

Builders' Merchant

A builders' merchant sells and hires out materials and equipment to the building industry and the general public. They supply materials such as bricks, sand and cement, or timber, wallpaper and paint, electrical and plumbing fittings, hand and power tools, kitchen and bathroom units, garden equipment, and ironmongery.

The Work

You could be:

- giving advice to customers about products
- using databases to check prices and technical details of products
- arranging goods and displays in the best way to attract customers
- ordering stock from suppliers and keeping records of stock
- handling and measuring out materials
- loading, unloading and lifting heavy materials
- dealing with cash, credit or debit card and account payments
- keeping up to date with what materials are available and in demand
- making up customer orders and arranging and possibly making deliveries.

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.

Starting pay is often based on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) or the National Living Wage (NLW).

As of 1 April 2026 the National Minimum Wage is £8.00 an hour for workers under 18, £10.85 an hour for workers aged 18 to 20. The National Living Wage for those aged 21 and over is £12.71 an hour.

Conditions

- You might be based at a builder's yard or DIY store.
- Alternatively, you may travel on a sales rep basis, visiting building firms.
- You would work both indoors and outdoors.
- You may have to lift heavy goods.
- You might wear protective clothing and possibly a uniform.
- You may sometimes work weekends and evenings.

Getting In

- You do not usually need formal qualifications but a good general education is useful.

- Most employers prefer you to have a driving licence.
- You need to be physically fit.
- You may get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in Freight Logistics.

What Does It Take

It helps if you are:

- willing to build up a detailed knowledge of products
- good at remembering different kinds of building materials
- able to use computers
- confident
- polite and helpful with customers
- able to work out quantities and costs quickly
- aware of safety matters
- good at working with others and by yourself.

Training

- Training is usually on the job through an employer's training scheme.
- You might attend day or block release classes at college and work towards SVQs in Warehousing, Storage and Distribution at SCQF Level 5 or Retail Skills at SCQF Levels 4 and 5, depending on the core aspect of your duties.
- You might do training for driving fork lift trucks or large goods vehicles.

Getting On

- You could work towards the SVQ Warehousing, Storage and Distribution at SCQF Level 6.
- With experience you could move on to be a supervisor, buyer, manager or become self-employed.

Contacts

British Retail Consortium (BRC)

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Website: www.brc.org.uk

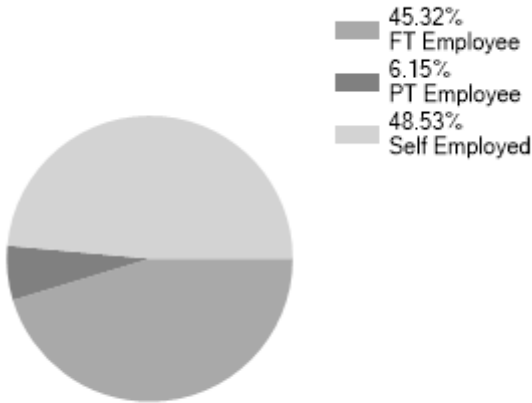
Website (2): www.rethinkretail.org.uk

X: @the_brc

Facebook: www.facebook.com/thebrc

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

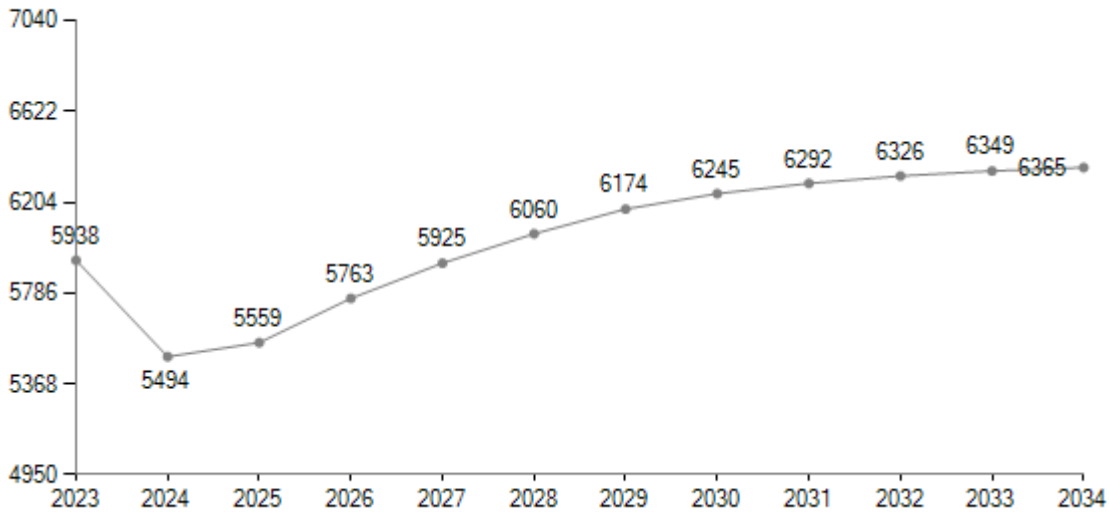


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)