Video Activity 6

HOW TO BUILD A BRICK WALL

Bricks are structural clay products, manufactured as standard units, used in building construction.

1 *Answer the questions before watching the video.*

1. Have you ever tried to build a brick wall? If so, when and where?
2. What building material do you need to build a brick wall?
3. What other building materials can be used to build a wall?
4. Is your house structure made of bricks?

Video Activity 6: "HOW TO BUILD A BRICK WALL"

The HomeServe guide to build a brick wall.

Whether you want to build a small wall at the end of your patio or a six foot wall around your house, you'll need to learn the ancient art of bricklaying.

Building a wall's a tricky job and it will take you all day; but HomeServe's here to show you how it's done.

Don't forget however, if you're planning to build a retaining or a load-bearing wall, then you'll need to call in a structural engineer before you start; and if it's over 2 m tall, you'll need to check your Council's building regulations.

Step one

You will need: cement, sand and lime for your mortar (but if you're building in cold weather, substitute lime for plasticizer which will keep your mortar fluid), plus bricks, a bucket and a bricklayer's trowel.

Step two: getting ready

The quality of your finished wall will depend on the quality of your footings. See how to lay foundations: to get this bit right, then you'll need to buy your bricks; a quick rule of thumb is that you'll need sixty-five of them for every square metre of wall. But remember, if your wall is over seven hundred twenty-five millimetres high, you should be building it double thickness, so you'll need double the bricks.

Step three: mix mortar

Once you've got your bricks, you'll need to mix the mortar to hold your bricks together. See how to mix mortar to see how it's done. Don't forget that once you've got a mix together, you need to use it within two hours.

Step four: bricklaying

Start at the end of your wall and work in, place a brick at each end and stretch a string between them to give you a line to work, too. Then put a load of mortar on you trowel and spread along the footings; place a brick on top with the indented side or *frog* facing up then at the next brick, spread a lot of mortar in the end and stick it next to the first one. Remove any excess mortar from the sides of the bricks and check them with the spirit level to make sure that they straighten through; if they're not, just give them a tuck with the end of your trowel to sort them out.

Step five: the bond

The bond refers to the pattern of the bricks. All bricks are upset to avoid one long mortar joint which could be a weak point. When you are building a wall two bricks thick, you'll need to place bricks laterally to keep it strong. There are two ways you can do this to keep the whole wall strong: the Flemish bond, which looks like this, and the English bond that looks like this. There you go, sort it! And if you've got lots of more brick wall to be done, why not call HomeServe and let us do the job for you.

2 *Listen and match the phrases in column A with the ones in column B.*

A	B
1. To build a retaining or a load bearing wall,	**a.** will depend on the quality of your footings.
2. The quality of your finished wall	**b.** and stretch a string between them to give you a line to work.
3. Once you've got your bricks,	**c.** the pattern of the bricks.
4. Place a brick at each end	**d.** you'll need to place bricks laterally to keep it strong.
5. Remove any excess mortar from the sides of the bricks	**e.** you'll need to call in a structural engineer.
6. The bond refers to	**f.** and check them with the spirit level.
7. When you are building a wall,	**g.** you'll need to mix the mortar to hold the bricks together.

3 *What are the English equivalents of these Italian words?*

1. muro portante .....
2. secchio .....
3. cazzuola .....
4. malta .....
5. calce .....
6. livella a bolla d'aria .....
7. additivo plastificante .....
8. fondazione per muratura .....
9. spessore .....
10. punto di giuntura .....

4 *Watch the video again and answer the questions.*

1. Is building a brick wall an easy job?
2. When do you have to call a structural engineer?
3. What materials do you need to prepare the mortar?
4. What tools are necessary to prepare the mortar?
5. How can you check if the bricks straighten through?
6. What does the word "bond" refer to?