

It's often said in the bricklaying industry that an apprenticeship in bricklaying provides a 'powerful foundation' for further developing a career in building and construction in Australia. This was never as true as in Western Australia with our tradition of using double clay brick. The bricklayer here has the responsibility of ensuring that the building is strong enough to support the whole structure – which is critically important for all trades that follow working at the site.

The introduction of the 2cs step down slab following the Second World War, was highly suited for the Perth coastal sandy plain; it enabled builders to utilise clay bricks both externally and internally, a method tried and tested in Europe. Bricklayers soon became very important to the building process given that they became responsible for the set-out of the building.

In the 1970's, brick companies further raised consumer interest in double clay brick by running television advertising campaigns highlighting the benefits. This further stimulated brick sales and double clay brick became common place.

Bricklayers require a sound knowledge of building concepts, plan-reading capability and the ability to identify and overcome issues relating to the set-out. For example:

- If a bricklayer is 10mm out on a window reveal, the window simply will not fit.
- If a bricklayer gets the brickwork out of plum the roof may not fit on properly which can be further complicated given fact that more consumers are opting for metal roof products.
- If a bricklayer's walls are crooked the plasterer will have to make costly corrections.
- He also sets-out, applies the damp proof, and installs windows, lintels, doors, tie down straps and wall ties.

Put simply the structural integrity of the building relies on the bricklayer to do his job properly and to ensure that it complies with national codes of construction and meets consumer satisfaction.

Given that bricklaying is an excellent foundation for general building knowledge it's quite common to see qualified bricklayers move on to being a builder or other important roles within the construction industry.

Several well-known ex bricklayer builders that have stamped their presence in the West Australian housing market including [Dale Alcock](#) , [Gary Brown-Neaves](#) and [Craig Sheiles](#) just to name a few.

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