added later.

### **5.2.13 METHOD AND CONDITIONS**

Please give the following information:

**Tools used:** small pick, big pick, trowel, wooden chopstick, broom, etc.

**Soil Conditions:** Excavated Dry or Excavated Moist. If your basket has been exposed to the elements for a length of time, comment on how long (a week? 2 weeks? Longer?). Mention if there was a recent significant rain or if you sprayed the soil down with water prior to excavation.

### **5.2.14 SIEVING**

Indicate whether or not you have sieved soil from this context, what size of mesh sieve you used (usually this is 5mm) and what percent of the total context you have sieved. You can estimate this by counting the number of zembils or wheelbarrows of soil that are removed and then calculating the ratio between those taken to the dump and those taken to be sieved – explain how you arrived at this number in your Excavation Notes.

### **5.2.15 SAMPLES TAKEN**

Indicate if you have taken sample(s) for water flotation, how much (in L) and what percent of the context this sample is. If samples were taken, a sample sheet needs to be completed – see §2.7.1.

### **5.2.16 COINS**

You cannot enter information about inventoried objects in the field, but you will enter some coin information. When a coin is found while excavating a context, immediately take a reading on it using the total station. Then mark the find-spot on your top plan using these measurements, with the elevation written next to the word 'coin'. In the data field on the recording sheet, list each coin with its elevation, "Coin (87.23 El.): \_\_\_\_\_" and leave space as each coin will be given a unique number (something like 2008-178) at the museum that you will need to write in this space.

All coins are taken to the museum at the end of the day in individual paper envelopes. On the outside of the envelope, record the area of excavation (**Nezi** or **N of Nezi**), the **date**, the **context number** and the **north, east** and **elevation** measurements from the total station. **Draw and outline around the coin** on the outside of the envelope in pencil. Coins found while sieving also go to the museum packaged like this, but instead of noting the measurements of their find spot, write 'from sieve.'

### **5.2.17 FINDS COLLECTED**

List the finds you collect from each deposit in this field along with quantities of each category (e.g. Glass (1 box), metal (1 bag), bone/shell (1 box), etc.). This should be a list of all finds, regardless if they are being sent to Pietri or to the museum.

### **5.2.18 EXCAVATION NOTES**

This is your opportunity to put into words in the field anything you observe about the context you are recording and any other interpretations of the excavation. It is fine to be repetitive here if it is necessary to get the point across (to repeat information you entered into the data fields above) but do try to step beyond simple description and attempt more complicated interpretation. This is the best place to explain WHY you think the things you do about your context. It is not helpful or appropriate to treat this area as your personal diary – keep your notes professional.

For each deposit please attempt to record the following information:

1. Begin by stating what you are digging and why you are digging it.
2. Any descriptive information relating to the fields above that needs elaboration or clarification.
3. What contexts this deposit reveals – this will help with the Harris matrix later on – you won't have context numbers for these new contexts yet, but you can describe them.
4. If you were expecting to reveal something with the excavation of this deposit, did you? Or did this deposit reveal something unexpected?
5. Any information about the excavation or revelation of this context that was not recorded in the data fields above.
6. Anything else you think is important, or any ideas you have about how this deposit relates to the rest of the excavation.

**If you want to add to these notes at any point after the initial composition in the field, you MUST write 'Later notes,' date and initial them.**

## **5.3 CUTS**

All contexts are classified as deposits, cuts or structures. Deposits and structures are positive features; a cut is the remainder of a negative human action – the removal of something. You cannot excavate a cut, you can only observe it. All cuts must be recorded and assigned a context number so they can be integrated into the Harris matrix as they are the remainder of human action and are thus part of the history of the site as a whole.

### **5.3.1 TITLE TAG**

See §5.2.1.

### **5.3.2 COORDINATES**

See §5.2.5.

### 5.3.3 ELEVATIONS

Take several elevations along the top and bottom of your cut – the highest of the high is entered in the Top field and the lowest of the low in the Bottom field.

### 5.3.4 SHAPE IN PLAN

Describe the shape at the top of the cut. Choose from the following terms:

**Square, Rectangular, Circle, Semi-circular, Oval, Sub-rectangular, Linear, or Irregular.**

If you choose Irregular, you must elaborate on the shape of the top of the cut in the Notes section.

### 5.3.5 DIMENSIONS

If the shape is asymmetrical (so not a circle or a square), measure the longest distance first, this is your **Length**, the shortest distance is the **Width**, and the **Depth** is the difference between the highest top elevation and the lowest bottom elevation. Record in meters. If the cut is square, the length and the width will be the same measurement. If the cut is a circle, give the **Diameter** rather than the length and width.

### 5.3.6 BREAK OF SLOPE-TOP

Describe the degree with which the top surface of the edge of the cut breaks into the sides. Choose from the following terms:

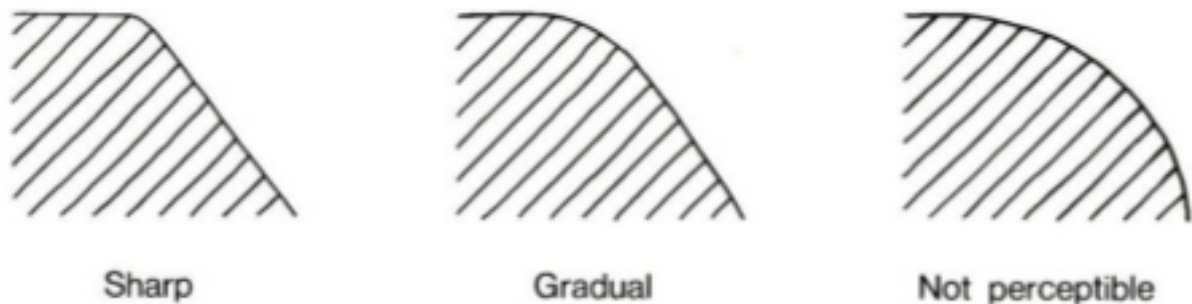


Figure 13. Guide to describing the break of slope – top (C. Spence 1994).

### 5.3.7 SIDES

Describe the sides of the cut using the following terms:

**Vertical, Convex, Concave, Stepped, or Mixed.**

If you choose Mixed, you must elaborate on the sides of the cut in the Notes section.

### 5.3.8 BREAK OF SLOPE – BASE

Describe the degree with which the sides break into the base of the cut using the following terms:

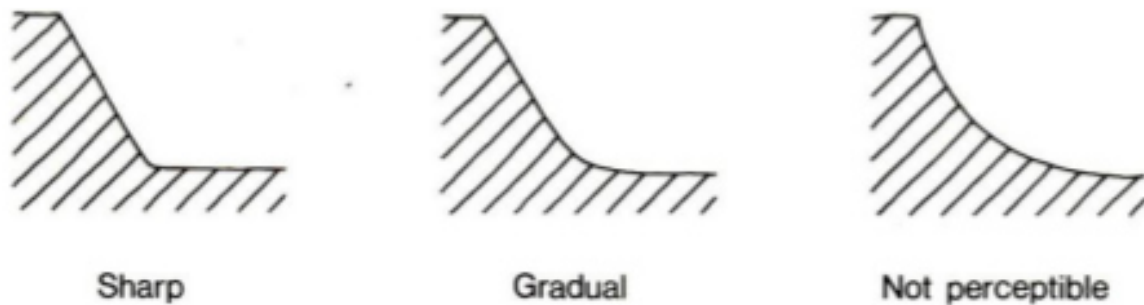


Figure 14. Guide to describing the break of slope – base (C. Spence 1994).

### 5.3.9 BASE

Describe the base of the cut with the following terms:

**Flat, Concave, Sloping, Pointed, Tapered – blunt, Tapered – sharp, Uneven.**

If you choose Uneven, you must elaborate on the base of the cut in the Notes section.

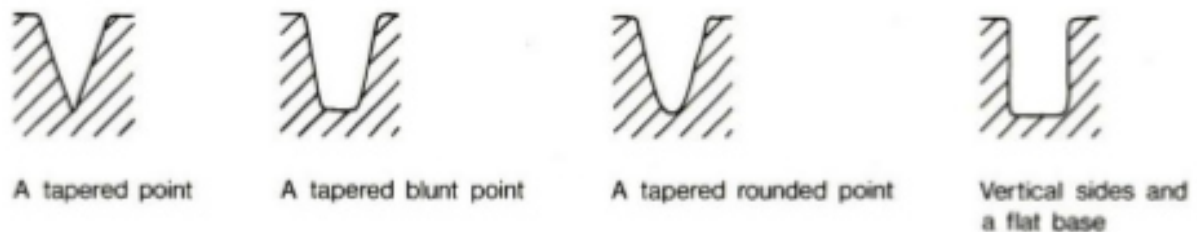


Figure 15. Guide to describing the base of a cut (C. Spence 1994).

### 5.3.10 ORIENTATION

**This only applies to linear cuts.** If linear, note the orientation of the cut in cardinal directions (N-S, E-W, NE-SW, NW-SE).

### 5.3.11 TRUNCATION

Does the cut have its original shape or has it been truncated (cut by) by another action/context? If so, describe what part is truncated and, if possible, state what has truncated it.

### 5.3.12 HARRIS MATRIX

See §1.4 for an introduction to the principles of the Harris Matrix and §5.2.10 for instruction on using the Harris matrix for deposits. Using the Harris matrix for cuts is very similar. The principle difference for cuts is that you are not asked to describe the differences between soil contexts as the cut is itself an interface between soil contexts. Note that cuts are expressed with ovals in the final Harris matrix produced for the site as a whole.

### 5.3.13 FILLED BY

This field asks for the context numbers of **ALL** the deposits filling this cut.

### 5.3.14 NOTES

This is your opportunity to put into words in the field anything you observe about the context you are recording and any other interpretations of the excavation. It is okay to be repetitive here if it is necessary to get the point across (to repeat information you entered into the data fields above) but do try to step beyond simple description and attempt more complicated interpretation. This is the best place to explain WHY you think the things you do about your context. It is not helpful or appropriate to treat this area as your personal diary – keep your notes professional.

For each cut please attempt to record the following information:

1. Any descriptive information relating to the fields above that needs elaboration or clarification.
2. How you came to recognize this cut based on the observations you recorded above.
3. What this cut cuts into (you will not have a context number for this deposit yet, but you should describe it well as you will need to add the context number(s) to your Harris matrix in the future when this deposit is excavated.)
4. Cuts of pits and trenches are important as the material from the fill inside and the deposits they cut are very good dating tools. Describe how this cut and its related deposits might aid the dating of this part of the site.
5. Any information about the excavation or revelation of this context that was not recorded in the data fields above.
6. Anything else you think is important, or any ideas you have about how this cut relates to the rest of the excavation.

**If you want to add to these notes at any point after the initial composition in the field, you MUST state that they are ‘Later notes,’ date and initial them.**

## **5.4 STRUCTURES**

All contexts are classified as deposits, cuts or structures. Structures are purposely built features like walls, built floors, built roadways, hearths, and well heads.

On your recording sheet check the appropriate box to note whether your structure is **excavated** or **unexcavated**.

### **5.4.1 TITLE TAG**

See §4.2.1.

### **5.4.2 CHRONOLOGICAL RANGE**

If the structure you are recording is actually excavated, treat this field as you would for a deposit – see §5.2.2. However, many walls and other structures at Corinth are not excavated so that they may be preserved for display to the public. When this is the case, you can only date your structure based on the chronological ranges of stratigraphically related contexts. Ideally, this will take the form of foundation

trenches (see §2.5.2) and the fills they cut. However, if no foundation trenches exist for a structure, you must rely on other stratigraphic relationships and your Harris matrix, for example: does your structure cut any floors, pits or other contexts and thus post-date them? Are there any floors that run up to your structure and thus post-date it? Are there any deposits or other structures that overlie your structure and thus post-date it?

### **5.4.3 COORDINATES**

Based on your measurements of the size and shape of the structure, determine the furthest North, South, East, and West that the structure extends. Your top plan will be useful here.

### **5.4.4 ELEVATIONS**

Take elevations at several points on the structure, but only record the highest of the high and the lowest of the low in this field. The other measurements should be added to the top plan.

### **5.4.5 DIMENSIONS**

Overall length, width and height of the structure, in meters.

### **5.4.6 MATERIALS**

List all forms of building material used in the structure. If there are different materials and they are being used in different and purposeful ways (like if marble was only used on the corners or large stones only at the base of a wall) then please elaborate here.

Frequently used building materials at Corinth: \*Not an exhaustive list\*

limestone, sandstone, marble, andecite, conglomerate  
roof tiles, diamond tiles, brick (fired), mudbrick, clay  
plaster, hydroplaster  
tesserae – stone, tesserae – glass,

### **5.4.7 SIZE OF MATERIALS**

Measure several examples of each form of building material in the structure and list the average size for each type, in meters.

### **5.4.8 FINISH OF STONES**

See illustration below. This describes the exterior surface of any STONES used in the structure and is not to be applied to other forms of building material. If there are no stones used, leave this field blank. Choose from the following terms:

**Unworked, Roughly Hewn, Squared, Tooled Surface, or Mixed.**

If the surface of the stones is tooled, describe the appearance of the tool marks in the Notes section. If you select Mixed, you *must* elaborate in the Notes section below. Often, a change observed in the masonry style or the building materials



used in a structure is evidence of a later repair or addition to the structure and so a new phase of the use of the structure. Make sure that this is not the case here – all repairs and additions must be recorded separately and given their own context number.

If it is a wall being recorded and the two faces are significantly different from each other, please select the Mixed option, and then describe each face in the Notes section, explaining the differences you observe.

#### **5.4.9 MASONRY STYLE**

See illustration below. This field is only applicable to structures built up from the ground (so not built roads or built floors or hearths or mosaics). There are two fields: one is a more general description of the way the structure was built. **Only if possible**, fill in the second field which is more specific to the Classical world and to Corinth. Select from the following general terms:

**Dumped rubble (present in some foundations)**

**Uncoursed (no regular courses or regular horizontal alignment)**

**Random courses (courses of varied and random height)**

**Regular courses (courses of regular and consistent height)**

**Coursed**

**Mixed**

Also state whether any of the following techniques are used in conjunction with the masonry style:

**String course (a projecting course of tile, brick or stone to emphasize a junction or boundary)**

**Leveling course (a course of building material used to create a level surface upon which to continue building up the wall)**

**Quoins (corners) stressed**

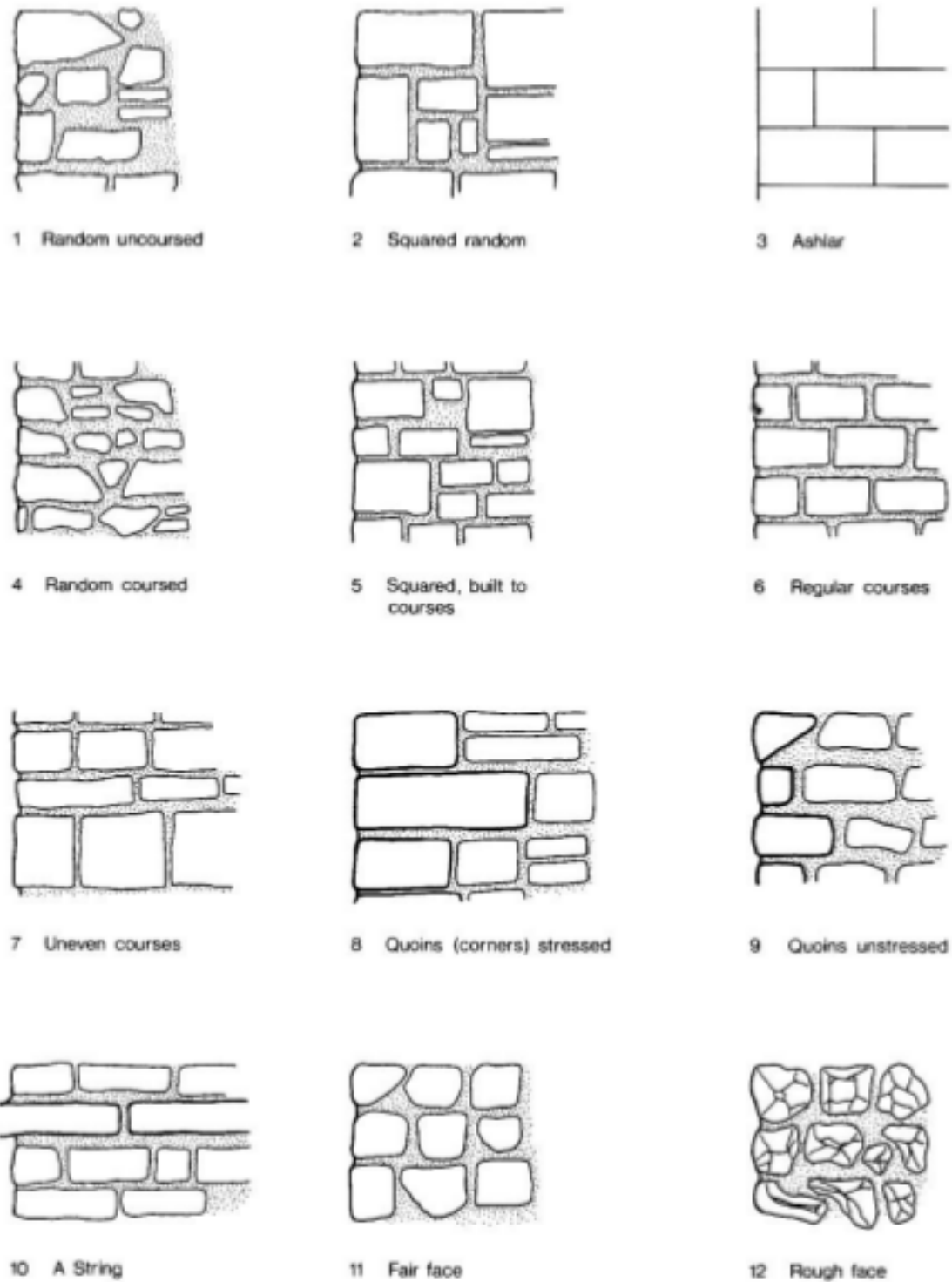
**Revetment (wall surface faced with usually marble or other fine stone slabs)**

If you select Mixed, you *must* elaborate in the Notes section below. Often, a change observed in the masonry style or the building materials used in a structure is evidence of a later repair or addition to the structure and so a new phase of the use of the structure. Make sure that this is not the case here – all repairs and additions must be recorded separately and given their own context number.

**If possible**, select from the following specific masonry terms:

**cyclopean, lesbian, polygonal, ashlar**

**opus cementicium, opus incertum, opus mixtum, opus reticulatum, opus signinum,,**



**Figure 16. Diagram of stone finishes and masonry styles (C. Spence 1994).**

#### **5.4.10 BONDING MATERIAL**

Describe the bonding material of the structure. Select one of the following terms: **None, Mud, Mud-Plaster, Plaster, Cement, Modern Cement (from modern restoration work).**

#### **5.4.11 SPECIAL FEATURES**

List any significant special features of this structure, like mason's marks, spolia, graffiti, or evidence for tools or quarrying methods used on stones (e.g. Lewis holes and surface treatments), arches or vaults, thresholds or windows, etc. **This is only a list**; describe these features fully in the Notes section.

#### **5.4.12 HARRIS MATRIX**

See §1.4 for an introduction to the principles of the Harris Matrix and §5.2.10 for instruction on using the Harris matrix for deposits. Using the Harris matrix for structures is very similar. The principle difference for structures is that you are not asked to describe the differences between soil contexts as the structure will obviously be very easy to distinguish from the surrounding soil. Note that structures are expressed with rectangles in the final Harris matrix produced for the site as a whole.

#### **5.4.13 FORMATION/INTERPRETATION**

This is a brief definition of your interpretation of the nature and function of the structure. You should explain in the Notes section how you arrived at this decision. This field will be useful in creating the Title Tag for this context. Choose from the following terms:

**Wall – superstructure or Wall – foundation**

**Wall repair/addition**

**Built Floor**

**Built Road or Metalled Road (constructed with gravel or crushed stone)**

**Built Hearth**

**Well Head**

**Drain or Manhole**

**Stairs**

**Platform (or Stylobate)**

**Ramp**

#### **5.4.14 INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL STRUCTURE**

This field will only be used if the structure being recorded is a wall. If it is a wall, state whether or not you are able to interpret the wall as external or internal (or if one face was internal and the other external). If you are unable to do this, explain why. If you are able to do this, site the evidence for this interpretation, (if necessary include comparisons to other walls or other contexts related to the one being recorded to make your case).

#### **5.4.15 RELATED CONTEXTS**

Briefly mention any and all related *structures* with their context numbers. Define the relationship – do they bond or not, are they physically connected or related by stratigraphy or building style? Briefly discuss the structure being recorded in the context of the greater building activities of this moment – is it part of a room, a

building, a city block? Is it part of a campaign of later refurbishment, remodeling or repair? Mention directly related *deposits and cuts* – floors, foundation or robbing trenches and their cuts – anything directly associated with the structure you are recording. This is a **list** of related contexts, use the Notes field to elaborate on these relationships and cite your evidence for them.

#### **5.4.16 SIEVING**

This field will only be used if the structure being recorded is subsequently excavated/dismantled. If so, treat all soil inside the structure as if it was a deposit. It will not receive a new context number as it is part of this structure. Describe the soil briefly in the fields provided. Soil from inside structures is ALWAYS 100% dry-sieved with 3mm mesh unless it is deemed necessary to take a sample for flotation, and then the rest is dry-sieved.

#### **5.4.17 COINS**

See §4.2.15.

#### **5.4.18 FINDS COLLECTED**

See §5.2.16.

#### **5.4.19 NOTES**

This is your opportunity to put into words in the field anything you observe about the context you are recording and any other interpretations of the excavation. It is okay to be repetitive here if it is necessary to get the point across (to repeat information you entered into the data fields above) but do try to step beyond simple description and attempt more complicated interpretation. This is the best place to explain WHY you think the things you do about your context. It is not helpful or appropriate to treat this area as your personal diary – keep your notes professional.

For each structure please attempt to record the following information:

1. Any descriptive information relating to the fields above that needs elaboration or clarification.
2. If this structure is to be excavated or if it will be left for presentation on site.
3. Any information about the excavation of this context that was not recorded in the data fields above.
4. Anything else you think is important, or any ideas you have about how this structure relates to the rest of the excavation.

**If you want to add to these notes at any point after the initial composition in the field, you MUST state that these are ‘Later notes,’ date and initial them.**