

## Bricklayer

### Duties

Bricklayers prepare and lay brick and other masonry units to construct and repair structures such as walls, partitions, patios, arches, fireplaces and chimneys. Bricklayers work with masonry materials such as brick, concrete block, stone, structural tile and precast panels. They also lay or install fire brick or castable materials in commercial and industrial furnaces and incinerators, and acid tile and acid brick in pulp mills.

In general, bricklayers:

- Interpret drawings and blueprints, and calculate the materials required
- Measure from an established starting point and construct corners first, using a plumb line and mason's level to ensure each layer will be level from corner to corner
- Spread mortar over the base or previous layer, spread more mortar on one end of each brick to be laid, and lay the bricks into position
- Remove excess mortar after the brick (or other masonry material) is in position
- Use a hammer and chisel or a masonry saw to cut bricks to fit, as required

Bricklayers must know the properties of various mortars and other bonding materials, and how to handle different types of masonry units.

### Working Conditions

Bricklayers usually work outdoors, often on scaffolding. They sometimes use protective enclosures and portable heaters in adverse weather conditions. The work is physically demanding, and some travel may be required to get to various work sites. Bricklayers work a five-day, 40-hour week. Overtime is sometimes required to meet construction schedules

### Skills and Abilities

The work is most rewarding for those who enjoy working with their hands on a variety of projects which sometimes require creativity.

To be successful in their trade, bricklayers need:

- The strength and stamina required to work with heavy tools and materials weighing between 11 and 25 kilograms
- Manual dexterity and a good sense of balance



- The ability to get along well with co-workers
- An eye for colour, line and proportion

## Employment and Advancement

Bricklayers are employed by special trade, building and general contractors. Some bricklayers are self-employed, usually contracting on small jobs such as patios and fireplaces. Bricklayers may experience periods of unemployment during an economic downturn when construction slows down and/or during cold weather.

Journeyman wage rates vary, but generally range from **\$22.81 to \$31.58 an hour plus benefits**.

Many bricklayers stay in the trade until they retire. Others advance to estimator, inspector or foreman positions.

## Working in Alberta

### To work as a Bricklayer in Alberta, a person must:

- Be a registered apprentice, an Alberta-certified journeyman, hold a valid recognized credential (see Recognized Trade Certificates), OR
- Work for an employer who is satisfied that the worker has the skills and knowledge expected of a certified journeyman, OR
- Be self-employed

Bricklayers learn their skills by registering with Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training to participate in apprenticeship training. Upon successful completion, they are awarded the Alberta Journeyman Certificate.

A bricklayer who holds a valid trade certificate from Alberta or from another Canadian province or territory may apply to write the Interprovincial Exam and, if successful, be granted a Red Seal under the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program. The Red Seal is recognized throughout most of Canada.



**A bricklayer who holds a valid recognized credential that does not have a Red Seal may apply for:**

- An Alberta trade certificate under the Qualification Certificate Program
- An Alberta Equivalency document under the Equivalency Program.
- **Bricklayers who** hold a credential that is not recognized or is no longer valid in an Alberta-designated trade, OR
- Can demonstrate their experience, skills and knowledge in an Alberta-designated trade, and meet the standards and requirements established by the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board may be eligible to apply for trade certification under the Qualification Certificate Program.
- Individuals possessing a valid Alberta Journeyman Certificate, an Alberta Qualification Certificate, an Alberta Occupational Certificate, or a valid recognized credential are eligible to receive a Blue Seal business credential after completing the necessary requirements.

**Apprenticeship Training**

The term of apprenticeship for a bricklayer is 3 years (three 12-month periods) including a minimum of 1600 hours of on-the-job training and 8 weeks of technical training each year.

- An applicant who previously completed courses of study or work experience related to the Bricklayer trade or holds a related journeyperson certificate and has the employer's recommendation, may qualify for credit that could reduce the term of apprenticeship. (see Accreditation Information for a list of accredited courses)
- A person who has previous training or work experience in the trade and wants to determine their level of skill and knowledge for entry or advanced standing in an apprenticeship program may apply for a Prior Learning Assessment.
- A high school student can become an apprentice and gain credits toward apprenticeship training and a high school diploma at the same time under the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP).

**To learn the skills required of a Bricklayer in Alberta and be issued an Alberta Journeyman Certificate, a person must:**

- Satisfy the entrance requirements or pass the entrance exam (see Entrance Level Competencies, Exam Counselling Sheet, Entrance Exam Study Guide, and Entrance Exam Support Materials List)



*Courses in mathematics and science are particularly important.*

- Find a suitable employer who is willing to hire and train an apprentice

***Most employers prefer to hire high school graduates and may select apprentices from among their current employees.***

- With their employer, complete the Apprenticeship Application and Contract and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above
- Complete the required on-the-job training
  - during on-the-job training, apprentice bricklayers earn at least 60 percent of the journey person wage rate in their place of employment in the first year, 80 percent in the second, and 90 percent in the third year
- Complete the required technical training each year (see Course Outline)
- Enroll in technical training (see Technical Training Centre)
  - select an educational institution that offers training for Bricklayer apprentices, and a time to attend training
  - determine requirements for enrolling at the selected institution, and forward completed enrollment form to the selected institution
- Review books and materials required for training (see Textbook and Resource List)
- Successfully complete all required exams (see Exam Counselling Sheets)
  - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating

Apprentices may attempt the Interprovincial Exam in the final period of their apprenticeship training and, if successful, be granted a Red Seal. (see Exam Counselling Sheets)

- Review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating

When apprentices attend technical training, they are required to pay the applicable tuition fee and purchase course supplies.

Grants, scholarships and other financial assistance may be available. For more information see Financial Assistance or contact an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office.



## **Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program**

### **To qualify for a Red Seal, a person must:**

- Hold a valid trade certificate in a trade that participates in the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program:
  - an Alberta trade certificate or completion of apprenticeship certificate, OR
  - a journeyperson or completion of apprenticeship certificate issued by another Canadian province or territory
- For applications based on Alberta certificates
  - complete the Interprovincial (Red Seal) Examination Application - Alberta Certified (no application fee is required)
  - submit the application to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- For applications based on non-Alberta certificates
  - complete the Qualification Certificate – Recognized Credential Application
  - submit the application to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
  - pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application form
- Prepare for the exam (see Exam Counselling Sheets)
  - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
  - review available resource materials (see Resource Materials - Bricklayer )
- Successfully complete the required exam

## **Equivalency Program**

### **To qualify for an Equivalency document based on a recognized credential, a person must:**

- Have a valid recognized credential that does not have an Interprovincial Standards Red Seal



- Complete the Equivalency Application and deliver it in person to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office. Government issued photo identification is required.
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above

*A person who holds a valid recognized credential, as described above, does not require an Alberta Equivalency document to work in the trade in Alberta. However, some employers may require Alberta documentation as proof that the holder is allowed to work in the trade or that the holder's credential is recognized.*

### **Qualification Certificate Program**

**To qualify for a Qualification Certificate *based on a recognized credential*, a person must:**

- Hold a valid recognized credential that does not have an Interprovincial Standards Red Seal
- Complete the Qualification Certificate – Recognized Credential Application and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office.
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above
- Prepare for the exam(s) (see Exam Counselling Sheets)
  - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
  - review available resource materials (see Resource Materials - Bricklayer)
- Successfully complete the required exam(s)

**To qualify for an Alberta Qualification Certificate *based on work experience*, a person must:**

- Have at least 7,200 hours and 54 months of 'hands-on' work experience as a bricklayer

*Time spent on supervisory or foreman duties, counter work, heading the tool crib, or on a training course is NOT counted as 'hands-on' work experience.*

- Complete the Qualification Certificate - Work Experience Application (and review the Application Guide) and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- Pay the non-refundable fees as identified on the application noted above



*This application fee covers the review of the application, the assessment and confirmation of the applicant's work experience hours/months, the administration of the applicant's demonstration of competency, and one attempt at the Qualification Certificate theory examination. The Qualification Certificate practical examination requires a separate fee as identified on the application noted above.*

- Prepare for the exam(s) (see Exam Counselling Sheets)
  - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
  - review available resource materials (see Resource Materials - Bricklayer)
- Successfully complete the required exam(s)

