

Bricklayers Home Study Course

Lesson Plans

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Introduction

Congratulations on purchasing my home study video course: *Learn To Lay Brick, Block And Stone*, I look forward to having you become a member of this great trade. I have come up with this unique approach to teaching as a result of over 50+ years of time, trial, and error in both in the classroom as well as on the job.

After you complete this course I will assist you in finding employment if that is your end goal. If being self-employed or becoming a masonry contractor is something you wish to pursue after you have refined your skills, I can help you reach that goal regardless of where you live in the world. There is only one thing I ask is this - **PLEASE DO NOT JUMP FROM ONE VIDEO TO ANOTHER UNTIL YOU HAVE YOU HAVE MASTERED EACH LESSON IN ORDER.** I purposefully will direct you in the order of the table of contents that I want you to follow so you will develop the proper skills as you go. If you follow the plan as directed, you will cut your training time in half and you will not develop bad habits that could cause you bodily discomfort in the future. This trade can cause damage your arm, neck, back and wrists as well as slow your speed down if not properly performed. Therefore, future bricklayer, I ask you to please follow the lesson plans exactly as I have laid them out in the lesson plans.

Thank you, good luck, and let's get started! !

Charlie Cummins, Founder

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What You Will Need To Purchase To Complete The Course

Congratulations on your decision to learn to be a bricklayer, the greatest trade in the world. This is a list of all the tools, materials, and equipment you will need to complete this home study bricklaying course.

Point: From this point on the word *mud* will often be used instead of the word *mortar*.

This list and prices shown will be average retail prices in the United States, it may vary depending on where you live.

Tips

Before you go out and purchase your tools, equipment, and supplies, here are a few ideas to consider as you can really save a lot of money if you are creative. Go to a pawnshops, flea markets, discount houses, or visit garage sales.

For example, on my list I have a 5-gallon bucket with a top retail price of \$6.00. You should be able to find one or two for free. I have listed a contractor's wheelbarrow for \$70.00 to \$ 125.00. If you look around, maybe you can find one for \$25-\$50 or less. I have a square tip shovel listed for \$25.00, perhaps you or a friend already has one. I have 2 sawhorses listed that will hold a 4 foot square mud board off the floor, you can substitute this with barrels, tree stumps, old tables, a desk, or use concrete blocks instead of spending \$15.00 to \$30.00 for 2 sawhorses. Then there's mason sand, retail delivered for \$50.00. You may be able to find a construction site in your area where the contractor might give you the leftover sand for free. While you are there, also ask them if they will give you the left over brick. You'd pay anywhere from \$50.00 to \$250.00 for your brick and block.

Regarding the Brick and Block Sizes

Wherever you end up getting it, be sure any brick or block you obtain is the suitable size for the course. You will need to obtain **modular brick** measuring approximately 3 5/8" wide, 2 1/4 " high, and 7 5/8" long. The main CMU (concrete block) you need for the course will measure 6" wide x 8" high x 16" long, the basic standard 6-inch block. CMU block is mostly used for interior walls and a lot of bricklayers agree that if you can lay 6-inch block, you can lay anything. This is why I use them for this course. When you order block never say, "Give me X number of 6

inch block". Instead say, "Give me (X) number of 6 inch by 8 inch by 16 inch block" which refers to the width, height, and length *in that order*. This is true anywhere in the United States. The way I remember that is, "**Women Have Legs**".

The only thing you may not be able to find used is a chopping hoe for chopping (mixing) mud (mortar). A good old fashioned or discount hardware store should have one. However, the block company in your town may sell them as well. It's nothing but a garden hoe with two 2 or 3 inch holes in it. You may even have a garden hoe that you can cut a couple of holes in yourself and save that \$20.00 to \$30.00 by using a cutting torch.

Important Information About The Mortar You Will Be Using!

Listen carefully to what I'm about to say. Regarding the *mud* (mortar) you will be using for this entire course, whatever you do, do not ever, **never, EVER mix portland cement in it**. If you do, you have to throw it away after you use it because it will get very hard. The mud used for this course is a special mix for practice purposes and consists of sand, water, and lime. If it gets hard, all you have to do is simply crush the hard lumps by stepping on them, sweep it up, add water to it, mix it up, and use it over and over. It will last this way for years. So you will never mix portland cement with this mixture, correct? You have been warned!

Moving along, I'll now give you a retail price list of the minimum items that you'll need to get started and to get you through lesson 5. If you wish, you can purchase everything for the entire course upfront; it's up to you and depends on your budget. **The underlined items will get you through lesson 5.**

Tools

1. A trowel. I suggest a Rose, Marshalltown, or Goldblatt 11" long - \$20 to \$65
2. A concave hand jointer, 5/8 inch to 3/4 inch Rose, Marshalltown, or Goldblatt. \$3 - \$10
You will later need to obtain a raker or sled runner jointer tool (shown in video)
3. A 4-foot wood spirit level. This can be cheap or expensive, new or used. \$25 to \$150

Tools After Lesson 5

To get started you won't need much more than I have already described. However, here are a few more things that will be handy, especially after lesson 5. These tools will run you anywhere from **\$ 100-\$200**, buy them and you'll pretty much be ready for the job market.

4. **Brick Hammer.** Breaking brick with a brick hammer is something a 10-year-old boy can learn to do in 10 minutes. However, I want you to go ahead and buy a hammer holder for your brick hammer and get used to wearing it while you take the course. When you go to work I want you to be a part of the few excellent bricklayers who are smart enough to carry their brick hammer on them at all times, the ones who don't have to spend 20-30 minutes a day looking for it. In 20-30 minutes a day you can lay a lot of brick and block.

5. **Leather Hammer Belt**

6. **Tape Measure** - Get a 25-foot Stanley tape measure if you don't already have one.

Note: Never buy a brick *spacing rule*, only buy a **modular rule** (discussed in detail later).

7. **Mason Line**

8. **Corner blocks**

9. **Sled runner jointer**

10. **Tool bag or bucket** - To keep your tools in and your pretty much set for the job market.

Equipment and material

1. **A contractor's heavy duty wheelbarrow** \$70-\$ 120

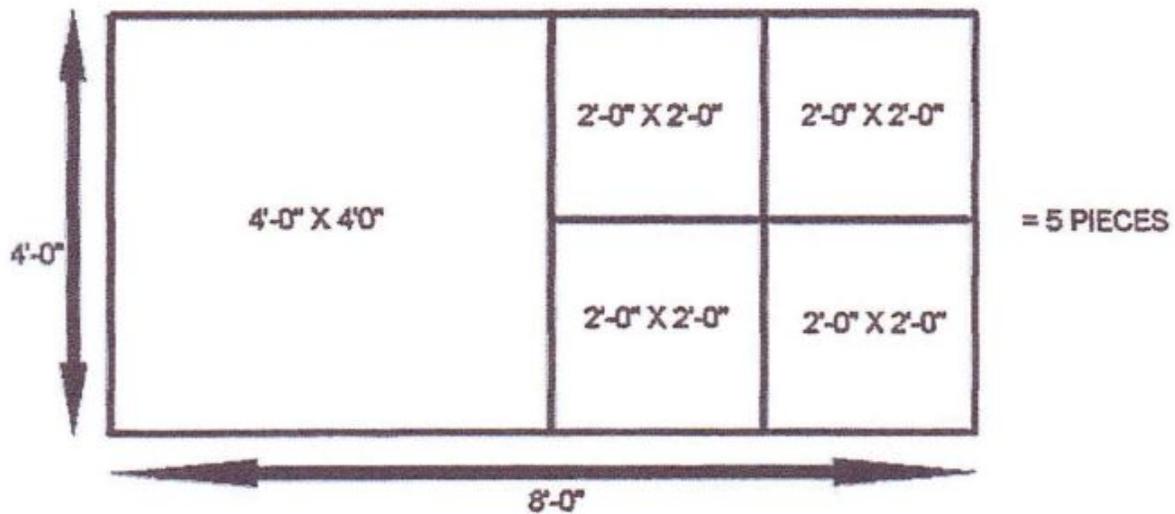
2. **A square tip shovel**, either short or long handle \$5-\$25

3. **A mud (mortar) chopping hoe** \$10-\$30

Of course, if you have enough money to buy a mortar mixer, either gas or electric, go for it. However, mortar mixers haven't been around for more than 70-100 years meanwhile bricklayers have been around for thousands of years. Mortar was and still is mixed by hand.

4. **One piece of ¾" to 1" inch thick, 4 foot by 8 foot plywood.** \$15-\$30 When you purchase it, be sure to have the lumberyard cut it (free) and tell them you want it cut exactly; 4-foot x 4-foot (or exactly in half). Keep one half, and with the other half have them to cut it into four pieces exactly 2 foot square. With these (4) extra pieces cut 2 foot square you now have four

mud boards for later use. You now have 5 pieces of cut plywood from your one sheet that looks like this:



5. **Two sawhorses** (or whatever) to hold your 4-foot square mud board off the floor 30 to 40 inches, depending on your height. For example, if you are 5' 11" you may want it about 34 off the floor. If you are shorter or taller add or subtract from 34 inches. Be creative, remember tree stumps or block will work just fine. Two sawhorses **\$15-\$30**

6. **Mason sand.** Borrow a pickup or put it in the trunk of your car on plastic. It's too costly to have a small amount of sand delivered. However, if you buy everything at once you should be able to get free delivery. You'll need no more than one *yard* of mason sand for this course. Be sure to get **mason** sand; not sod sand, garden sand, or any other name they have come up with for sand. *You must ask and demand mason sand.* Any block or brickyard will sell it. A half a year of sand will get you through lesson 5. **\$5-\$50**

7. **At least 1 bag of lime** (5 bags to finish this course). It's called *miracle lime* and each bag is around 50 lb. **\$15-\$25**

If anyone asks what kind of mortar you're making tell him or her **type K mortar**. If they say they have never heard of it, tell them it's in the book and that it means sand, lime, and water with **no portland cement**. They will really think you know something. I've been doing this since 1963 and it wasn't until June of 1998 that I found out that's called *type K*. Well you learn something new everyday. Remember, if anybody asks you what you are doing, tell him or her that you're taking my home study bricklaying course.

8. **(1 or 2) 5-gallon buckets for holding mortar.** Please find one for a dollar if you can.
\$3-\$5
9. **(175) Modular brick (30 to get you through lesson 5).** 3 5/8 inches wide, 2 ¼ inches high, and 7 5/8 inches long (**Women Have Legs**), preferably with no holes in them. Modular brick are the most popular size brick laid in the United States, if your brick have holes in them they will quickly fill with mud. If they do, leave them full and don't clean out the holes. **\$3-\$10**
10. **(2) 6 x 8 x 16 CMU block.** **\$1-\$3**
11. **(2) 2 inch x 10 inch boards** cut 12 foot long (starting with lesson 6) **\$5-\$25**

This will get you through Lesson 5.

12. **(10) Modular brick** 3 5/8 inches wide, 2 ¼ inches high, and 7 5/8 inches long
13. **(60) 6 x 8 x 16 CMU block (2 to get you through lesson 5).**
14. **(6) 6 x 8 x 8 CMU block** – Half units for building half-bond walls
15. **(6) 8 x 8 x 8 CMU block** – Half units for building half-bond walls
16. **(25) 8 x 8 x 16 CMU block** - For building corner leads

Once you have obtained all of the above and you have it all in your basement, garage, or backyard, you are ready to begin and it will take you through lesson 5. However, while you're doing all the above shopping do consider getting ALL of the items needed to complete the entire and remember to ask for delivery.

Remember, if your budget is limited I have drawn a line under the minimum tools and equipment you will need through lesson 5. Hopefully, you now have a few ideas on how to be creative and save money when buying the tools and equipment necessary for this course.

Now The Fun Begins

First I want you to relax and watch lesson 1, titled how to spread mud for block. After you have watched it one or two times, you now have an ideal of how I want you to set up your 4-foot mud board. Read lesson 1, then watch video 1, then set up your mud board.

Mixing Mortar

Hopefully by now you have your materials, tools, and equipment ready in your garage or workspace and are ready to begin. Now it's time to have some fun. Before you begin please watch **Video 2 - How To Spread For Block** and pay particular attention to the mortar in it. What it looks like, try to see its consistency. Before you can start spreading mortar, you have to make it first, right? After you've watched the video, let's mix some mud. You want it to look just like the mud in the video. You want it to be sticky enough that it won't fall off your trowel after you have patted it down on the mud board and turned the trowel upside down.

You mix it 3 to 1, meaning **3 parts sand to 1 part lime**. You can do this with a shovel, coffee can, or a 5-gallon bucket. The only thing to remember is **3 parts sand and 1 part lime**. Once you have the sand and lime in your wheelbarrow (or on the 4-foot mud board), you simply add water to it. Start by putting about ½ gallon (about 2 liters) of water in the mud, then take your chopping hoe or shovel and mix everything together. Keep adding water to the mud until you get it to where it looks like the mud in the video. If you get it too wet (soupy) then simply add a little sand and lime back into it (remember - 1 part lime 3 parts sand). Now, take your trowel and scoop a little bit up. Pat your trowel on the mud board two or three times and then turn your trowel upside down. If the mixture stays on your trowel, you are good. If the mud falls off, it may need more lime in it. Lime is what makes mud sticky, so add some to it. If you think it is too sticky, add some sand to it. You're the boss. Mix it anyway you like it. You'll find on the job that all bricklayers differ in their opinion of how the mud should be mixed. Since you're mixing your own mud, you are the boss, mix it how you like it. Once you get the mud made to the way you like it, you shouldn't have to do anything in the future days training sessions but add more water, or perhaps adjust the sand and lime a bit. If it feels good, it is good.

More on the mud. Frankly, I can't tell you *exactly* how to mix your mud because sand texture and coarseness vary from location to location. However, I will give you my rule of thumb for making perfect classroom mud:

1 bag of lime (50 lbs.) to 20-35 shovels of sand, then add water until you get it to how you like it. The easiest way to mix your mud is to put approximately one gallon of water in your

wheelbarrow, then put 5 shovels of mason sand into the wheelbarrow followed by 2 or 3 shovels of lime shoveled right out of the bag. Now stir it up with your shovel or chopping hoe. Now, add more water and put in 5 more shovels of sand and 2 or 3 shovels of lime. Stir it all up again using your shovel or chopping hoe. Repeat the above until you get your wheelbarrow almost full of mud. Test it with your trowel. ***If it feels good, it is good.***

At the end of your training sessions you may either leave the mud on the mud board or in your wheelbarrow. When you start your next session, simply add water, either on the mud board, or in the wheelbarrow and shake it up. About the worst thing that can happen would be that you left it in the wheelbarrow until it got hard, probably 2-5 days depending on your area. The mud of course will set up faster in Arizona than it will in Alaska. No problem. Simply break it up in the wheelbarrow, dump it on the floor of your garage or basement on plywood or a tarp, and simply step on the lumps until it gets soft. Once the lumps are crushed, simply put it back into the wheelbarrow, add water only, and chop it with either your shovel or chopping hoe and it will become as good as new. You should not have to add more sand or lime, just water.

I'll leave this mud thing by saying that different bricklayers think the perfect mud lies anywhere between the two ends of the graph.



Now you have your work area set up. You've got some mortar (mud) made up. You are ready to begin. Go to lesson one, follow it, and remember not to jump from lesson to lesson.

When you finish each day of training, simply leave your mud on the mud board or in the wheelbarrow, simply add water to it, mix or chop it up, and you're ready to go again.

Let's move on.

- A. You now have everything in your work area.
- B. You have mixed your mud.
- C. You have watched the video 2.

Stop and read again

Watch video 2 again.

Spreading Mud For Block. You *simply cannot watch and read this lesson too much*. If you start picking up my accent though, please turn the volume down.

Good luck! I know you're going to do well!

P. S. Remember, don't jump from lesson to lesson. Do exactly as I say.

Video 1 - *How To Handle A Trowel*

Watch The Video & Practice

Video 2 - *How To Spread Mud For Block*

Always keep lesson playing while you practice and please remember- do not jump around from lesson plan to lesson plan and video lesson to video lesson. If you will only follow my instructions to the letter, I will turn you into a brick and block-laying machine. Let's get started

I want you to sit down (don't stand up) with your trowel in your hand and watch lesson 1 from start to finish. While sitting down and watching lesson 1, I want you to practice swinging your trowel and rolling it upside down using your thumb and forefinger. Your forefinger is the finger next to your thumb. Use the rest of your fingers to simply assist the rolling maneuver, and assist you in not dropping the trowel on the floor. If you are right handed, you will roll the trowel upside down by turning the trowel counterclockwise. If you are left handed, you will roll the trowel upside down going clockwise. Watch the lesson and practice this until you can roll the trowel upside down as shown on the video.

You're doing great! Now stand up next to your empty or full 4-foot mud board. Be sure to always keep the video lesson playing while you are practicing. While practicing dry runs, pay close attention and concentrate to:

- A. Rolling your trowel upside down while keeping your elbow as straight and comfortable as possible.
- B. Swing the trowel as on video.
- C. Keeping the trowel blade approximately 10 degrees tilted toward the center of the mud board. The reason you must tilt the trowel blade and handle in 10 degrees is so that you will not smear mud on the brick and block face of the brick/block you will soon be laying. **Do this for 30 minutes to one hour.** Visualize the mud going down perfect, as shown on the video.

What I am about to tell you next is something that you must remember as long as you are in this trade. It's very simple, yet often forgotten by many in the trade: ***Never put mud on a mud board without first wetting the board down with water.*** If you don't wet it first, you will

be fighting your mud all day. Please remember to always wet your mud board down before placing mud on it forever.

Let us continue. You are now ready to wet your 4-foot mud board down with water. Please use a brush or broom to spread the water over the entire 4-foot mud board. The brush or broom will help you to get the right amount of water on the entire board without spilling water all over the floor, that you are about to be walking on. I don't want you or anyone else to slip and fall on a slippery surface. Don't spill the water all over the surface you or someone else will be walking on. By learning and always doing this simple rule, you could very easily save someone's life and that life you save could be your own.

You're doing great! Now place a heaping pile of mud onto your wet mud board as shown on the video. Now stand in the position as shown on video, the same way you were standing while practicing dry runs.

You are ready to begin spreading that mud! Remember to take your trowel and **slide it in sideways** as shown on the video. Do not stick the tip of your trowel into the mud. Remember stick it in sideways. Now, pull the trowel out of the mud, with mud on the trowel. Lift it 3" or 4" (not 10" or 12") above the mud board and gently, but firmly, drop the trowel with the tip of the trowel hitting the mud board a split second before the back end of the trowel hits it so that it packs the mud down on the blade of your trowel firmly. By doing that, the mud will not fall off the trowel when you roll the trowel upside down and before you spread the mud as shown on the video.

Do this 50-60 times before you attempt to roll the trowel upside down and spread mud. You have simply got to learn to pack the mud on the trowel properly before you can even think of spread mud correctly. Everything in this program must be learned step-by-step, in the proper order, you cannot jump around. If you do, you will get disgusted and give up. Do not give up – never, never, never give up!

You're doing great! Now you can practice spreading mud around the mud board while walking backwards as shown on the video. Do it exactly the same way as you did when you were doing the dry runs. Remember - ***stick the trowel in the mud sideways!*** And drop the

trowel with the mud on it onto the mud board. Learn from the beginning how to protect your body from bad habits that will wear your body out fast.

Tips!

Do not try to see how far of a spread of mud you can make. You must put it down thick enough that it will support the weight of a block.

Be sure you tilt the blade of the trowel so that you're not smearing mud on the course below that you will soon be laying.

Practice! Practice! Practice!

If becoming a master mason is your goal, when you get to where you can go around the entire outside surface of your 4-foot mud board in 45-60 seconds you are ready to move on to Lesson 2. If all you want is to be a DIY'er and not a master mason, 3 to 4 minutes will suffice.

Remember - I stress quality. To obtain quality, you must learn to be neat. Don't worry about speed, which will come to you naturally. I have never heard of a brick or block layer getting fired for doing top quality work.

Never forget - Spreading mud is 80% of the trade. You can never be too good at spreading mud.

Always try to be better and never, never, never give up.

Video 3 - How To Spread Mud For Brick

1. Watch the video lessons a few times while relaxing with a glass of tea or coffee. Then come back here and read and study this section before you actually physically attempt to do the lesson. Do this every time you finish a video lesson and before you begin the next one.
2. Wet your mud board down, place a heaping pile of mud on the mud board as shown on video.
3. I now want you to warm up for about 10-20 minutes by spreading mud for block. You're pretty good at that by now. I want to build your confidence each time you start your training session by doing something that you are already nearly an expert at. Therefore, spread that mud for block for now. Thank you, I'm sure it's looking great.
4. Now you're ready to learn how to *roll that mud* (spreading mortar for brick). You start off by drawing your trowel blade on the mud board (as shown in the video) and practice swinging your trowel flatly and stopping it exactly on your drawing. Do it just like its shown on the video.

Do this 275-300 times. Listen for that unique sound you heard on the video.

5. You're doing great! Now hold your trowel looking at the skinny angle and the ski slope pile of mud (see video). Drag off a trowel full of mud and roll it toward you until it looks like a bread loaf (we trained a baker once and he said it looked just like a bread loaf before he baked it. That's when I gave it the name "bread loaf"). Continue rolling off the bread loafs while walking backwards. When you walk all the way around the mud board, going backwards, and the mud board is full of bread loafs (as shown on video), stop. Now, start scooping the loaves up and throwing them back into the mud pile, while walking forward. After you have put all the bread loafs back into the mud pile, simply start over again.

Remember, skinny part of trowel (proper angle), the ski slope (proper angle the mud should look while you are rolling that mud), walk backwards until you've filled the mud board again with the bread loafs, then walk forward scooping them up and throwing them back into the mud pile.

If you start having trouble picking up the bread roll, simply go back, draw your trowel blade on the mud board again and practice sliding and stopping your trowel exactly on the drawing you just drew. Do it just like the video.

Do this for one or two hours.

You simply have to be able to roll the mud off the pile and scoop it up properly before you can ever learn to spread the mud for brick so... ***Roll That Mud!*** Don't rush, take your time.

What you are learning now is how to roll mud for brick, and how to roll for the first course of block spread on a footer or a flat surface where the first course of block is laid.

6. You're doing great! Now that you're rolling out the mud from the pile (ski slope), scooping it up on your trowel correctly (bread loaf), you are now ready to learn the ***bricklayer's swing***, which completes the art of rolling that mud.

What I want you to do now is make those dry runs again. Do it as shown on the video.

Walk backwards, visualize it. Do these dry runs for 10 or 15 minutes.

7. **Next, start rolling that mud.** Go all the way around the board, then furrow the mud. Approximately every ten trips around the mud board, flatten the mud instead of furrow it. Always be walking backwards. Practice this until it looks almost as good as on the video and you are able to go all the way around the board in **60 seconds or less**. For DIY'ers, 3 minutes will suffice.

8. **You are now ready to watch video 4** – A combination of video 2 and 3.

Video 4 - *Spreading Mud For Brick AND Block*

- 1 You're doing great. What I want you to do now is practice everything you have learned.
Make it fun! Why? Because it IS fun! The better you get the more fun it becomes.
- 2 I want you to practice spreading mud for brick and block until you can:
 1. Spread mud for BLOCK all the way around the mud board. THEN...
 2. Roll that mud for BRICK all the way around the mud board. THEN...
 3. Furrow ("fur") the mud for brick all the way around the mud board.

Do this drill in 2 minutes or less. For DIY'ers, within 5 minutes. It should look almost as good or better than the video.

Remember Quality, Quality, Quality - Speed will come naturally, don't rush it.

Now's the time for a story! This story will hopefully help you to understand the importance of spreading mud. It will also help you to understand why this is and always will be a great trade, and you will always be in demand once you learn it.

For the last 50-80 years, inventors have been trying (unsuccessfully) to invent a bricklaying machine to replace us. They have had some meager success with everything but the spreading of mud. This is why I believe they never will be able to develop a bricklaying machine that would be economical enough to replace you or me. I'm glad that spreading mud is 80% of mastering this trade! Do not get impatient when it comes to learning to spread mud. Also, remember they have been laying brick the same way for thousands of years and the only thing that has really changed (improved) is the equipment to get the material in the bricklayer's hand. Once you learn the art of laying brick and block you will have a trade for the rest of your life and the sky is the limit on your earning potential. Anyone who chooses computers, auto repair, and etc., for a career will always have to worry about a machine or robot taking their job away, not to mention they will need to keep up the with new technology for rest of their life to stay up.

To sum this up, I'd like to say that the closest they have ever come up with towards building a bricklaying machine was already created thousands of years ago, and you've been watching it on your video lesson - it's called a human being! Soon you will be a bricklaying machine also

You have my permission to quote me on that if you so choose.

Remember; never give up, never, never, never give up.

ATTENTION: SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR REMAINDER OF THIS COURSE

Henceforth and until you finish the rest of this course, at the start of each training session I would like you to practice (warm up) with videos 1 through 4 for at least 30 minutes before continuing with your current lesson plan. Practice spreading mud. Remember, you can never be too good at spreading mud!

You're doing great - let's move on to video 5.

Videos 5 Through 9 - *Laying Brick On Mud Boards, And Buttering Head Joints*

Head joints are the mud joints that run up and down, as in vertically. *Bed joints* are the mud joints that run flat, or run horizontally.

1. The first thing I want you to do is to sit down, relax, and watch video 5 from the start to finish.
2. You're doing great! Now take a brick and practice putting head joints on the brick. **Do this for 30 minutes** or until they look like the one's on the video.
3. Do they look good? If so, get six brick and lay them on the mud board, just like in the video. Head joints only, no bed joints yet. Be sure and place 3 brick on each side of the mud pile as shown on the video. **Do this drill 10-15 times**. Be sure that when you lay the last brick, you are 3/8" (or 10 mm) behind the edge of the board, as shown on the video. Please remember to concentrate on perfection. Good, full, head joints. Line them up to the outer edge of the mud board using the tip of your trowel. Remember perfection, speed will come to you later naturally,
4. Does it look good? Now roll the mud on the edge of your mud board and then furrow it. Next, lay six brick on top of the mud just like you did before, but now you'll lay the brick with a bed joint under them. Do it as shown on the video. Concentrate on using your eye to get them straight. You are now developing what bricklayers call *a good eye*. You can only develop a good eye by doing it. **Do this drill 10 or 15 times**. Do it as shown on the video.
5. I'm really starting to get proud of you, you've made it this far and I know you are doing great. When you get to the point where you can spread the mud, fur the mud, flatten the mud on the bed joint, and lay 6 bricks to near perfection using only your eye in **60 seconds or less** (5 minutes for DIY'ers), you are ready for the next lesson and lesson plan.

You have also been shown on this lesson how to butter full head joints on brick that have strange names, like soldier, rowlock, sailor, header, etc. Whatever they call it, you simply have to butter them the same way, the way I have shown you. The way they are laid on the wall is what determines the brick's a strange name. The method I teach for buttering full head joints on brick never changes. Do it just like it's shown in the video and you will never have to worry about not placing full head joints.

Time to move on to the next lesson.

Videos 10 & 11 – *Building corner Brick Leads On Mud Board Without A Level*

PLUS

2 Types Of Jointing

Using your eye without a level, and two types of jointing

- 1 Once again, after you've read the lesson plan, sit back in a quiet room and watch lesson 5 a few times. As you watch this lesson, visualize yourself doing what is shown on the video lesson.
- 2 Let's get going. Be sure and wet your mud board down with water before you place mud on your mud board. Hopefully, by now you know how important a wet mud board is, especially if you have forgotten it once or twice since starting this course.
- 3 Build your corner lead on the mud board one course at a time, using your eye each course as shown on the video. For each course, stand over the corner and eyeball it from above making sure it is straight up and down. Then look from the corner to the tail of the lead on both side making sure it is straight with the mud board as shown on the video.
- 4 **Do this corner lead 15 or 20 times.** You should be starting to have a very good eye.
- 5 Remember to joint (tool) your brick as shown on video.

Since you have made it this far in the course, I now know that you're going to make it the rest of the way, it's a given. Because of that, I'm going to share with you the secret of success, the secret of happiness, at least from my viewpoint. It can be described and remembered easily and only contains the following eleven words. They are:

I'm a winner. Do it now. and Never, never, never give up.

An old bricklayer told me those words 30 years ago and they have really helped me over the years. Write these words down and stick them over your mirror in the bathroom. Put them on the dash of your car. Put them where you can see them daily.

This is what makes them work. I'm a winner. Let's say you have a drug or alcohol problem, or maybe you're just plain ol' mean and hateful to everyone around you. Mean towards your mother, father, sister, brother, teacher, preacher, or maybe even the cat and dog. Every morning when you wake up look in the mirror and say to yourself, *I'm a winner. I'm a winner. I'm a winner.* Then go ahead and shoot up, snort up, or have that drink (bad habits are hard to break). For the rest of the day keep telling yourself those 3 easy-to-remember words, *I'm a winner.*

Here is where the magic comes in. For most people, after 25 or 30 days of telling themselves over and over again that they are a winner will cause their brains to start believing it. Once their brain believes it, the person will start believing they are a winner. This is magic my friend, because when your subconscious brain starts making you think you're a winner, you, and only you, will stop these bad habits. Everybody knows a winner doesn't shoot up, snort up, drink up, and is mean to everybody around him or her. Further, when you change, everyone around you will change. If they don't, get away from them immediately. Sound easy? It is. Try it.

The next 3 words are, *do it now!* They mean just what they say. Do the above now. Dirty dishes? Wash them. *Do it now.* Want to say something nice to someone? *Do it now!* Alarm clock goes off in the morning; you know you should get up. *Do it now!* Do you understand? *Do it now.* Do not delay, and do not procrastinate. *Do it now!*

Last but not least, five of your eleven words are *never, never never, give up*. This means never stop practicing the first six words, which are, *I'm a winner, do it now.* Sound easy? It is. It works. *Do it now.*

Lastly, if you have people around you telling you that you are *crazy* to be a bricklayer, remember this: *They laughed when I put my trowel in my hand, but when they saw the brick building I had built with my hands, they stopped laughing.*

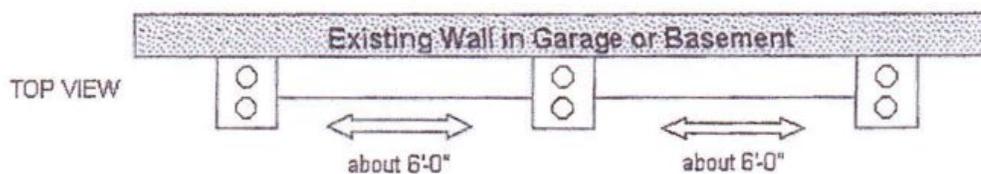
Keep up the good work. You've made it this far, congratulations. I know you are going to make it. So, let's go the next lesson, it's time to build your lab (work area). *Do it now!*

Building Your Lab (Work Area)

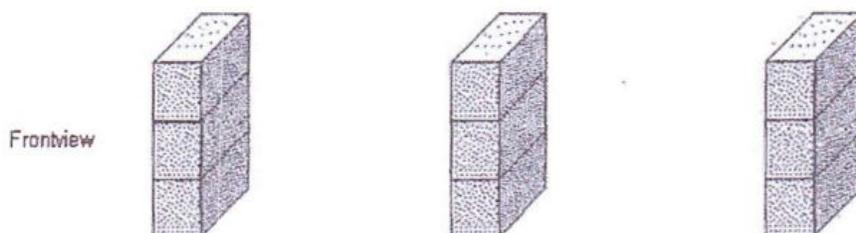
You have finished video 11, now its time to set up the rest of your lab. With everything you have learned so far, building the rest of your lab (work area) and the rest of the course is really going to be fun.

Go into your work area. You are going to be building a wall that is 12'-0" long.

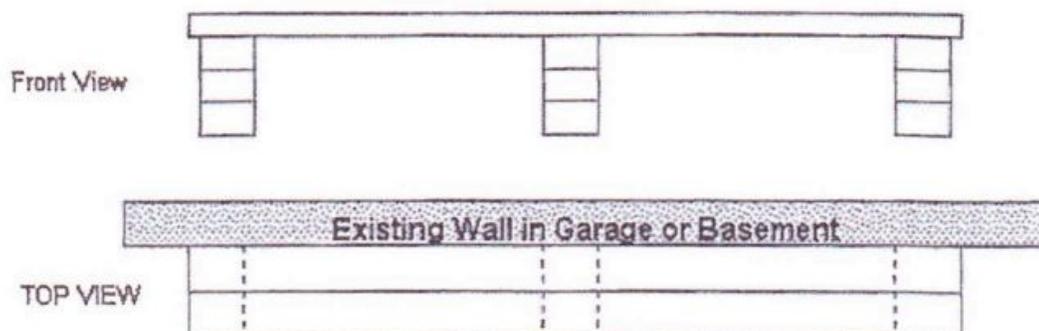
- A) You are going to be building a *hop board* to place your brick and mud boards on. You may use anything to get your material, stock, and mud boards 2 to 3 feet off the floor, depending on your height. I am 5' 11" tall and I like my material (hop board) to be 24" - 28" high.
- B) I want you to use your concrete blocks to raise your material off the floor for easy pickup and delivery. This is the way I would do it:



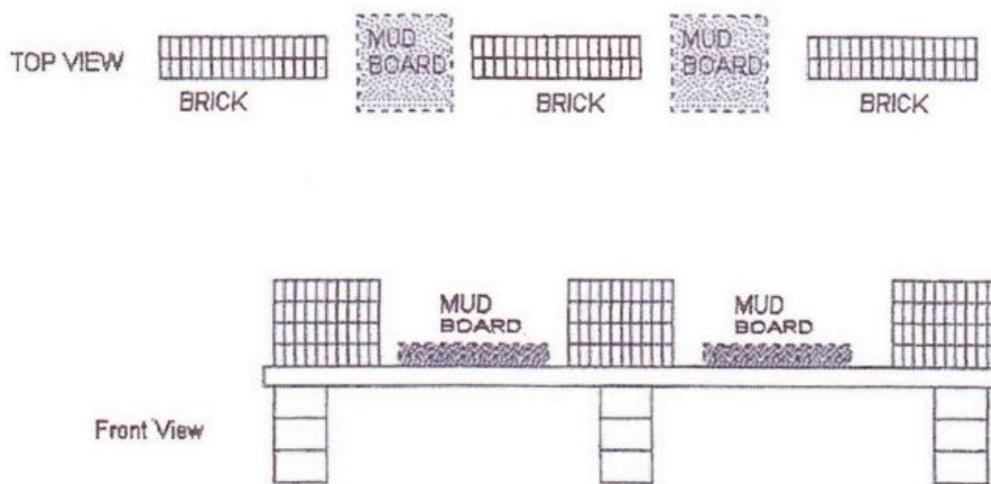
I then stack three block at each of the locations indicated above.



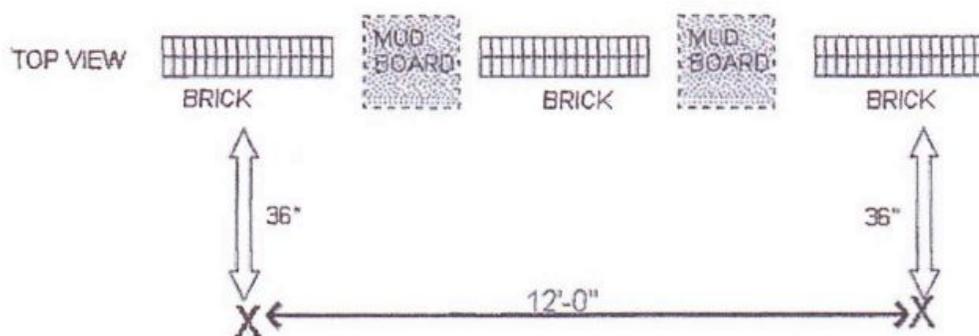
- C) You need two of your boards to be 12 foot long to place on top of the block. You can use 2" x 4"s, 2" x 6"s, or anything you may have laying around. I prefer two 2 x 10's cut to 12 feet long. Place them on top of your block.



Next put your mud boards and brick on your hop board as follows:



- D) Now I want you to evenly spread 130-140 modular brick in the areas indicated above. Remember to use two of the 2-foot mud boards you had cut from your original plywood.



- E) Now you are really getting close to having a ball. I want you now to measure 36" out from the forward face of your hop board (which is holding the 130-140 brick and mud boards). Take a pencil and mark an x on the floor. Do the same on other end. Make sure you have 12'-0" spacing between the two X's.

Draw a straight line being in the center of the x's you marked. The best way to do this is with a chalk line. However, you can use a straight board, or use a string pulled tight over your X's and trace it in with a pencil, or mark the floor every 4 feet with your 4-foot level then pencil it in. You do it anyway you can. Remember, there's always more than one way to do anything.

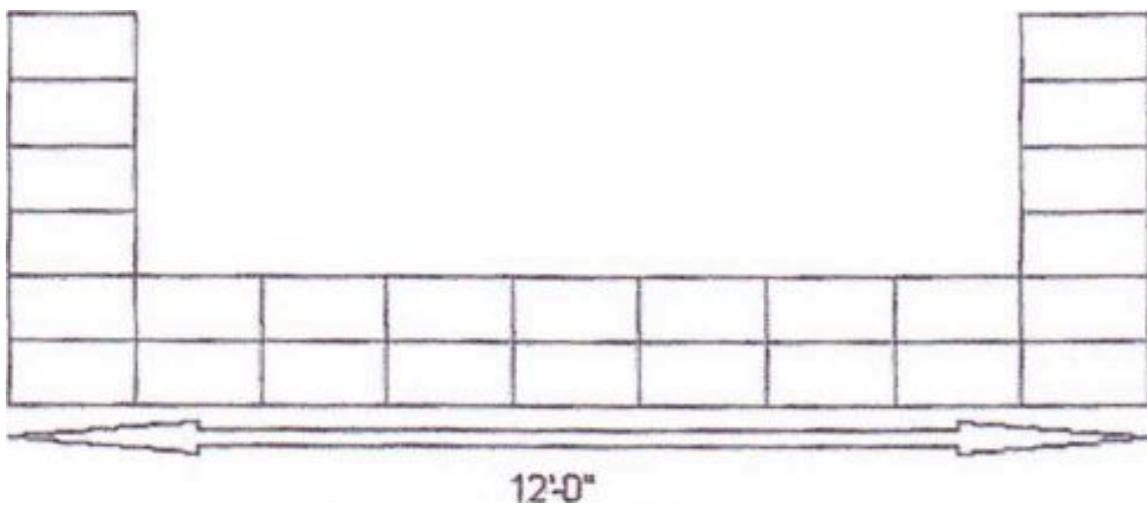
Watch Video 12 Now – How To Make A Head Joint For Block

Although we are jumping ahead here a bit, you will need to know how to make a head joint for block in order to build your lab so please watch video 12 before proceeding further.

Did you watch video 12? Good! I have designed your work area to be comfortable for you. The things you are going to be doing for the next 100 - 300 hours I want you to be as comfortable as possible so you can learn as fast as possible. I am trying to keep you from bending so much. On the job, you will have to bend over to the floor occasionally and by learning this course that would be too often. Therefore, please do what I say. Thank you.

You are about ready to put mud on your mud boards. You will be laying 26 blocks. You are going to build your work area, which will be 12'-0" long. Your corner blocks are going to be stacked six courses high at both ends, and two courses of block in between the two corners. Sounds fun, doesn't it? It will be. For your convenience and safety, I want you to stand and build this wall (work area) with the wall being between you and your material, hop board, brick, mud board, and stock. Remember, the two mud boards and 130-140 brick you just set up? The reason I had you build and stock your hop board first is because I do not know how big of a work area you have, I have to think it is small. I do not want you to build this wall and then have to step over it to stock your hop board with brick. Make sense? You could fall and if you did you might be mad at me. I do not want that.

Here is the front view of what you will build.



Nine blocks long.

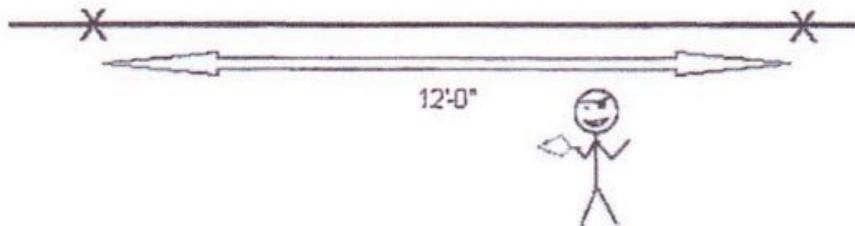
Six courses high on both ends.

Two courses high in the middle (Option: You may also lay the second course on it's side).

When you get this built, I want you to fill all the holes in the second course of your work area with either sand or newspaper. **Another alternative way to do this is to lay the second row of blocks on their sides instead - up to you.**

How To Build It

1. You have a marked straight line with an X which marks the corner of your 12'-0" long wall. The line is 36" away from your hop board. You will build the wall between you and your hop board.



2. You are now going to lay your six-block high corner. You will spread your mud and start stacking the block six courses high.

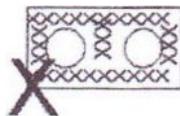


Lay the first block as indicated above. Now take your 4-foot wood level and level the block first. Now *plumb* (vertically align) the block at the two points shown by arrows below:



Make sure the block touches the line at both plumb points and the corner is on the X as shown on detail.

Now spread your mud on the floor for the block (remember lesson one spreading for block?). Be sure to spread the mud to the side areas of the block as shown on the small x's below.



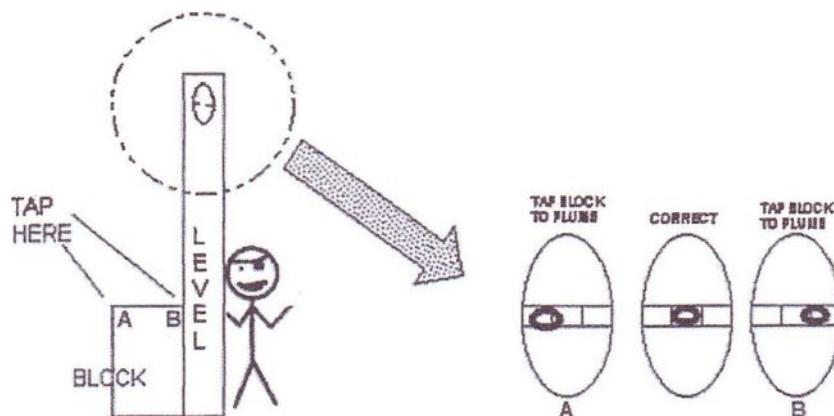
Now you are ready to gently lay the second block on top of the first block. Take your 4-foot level and level the block first. ***You always level before you plumb!*** Never forget this. **Level before you plumb.**

After you have leveled the second block, you will plumb it with your 4-foot level in three places. You only had to plumb the block in two places on the first course, which will always be true. However, once above the first course you will have three plumb points as indicated in the below detail for this course or lead you are now building. **You always plumb the end of the block (known as the jamb) in the center of the block**, as indicated with the arrow, with your 4-foot level.



When you level and plumb, always make sure the wooden level fits snugly against the material you are plumbing and the bubble is between the two center lines.

You are about to learn which side of the block to hit (always hit the center of the block so you do not knock it out of level) to get the block plumb (vertical). Understand? Think about it, if you hit the end you will knock it out of level you will have to play with this until it becomes natural for you. You will learn level work later. Right now all you are doing is building your work area. However, here is an example of where to tap the block to get the bubble in the center of the lines (remember to tap the center of the block).

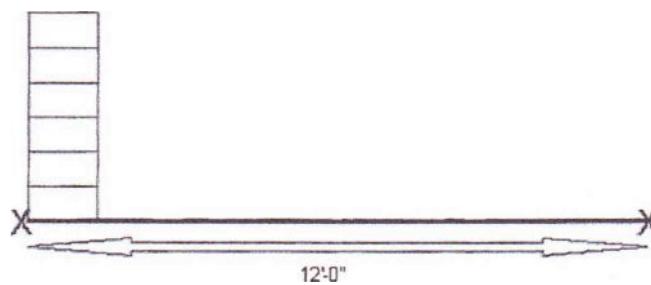


In other words, tap the side of the block in the direction it needs to go to get in between the lines of the level and make it plumb. The same rule applies for leveling.

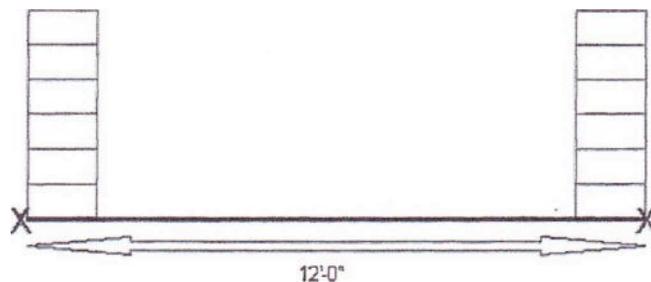
Here is the way I figured it out when I was 18 years old after many frustrating attempts, please do not laugh. Simply imagine that you are the bubble. Therefore, if you are the bubble,

you always walk in the direction that is necessary to get in between the lines and tap behind you. Make sense? Or simply tap the side of the block that the bubble shows is off. If you figure an easier way, please let me know and I will use your method.

Repeat the above using the three plumb points until you get six courses high. Do not worry about your height. This six course deal is to hold your line up when you start laying brick. Now your wall looks like this.



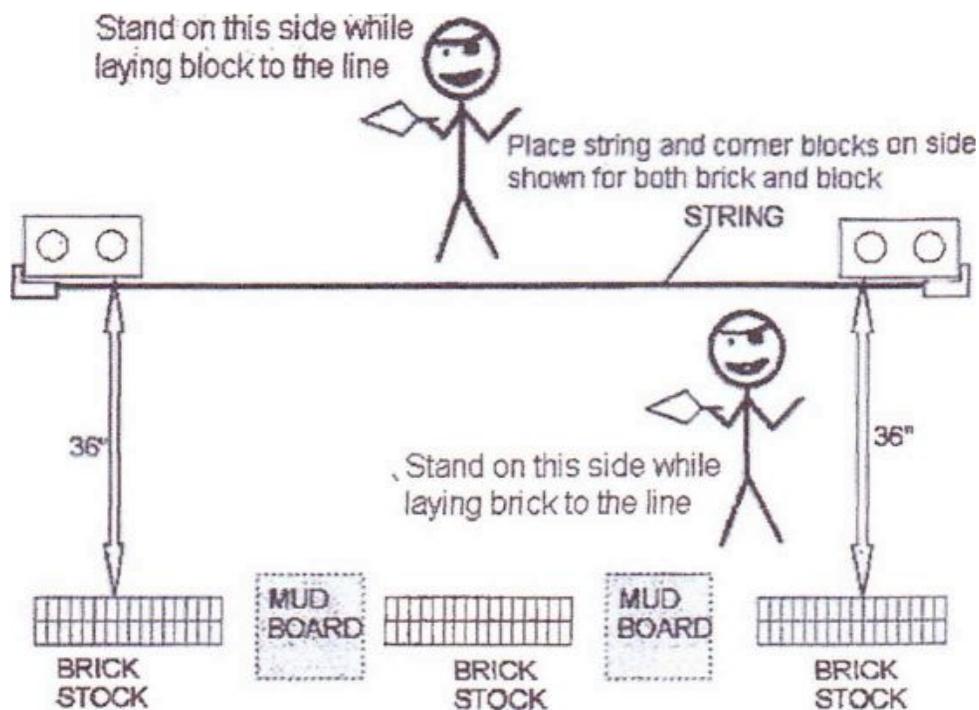
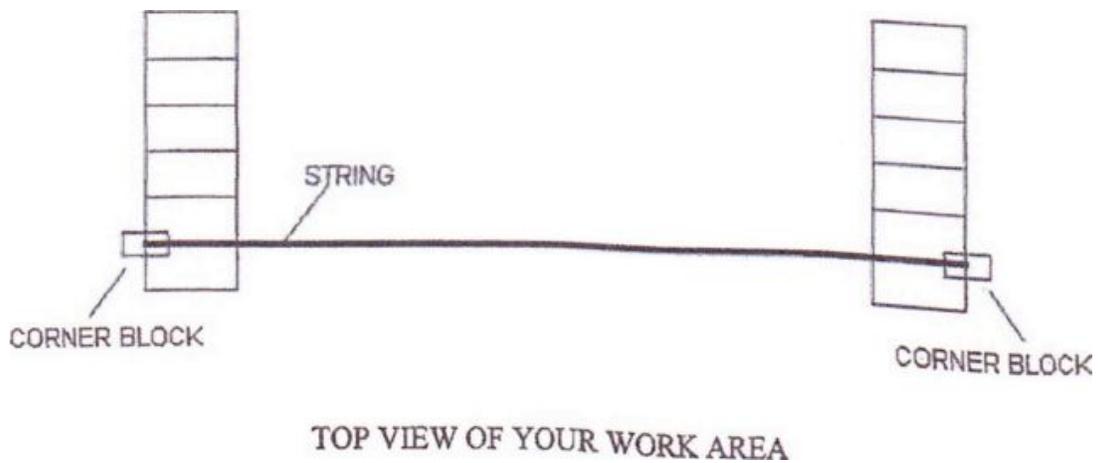
Move your mud and six blocks down to the other end's X mark and repeat all of the above. When you have completed the other end, your project will look like this.



Now you are ready to lay seven blocks in between your two corners. Remember to put 3/8" inch joint between each block you lay. Head joint only.

The corner blocks were built to hold mason line in position and to give you proper coursing height in order to lay the brick to the line. On the short wall you are going to be working on, you will need about 15 or 20 pounds of pull on the line to keep it from sagging while you build your wall. On longer walls you need more pressure. For example: on a 50 foot wall you need about 80-100 pounds of pull. The longer the wall, the more pull needed. Mason line is rated for 180 plus pounds of pull.

What You Have Now Looks Like This.



After you have laid your block using the above top view of your work area, you will simply move to the inside for laying brick as shown above.

You are doing great. Now with the line up as on the top view, you are now ready to roll that mud on the floor (spread as you would to lay *brick*). Now you simply lay seven blocks in between your two corner leads. Be sure you have approximately $\frac{3}{8}$ " joints between each block. When you lay the last block on the first course, all your joints should be the same size. If

the joints are big on the last block, then you simply adjust the other blocks by making the joints bigger. If the last block you lay will not fit, then you must tighten up the joints on the other six blocks you laid.

Common Sense, Okay?

Your goal is to always have the joints looking the same on each course. In other words, never have real big joints on one side of the wall and tight joints on the other side of the course. Again, common sense!

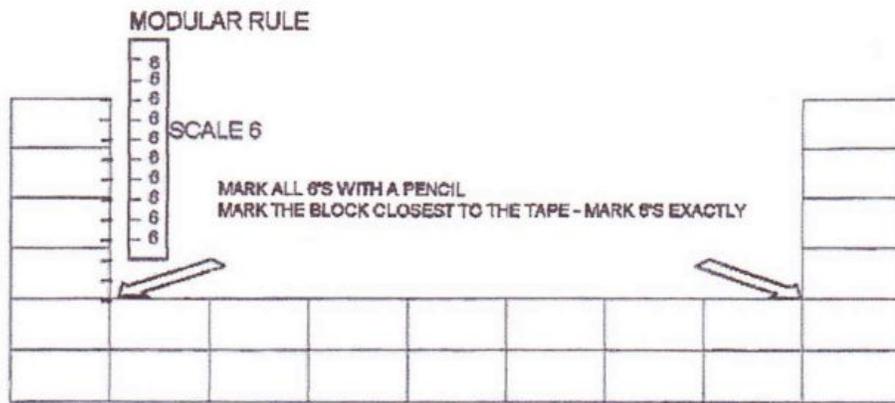
After you have laid the first course, simply move the mason line up for the second course. You need to spread mud on top of the first course you laid by using the technique of spreading for *block*. Repeat the above.

Congratulations! You have now built your practice work area or lab. You will be here for the next 150-300 hours of training, or until you can lay 125 to 128 brick of near perfect quality and jointed within one hour or less (4 hours for DIY'ers). My fastest student laid 128 bricks (un-jointed) in 18 minutes. He was that rare "natural."

Watch Video 13 - Modular Spacing

You should probably learn to make a story pole right about now. You are about to start laying bricks in your newly created lab; it's a good time to learn about spacing. Watch video 13 before proceeding.

Did you watch video 13? Good!, Now take a modular rule and mark your coursing for 11 courses at each corner as shown on the below detail. Do this on both corners. Or, if you feel really ambitious, go ahead and make your own story pole. Use **scale six**. Mark the side of your practice wall that is closest to your hop board material. This is also the side that your line and corner blocks are on. Make sure that on each course your line covers exactly the **scale six** mark you put on your corners or lead. You will now be laying the *brick over the line*, which means you will physically lift the brick over the line. The line is between the brick wall and you. Understand? When you laid your two courses of *block*, you *laid to the line* (did not have to lift the block over the line).



Congratulations, your lab is complete. I now want you to watch videos 13 through 16 and continue on with this course. Thank you, you are doing great!

Remember, in the next section you stick to videos 13 through 16 until you can lay 126-128 brick (either half bond or stack bond) jointed, with top quality workpersonship (near perfect) in one hour or less. Good luck, have fun, and congratulations again. You are doing great!

Videos 14-16 - *Laying Brick To The Line Using Half Bond, Stack Bond, And Tooling Your Joints*

Once again, sit back, in a quiet room, and watch and listen to lesson 6 from start to finish. As you watch the lesson, visualize yourself doing everything on the lesson. Perfect.

Doesn't it make you feel good to look at the work area you built by yourself and know that you've accomplished all this in a short period of time? You are now ready to start laying brick to the line in the work area that you built all by yourself. Go for it!

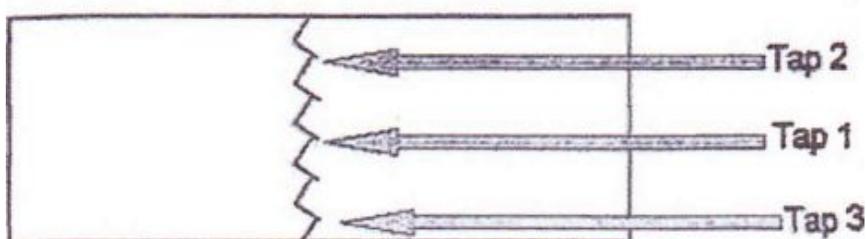
Now, what I'm about to ask is one of the most important questions that I could possibly ask and everything depends on your answer. The question is, do you want to be a good bricklayer, or a *great* bricklayer? I want you to be a *great* bricklayer, and here's how you do it. All you have to do is apply everything you've learned so far, spread that mud, use your eye, and **remember what a 3/8" joint looks and feels like.**

The Secret Is To Go Slow, And Go For Quality, Quality, Quality

When you are building your stack bond wall, make sure your first course is spaced (laid out) perfectly. As you build your wall one course at a time, make sure every brick you lay on top of the brick below it is as perfectly straight up and down as possible. Do this for nine courses, take your time. Do not try to go too fast, remember - full head and bed joints. Speed will come to you, that's the secret. Work slowly and do quality work.

I want you to build your wall **four times, nine courses high, stack bond**, and try to be perfect. Then I want you to build one wall half-bond (also sometimes called *running bond*) as shown on the video.

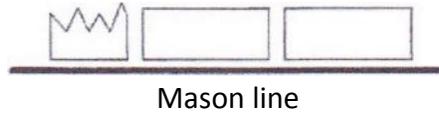
Before you build your half bond wall, take your brick hammer, 6 modular bricks, and go outside and get far away from your mud (I don't want brick chips to get in your mud). Now that you are away a safe distance away from the mud, I want you to take the brick hammer and break the 6 bricks in half so that you have 12 halves. Break them as follows:



Repeat 1, 2, and 3 until the brick breaks.

When you lay your wall half bond, on every other course you must start with a half.

Always lay the broken part of the brick to the backside of the brick wall.



You will notice that your speed will automatically increase when you are laying brick half bond. The reason for that being that with half bond you can be a little off on your bond and it will look good. Ninety eight percent of all brick and block walls are half bond. The reason I insist on you building four walls of stack bond and one wall of half bond is simple - its because stack bond teaches you quality and I want you to be a quality brick and block layer. Thank you.

Moving right along. Every time you lay a brick, I want you to say out loud (or to yourself):

1. ***The top of the brick, to the top of the line***
2. ***The thickness of the line, away from the line***

What this means is that before you let go of the brick you're laying and before you go to reach for another one, the top of the brick you are laying must be...

Laid To The Top Of The Line

NOT To The Middle Of The Line

NOT To The Bottom Of The Line

The Top Of The Brick Must Be Laid Exactly To The Top Of The Line.

The Thickness Of The Line Away From The Line - *Never Touch The Line*

You simply must do this with both ends of the brick before you reach for another brick to lay. Go for perfection. And whatever you do...

***Never touch the line with your thumb or the brick never touch the line.

***Never. Never, never, never, touch the line with your thumb or brick. Never.

You must immediately, right now, embed in your mind that the line is not yours, it belongs to everyone who will someday soon be working with you. If you touch or move the line in any manner, the other brick and block layers will not be able to trust it as being accurate. On

most job sites, touching or thumbing the line will get you fired faster than anything else. Now that you know it, never touch the line, with your thumb or the brick you're laying. Practice this until you master it as shown on the video.

You're doing great. Do this until you can lay **100 plus brick, jointed in one hour or less.**

You're great! Let's move on. I want you to build these walls over and over again until you can do the **nine courses, half bond, jointed in one hour or less.**

Remember, quality, quality, and quality.

Also, don't forget, that before every work session, or if you only have 30 minutes or an hour to practice, always practice spreading that mud, it's 80% of the skill.

Also remember, tearing the wall down and cleaning each brick is as important as knowing how to flip the brick in your hand. It also teaches you the best angle that your trowel always needs to be in when the blade touches a brick. That angle, by the way, is the same angle you hold a razor to your skin when you shave. The cleaner you clean your brick, and stack them to be laid again, the greater the bricklayer, foreman, or contractor you will become.

When you are laying brick on any job you will always be flipping them in your hand, looking for chips, and putting the face side out. Trust me!

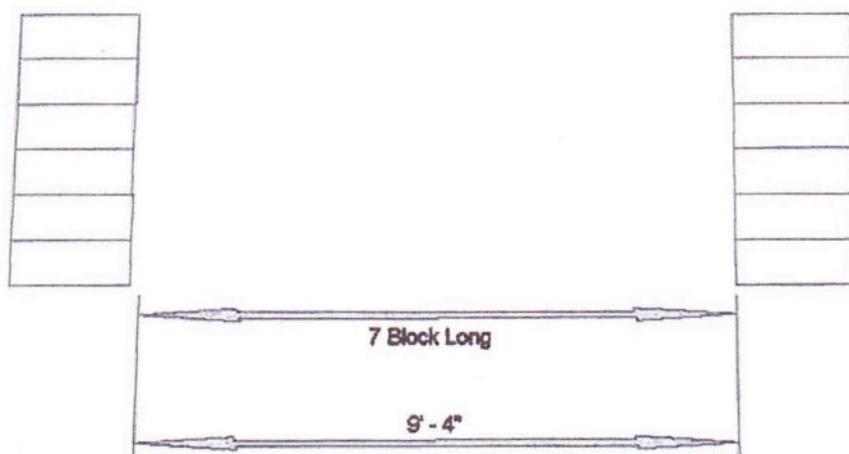
You're doing great! Let's move on.

Watch Video 12 Again - Block Course Head Joints

Videos 17 Through 20 - Laying Block To The Line

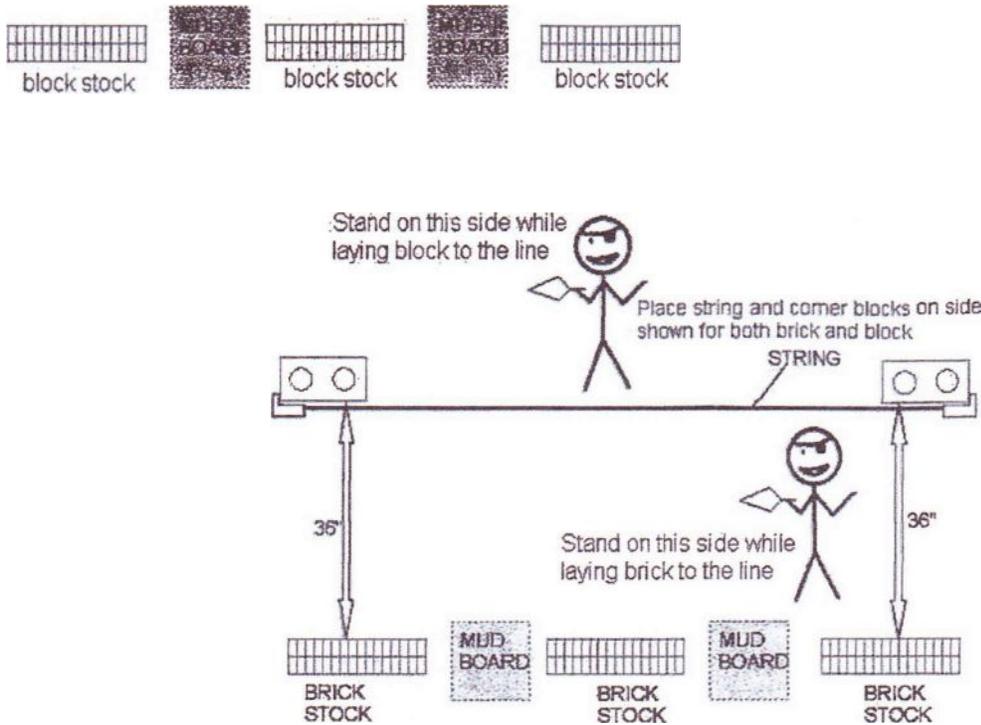
1. Once again, sit down, relax, and watch video 12 again. Remember, you watched it earlier before you built your lab area.
2. Please remember what I am about to tell you, it is very important. Another secret to laying block with both speed and quality, quality, quality is your ability to place head-joints on the block. It's that simple. I am sure you will later agree with me that the two ways I stress on the video are not only the best for speed and accuracy, they will also help you protect you from wearing out your joints, elbows, back, hands and body. I will show you other method to place block head joints, however.
3. Practice the two methods of placing head-joints on block as shown on the video.
4. Now move to your work area and take out the two courses of block. Leave the 6 course leads on both ends.

Your work area now looks like this:



Depending on the size of your work area, you now have a choice to make. If you have enough room, simply stack your block on the other side of the wall. If you don't have enough room, you must move your brick and hop boards, and place the block where your brick and hop board was.

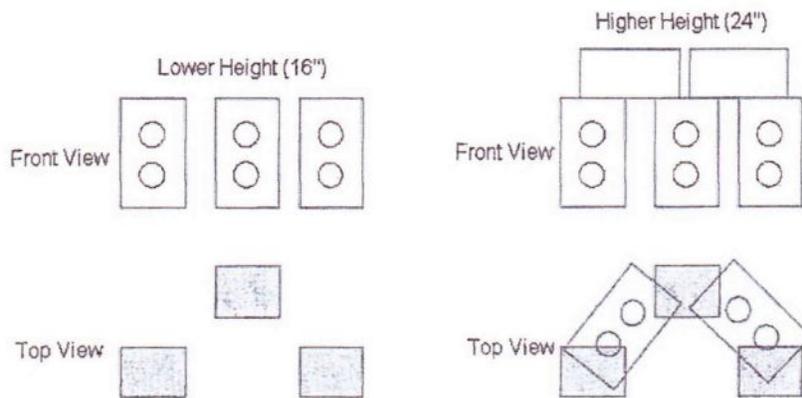
After you do the above, your work area will look like this when views from above:



Detail 4

If you didn't have to move your brick and hop boards they will be on the other side of the above detail.

When stacking the block in the above example, simply put block under the mud boards and raise them to a comfortable height for yourself.



5. The biggest problem most people have when trying to learn to lay block correctly is learning how to lay a block so that it doesn't lip or lap on the block course that you are laying over. I'll explain how to solve this lip and lap problem and also show what lip and lap looks like.

6. You're ready to lay those seven blocks in between your corner leads. Make sure you have perfect or uniform size head joints between the seven block as you learned to do with

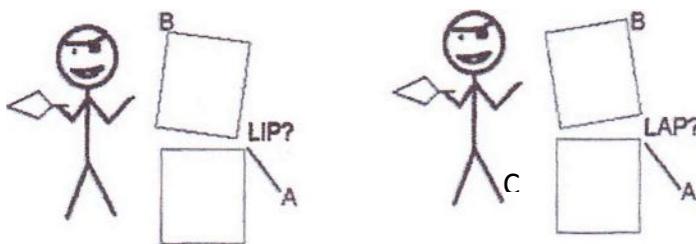
brick. Don't forget; go for quality, quality, quality. Speed will come to you later. Also, don't forget to roll that mud for the first course of block you are about to put down.

After you've laid the seven blocks and are satisfied with the joints, take your 4-foot level and plumb the center of each block you just laid for the first course. Remember now and forever when in the real world - ***always plumb the first course.***

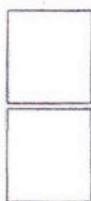
After you've plumbed each block (on it's center), check to make sure the block is still properly lined up with the line. If it isn't, adjust it as shown on the video. I want you to build the wall **six (6) courses** high.

7. When you reach the second course, I want you to build this wall as *stack bond*. Later when you build your half bond walls you will use (6) 6" x 8" x 8" block and use them the same way you used the half brick in the half bond brick walls.

I will now discuss what *lip* and *lap* is and the proper way to lay the block.



- A. Where you look first to see if you're lipped or lapped (the top of the block you are laying over).
- B. Where you must tap downwards on the block in order to fix it
- C. What it will look like when fixed.



If it's lipped, tap the *back* of the block. If it's lapped, tap the *front* of the block.

Here's how you do it. You are laying the block to the line (not lifting the block over the line as you do when laying brick).

First, you lay the block as close as possible to the line without actually touching the line (never touch the line).

Next, you look to see if you're lipped or lapped then you properly align the bottom of the block you are laying to the top of the block you are laying over so that when you finish, it will look like image C.

Watch The Video, Practice, And You Will Soon Have It.

Here is the best way to learn to never touch the line with block and automatically, naturally, set the block down while coming very close.

A. Swing the block into position (see video) and a *split second* before you touch the bed joint, simply twist your wrist so that you slightly move the bottom of the block **away from you**. You won't touch the line if you do this, and once you do it every time, 98% of the time all you will have to do afterwards is tap the side of the block that farthest away from you, closest to the line. In other words, get in the habit of always slightly lapping the block on purpose. It is better to have a slight lap than a lip. If you get into the bad habit of lipping, you will always be touching the line. Never touch the line.

Stop now and think about what I just described regarding lipping and lapping. Read it over and over, the twist of the wrist. See in your mind what I am talking about.

You're doing great!

This is really fun, isn't it?

You gotta love it!

By the way, what I just told you took me *months* to figure out and a lot of bricklayers never figure it out. All you have to do is drive around your town and look at brick and block buildings and soon you'll be able to see what brick and blockers did and didn't learn about lipping and lapping (especially if there is a light hanging on the building at night!).

8. You are now ready to watch the video and practice, practice, practice. Go for quality, quality, and quality. Speed will come to you.

9. After you have done all the above, Wet your mud boards down. You are now ready to put the line up (see detail 4 again). Remember the line is on the backside of your lead, which means it's the farthest away from you. You *lay to the line* and you don't lift them over the line. This is ideal for speed and less energy. However, sometimes you may have to have the line on

the inside. If so, you simply lay the block using the same principles as you would lay the brick.

All the brick principles apply when laying block over the line.

10. You are now ready to learn to become a block-laying machine. As shown in the video, lay 7 block per course and make it 6 courses high = 42 block.

11. For practice purposes, you may leave the first course when tearing your wall down when you want to rebuild it again. It's your choice, you decide.

I want you to remember and apply everything on this lesson plan that you have learned so far. I want you to practice laying block until you can **put up a wall 6 courses high, laying 30-35 block or more, jointed on both sides, in one hour or less**, though I prefer 42 blocks. My fastest student did un-jointed it in 35 minutes. Remember build 3 or 4 walls stack-bonded, then build one wall half-bonded, quality, quality, quality.

When you can do all of the above you are ready for video lesson 8.

Congratulations, You're Really Doing Great!

Remember - I'm A Winner!

Do It Now!

Never, Never, Never Give Up!

Videos 21 Through 24 - *Building Corner Leads, Straight Leads, Brick Piers (Chimney) Using a 4-Foot Level*

You are now ready to begin to learn a very important part of the art of being a bricklayer. What you are about to learn and how well you learn it is what separates *the line burners* from *the lead men*.

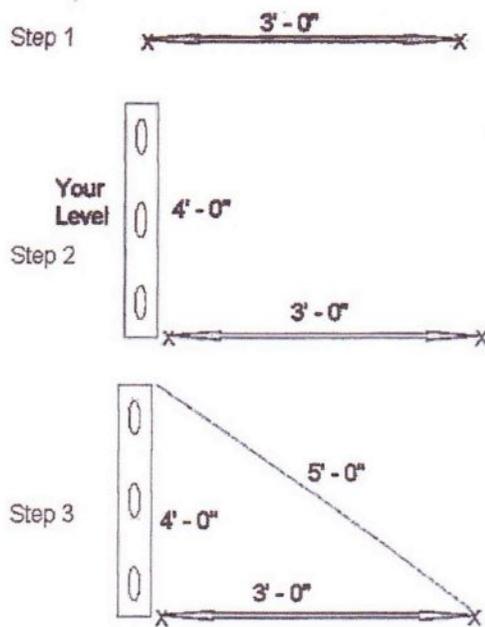
You must learn to use your 4-foot level. You must be able to build a corner 10 feet high and be within 1/8"-1/4" of an inch of perfectly plumb. This is easy to do if you remember to take your time, spread properly, and build your corner concentrating on only one course at a time. In most cases, it's the most experienced or best level man who will build 75% of all the corners.

Remember that 95% of all brick and block work is laying to the line. Most bricklayers, and I love 'em all, prefer to be line burners. I guess it's just the racehorse in us. We all try to do better today than we did yesterday. However, the main reason I emphasize the importance of level work in this course is because I know you want to be a great bricklayer, foreman, or contractor. Learn to build the corners.

Let's get with it.

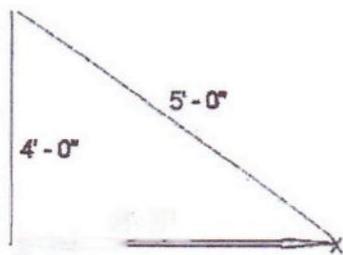
You know the routine. Sit back and watch lesson 8 from start to finish. Then!

1. Get you a framing square and draw lines on the floor with your pencil in order to establish your exact corner. If you don't have a framing square, you take your 4-foot level, and draw a 4-foot straight line on the floor and place an "X" at the exact position you want your corner to be. Next, measure over 3'-0" from the first "X" and mark another "X" on the line at exactly 3'-0". Next, place your level at your first "X" again, this time at 90 degrees, but do not mark this line yet. Take your tape and measure from the second 3'-0" "X" to the point where 5'-0" on your tape measure exactly touches your level. There you draw another line on the floor, and you now have a perfect square corner. This is called squaring up a corner using the 3, 4, 5 rule. Here is a diagram:



If the above is done with great care, your corner is now perfect. You take your pencil and draw on the floor the other side of your corner (the side your level is on)

After you've done the above, remove your level from the floor and check once again to be sure you have 3'-0" by 4'-0" by 5'-0" measurement.



Squaring up fast and perfect is another story. When you are ready to be a contractor or foreman, I have written a book called, *The Secret Of Squaring Up* that explains how to do that. For now, however, I want to get you on the job earning money as a brick and block layer.

Okay, your lines are on the floor; you've watched the lesson; let's build the corner. Let me give you a few pointers (remember, if you ever find a better way do let me know and I'll change my way). Here's how I do it:

- A) Spread the entire corner on both sides of the corner marked "X".
- B) Lay the units.
- C) Level both sides of the corner.

- D) Plumb the corner, and both tails (furthest sides away from the corner).
- E) Straight edge horizontally.
- F) Repeat the above next course.

Review:

- A) Spread the mud on the entire course on *both* sides of your corner marked "X" before you lay your first block or brick. When you do lay your first block or brick, it will be placed on the corner.
- B) Lay all the units on both sides of the course.
- C) Level all the units for the course (both sides)
- D) Remember to always plumb every unit on the first course only. After first course, plumb only the corner and tails.
- E) On both sides of the corner, straight edge the course horizontally so the level touches from the corner to the tail. (Note: on the first course only, always straighten the edge on both the top and bottom of the units. All other courses straighten only the top of the unit because the bottom is lined already lined up with the course below it..

For The Second Course Of The Lead:

- A) Spread the mud on the whole corner, both sides, all the way to the tails.
- B) Lay all the units using your eye, starting with the corner.
- C) Level all the units on both sides of corner.
- D) Plumb the corner and one tail, then straight edge. Plumb the other side of the corner and the other tail, then straight edge.

Check Your Height

If your joints look good and you're a little high or low, make up for it on the next few courses.

Check your height every 2 to 4 courses.

Repeat the above, until you get to the top of your lead and the last unit has been laid as shown on the video. Practice building these leads until you can do them almost as fast as I am building them on the video. Almost as fast means that if it takes me 10 minutes, you are able to build it in 15 to 20 minutes.

After you have built corner straight leads using both brick and block, I now want you to really start having some fun - I want you to build a brick column like the kind often used in chimneys.

A. I want you to make this brick column 2'-0" x 2'-0" square.

B. I want you to build the column 12 courses high; it will have 10 brick per course for a total of 120 bricks. I want you to practice until you can do it perfect in 2 hours or less. Be sure to joint and brush it

Congratulations - You can now lay 100 plus bricks in one hour, jointed. You can now lay 30 to 40 blocks in one hour, jointed, always stressing quality. When you can consistently build a chimney laying close to 100 bricks in one and one half hours perfect, you are ready! You are now ready for a job, anywhere in the free world.

You Have Completed This Course!

Let's Get You A Job. You've Done It!

Please Read The Next Page On How To Find A Job!

I'm So Proud Of You!

How To Find A Job

Congratulations, you are now ready, able, and qualified to find a job as a bricklayer anywhere in the free world. I take my hat off to you!

Remember, after you get your feet wet in the field, if you ever want to become a foreman or contractor I have other courses on proper layout, squaring up, reading blueprints, and scaffolding. You name it, I have it. If I don't have it I will get it.

Should you be union or non-union? All I can say on this subject is go where you can make the most money and enjoy the people you are working for, the ones who will allow you to advance to whatever capacity you are capable of attaining.

There is no license or certificate you have to have in order to be a brick layer, union or non-union. Plumbers and electricians usually have to be certified as do some welders. With bricklayers, you can either lay brick and block or you can't. The person you go to work for will know in five minutes or less whether you can lay brick and block or not.

The bottom line is this - when you can lay a 100 perfect bricks jointed in one hour or less and when you can lay (42) 6 x 8 x 16 CMU block, jointed perfectly on both sides in one hour or less, and when you can build a 2 foot square brick column and lay close to 100 bricks in 2 hours or less, you are able to work as a brick and block layer anywhere in the free world.

I have trained people who, after they could do the above, started contracting, worked non-union, or went down and immediately joined the union. The union sent them to a union contractor and the contractor started them either at journeyman or improver pay.

Here's All You Have To Do To Find A Job

Look in the phone book or online for masonry contractors in the area where you wish to work. Call all of them; go to work for the one who treats you with respect on the telephone. Be honest with them and tell them the bottom-line about what you can lay in one hour. Simply say, "Mr. Contractor, I've got (your age) year of being honest. I am a hard-working man or woman. I'm dependable. If you ask me to start work at 8 AM, I'll be there at 7:30 AM. If someone stole the mixer gas, I will get you some gas. When I am working on a wall, if the line breaks, I will gladly get mason line out of my tool bucket and will use that. If someone needs a twig or line,

I'll give him or her one out of my shirt pocket. If someone can't find their brick hammer I can reach on my belt where I have my hammer at all time and loan them mine until they can find theirs. At the end of the day, I promise I will never leave mud on the boards just because it's quitting time unless some of your regular guys drag me away from it. I will use the mud up before I go home. If you need someone to work late, or on the weekends, I'll be there.

Stop, that's enough!

Wait until the contractor can get his composure together, because it'll have been a long time, if ever, since he heard anyone say what you just told him. Nine out of ten times if you say the above, you will have a job. Don't be surprised if he wants to send a limo for you. Ninety percent of all masonry contractors are great guys. If you say the above and they don't need you immediately, don't be surprised if they give you the name of someone who does.

However, If you happen to call a jerk (the other 10%) simply say, "thank you" and call another. You never want to work for a jerk!

If I can be of help in finding you a job, call me. I know contractors all over the country. I'll be glad to help you anytime. Forever! Remember, a job or money back. When you can do the above you've finished the course.

Thank you. You've done a great job and you deserve the best.

Sincerely,

Charles I. Cummins

P. S. Always remember to help someone along the way. Remember the 11 words, share them with other people. They are; **I'm a winner. Do it now. Never, never, never give up.** Preach them until you die.

P. S. S. Do stay in touch with me. I want to know how you are doing, forever. Hopefully, we'll either meet on the big wall in the sky, or here on earth, as it is in heaven. Thanks.

Remember, you got to love it! Congratulations and welcome to the greatest trade on earth. You can quote me on that if you wish!