

BUILD ILLINOIS

BRICKLAYER and Allied Trades

Bricklayers construct walls, partitions, fireplaces, chimneys, and other structures from brick, block, and other masonry materials such as structural tile, concrete cinder, glass, gypsum and terra cotta. They spread a layer or "bed" of soft mortar that serves as base and binder using a trowel. The brick or block is then positioned and the excess mortar removed. Bricklayers must understand and work from blueprints, and be able to use measuring, leveling, and aligning tools to check their work.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Much of masonry work is performed outdoors and depends on suitable weather. Modern construction methods along with heaters and temporary enclosures, however, stretch the season and make bricklayers less dependent on optimal weather. Bricklayers are on their feet all day, and do considerable lifting of heavy materials with much bending – sometimes from scaffolding high above the ground.

APTITUDE AND INTEREST

Masonry construction involves a variety of duties requiring close tolerances and standards. Bricklaying requires careful, accurate work by the craftsman. Masons should enjoy working outside under many different weather conditions. Good eyesight is important to quickly determine lines and levels. Manual dexterity is also especially important.

TRAINING

Training is essential to become a skilled bricklayer. It can be acquired informally through "learning-by-working;" through company on-the-job training programs; by attending trade or vocational/technical schools; through unilaterally (management or labor) sponsored trainee programs; through registered, labor-management apprenticeship programs; or a combination of the above. It is generally accepted that the more formalized training programs give more comprehensive skill training. Recommended high school courses include algebra, geometry, general science, mechanical drawing, and English.

