

Bricklayer

A bricklayer uses manufactured bricks, breeze blocks, pre-cut stone, concrete and mortar to build and repair inside and outside foundations, walls, tunnels, chimneys and archways. Work can be plain or ornamental.

The Work

You could be:

- reading the engineers' and architects' plans and drawings
- choosing tools and materials
- measuring the area, then setting out bricks in position
- mixing mortar by hand or using a mechanical mixer
- using a trowel to spread mortar
- laying the bricks, using a plumb line and spirit level to make sure they are vertical and level
- using a club hammer and bolster (a chisel with a wide blade), or machine cutters, to cut bricks to size and a brick hammer to trim the bricks
- lifting and carrying bricks and tools, sometimes up scaffolding
- installing special materials into foundations, walls and floors to prevent moisture from entering internal rooms (known as damp proof coursing).

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

There is a minimum wage for apprentices in Scotland. As of June 2021, the Building and Allied Trades Joint Industrial Council (BATJIC) rates for a 4-year apprenticeship based on a 39-hour week are:

Year 1 – £209.40

Year 2 – £278.68

Year 3 – £349.54

Year 4 – £349.54 (without SVQ Level 2)

Year 4 – £369.72 (with SVQ Level 2).

Please note these rates may vary if the Apprentice is 21 years old or over and has completed the first year of their apprenticeship. National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) will apply.

Once qualified you may start on around £17,000 a year. With experience this can go up to £40,000 a year. You can earn extra through overtime and bonuses. A self-employed qualified bricklayer can expect to earn £13.00 to £25.00 an hour.

Conditions

- You work mostly outdoors, sometimes in bad weather.
- You often work at heights.
- You must carry heavy weights and climb scaffolding.
- You must wear protective gear: a hard hat, and sometimes goggles, gloves, ear-protectors and protective footwear.
- You could work up to 45 hours a week, but may sometimes work overtime including evenings and weekends to meet deadlines.
- Your working day starts early and usually depends on daylight. Working hours are longer in summer and there may be lay-offs in winter.
- You must travel to different sites and might have to live away from home.
- You must have your own tools and equipment if self-employed.

Getting In

- The normal entry route is by finding a Modern Apprenticeship with an employer.
- You do not always need formal qualifications, but some employers ask for subjects at National 4 or 5 including English, Maths and a science or technological subject.
- You could study the Foundation Apprenticeship in Construction (SCQF Level 4 or 5) in S3-S6, which can help to get into a relevant Modern Apprenticeship.
- You usually have to sit an aptitude test as part of the application process.
- A driving licence can be useful.
- You must hold a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card or equivalent to work on a site. You must pass a health and safety test to qualify for this scheme.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- practical skills
- a methodical approach and an eye for detail
- the ability to read drawings and plans
- basic maths skills for measuring and calculating materials
- an awareness of safety issues
- a head for heights and a good sense of balance.

You need to be able to:

- work accurately and meet deadlines
- work alone and as part of a team
- lift and carry heavy items.

Training

- Training during a Modern Apprenticeship is mainly on the job with off the job training, you would work

towards a SVQ in Bricklaying (Construction) at SCQF Level 6 and PDA or City and Guilds Diploma Bricklaying.

- On completion of an SVQ you could study part time at college for Advanced Craft Brickwork.

Getting On

- With experience you can apply for promotion to supervisory posts.
- You might then move into management.
- You might go on to work for yourself, sub-contracting your labour to building contractors. Eventually you could run your own specialist firm, employing other staff.
- There are good opportunities for working abroad.

More Information

For more information please see the organisations below:

- [Construction Industry Training Board \(CITB\)](#)
- [Scottish Building Apprenticeship and Training Council \(SBATC\)](#)

Contacts

GoConstruct

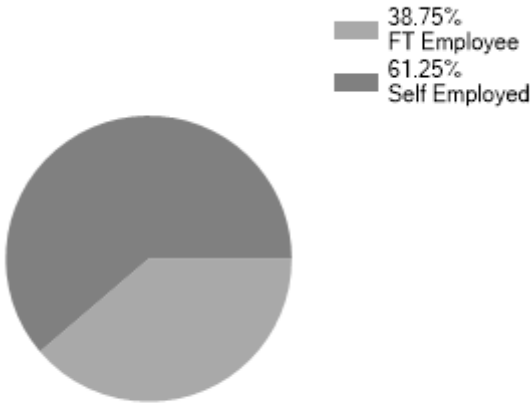
Website: www.goconstruct.org

Twitter: @GoConstructUK

Facebook: www.facebook.com/goconstructuk

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



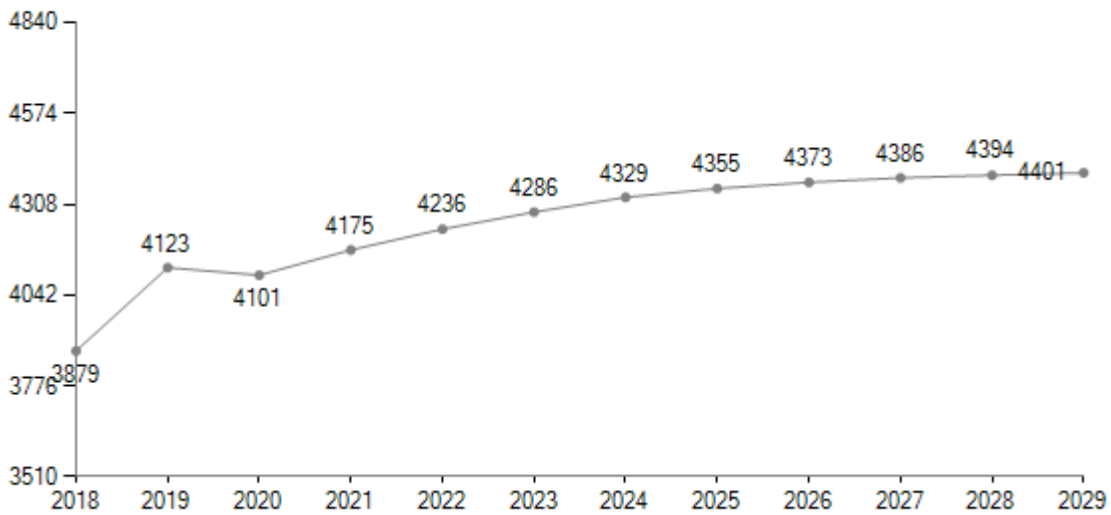
Past Unemployment - Scotland

Date	Unemployed
Dec 2018	0.33%

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Predicted Employment in Scotland



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