

Bricklayer interview questions

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What to expect

Bricklayer interviews are usually shorter and more practical than office-based hiring processes. Expect a mix of trade knowledge checks, safety questions and a look at how you handle problems on site, sometimes alongside a look at past work or a short practical test if the employer runs one.

- **Process / technical:** Questions checking you know the correct sequence and technique for laying, mixing and finishing masonry work.
- **Safety:** Questions on WHS practice, scaffolding and hazard management, given the physical risks on construction sites.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about how you've handled mistakes, rework or team problems on past jobs.
- **Scenario / client-facing:** Judgement questions about handling client concerns or on-site disputes without a supervisor immediately available.
- **Estimating:** Questions on how you work out materials and time for a job, relevant if quoting is part of the role.

Most interviews open with a quick run-through of your trade certification, ticket or licence and recent job history, move into technical and safety questions, then finish with one or two scenario questions to see how you think on your feet. Some employers will ask to see photos of past work or arrange a short site visit before confirming an offer.

1. Walk me through how you'd set up and lay a straight brick wall from string lines through to the finished course.

Why they ask

This checks you understand the full sequence of a bricklaying job and haven't just learned isolated steps.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a step-by-step walkthrough in the order the work actually happens, from setting out to finishing.

Example answer

"I start by checking the footing or slab is level and marking out the wall line to match the plan. I set up profiles and string lines to get my first course straight, then lay a dry run of bricks to check spacing before mixing mortar. I lay the first course with consistent joint thickness, checking level and plumb every few bricks with a spirit level. As I build up courses I keep checking plumb on the corners and use a gauge rod to keep joint heights consistent. Once the wall's up to height I clean off excess mortar and tool the joints to the finish specified, then do a final check with the level along the whole run before calling it ready for inspection."

2. Tell me about a time you found an error in a wall's level or plumb partway through a job.

Why they ask

Employers want to know you catch problems early and fix them properly rather than covering them up.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation, the task, the action you took and the result.

Example answer

"On one job I was checking a long wall run partway up and noticed a section had drifted slightly out of plumb over a few courses. I stopped work on that section straight away rather than building on top of it. I stripped back the affected courses, reset my string line and level, and rebuilt that section properly before continuing. It cost some time that afternoon, but the wall passed inspection cleanly and I didn't have to deal with a much bigger rework later once it was capped and rendered."

3. How do you manage safety when working with scaffolding at height on a site?

Why they ask

Scaffolding and height work carry real injury risk, so employers check you take WHS seriously rather than treating it as a formality.

How to structure your answer

Structure your answer around identifying hazards, the controls you use and how you follow site WHS procedures.

Example answer

"Before I get on scaffolding I check it's been tagged and inspected, and I look over the platform, guardrails and ties myself rather than just assuming it's fine. I keep tools and materials tidy on the platform so there's nothing to trip on, and I wear the PPE required for the site. If I notice anything loose or missing, like a guardrail or toe board, I report it and stay off that section until it's fixed. I also keep an eye on weather, since wind and wet conditions change the risk on elevated work."

4. A client raises a concern that the mortar joint colour doesn't look uniform across a finished wall. How would you handle it on site?

Why they ask

This tests judgement in a client-facing situation where you may not have a supervisor immediately available.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a judgement-under-pressure response: assess the issue, decide what you can resolve yourself, and know when to escalate.

Example answer

"I'd first have a look at the wall myself to see whether it's a genuine mix inconsistency or just a lighting or drying difference, since fresh and cured mortar can look different in colour for a while. If it's a real batch inconsistency, I'd explain what's causing it and whether it will even out as it cures, or whether a section needs to be redone. If I'm not confident it's just a curing issue, I'd flag it with my supervisor before promising the client anything, rather than guessing and getting it wrong."

5. What's the difference between stretcher bond and English bond, and when would you use each?

Why they ask

This checks core trade knowledge that comes up regularly when reading plans and specifications.

How to structure your answer

Answer by defining each bond, comparing their structural and appearance differences, then giving a practical example of when each is used.

Example answer

"Stretcher bond is the standard pattern where bricks are laid lengthwise with each course offset by half a brick, it's common on single-skin veneer walls in residential work because it's efficient and gives a clean, simple look. English bond alternates courses of headers and stretchers, which gives more strength through the wall and is more common on older or load-bearing masonry work where structural bond strength matters more than a plain finish. I'd choose based on what the plans and

specifications call for, and whether the wall's structural or veneer."

6. How do you work out the materials you'll need for a job when putting together a quote?

Why they ask

With quoting and estimating listed as part of the role, employers check you can price a job accurately rather than guessing.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a process walkthrough of how you move from plans to a materials and cost estimate.

Example answer

"I start from the plans to get the wall dimensions and work out the area to be bricked, then use standard brick and mortar coverage rates to estimate quantities, adding a percentage for cuts and wastage. I check the specification for the bond pattern and any special features like arches or piers, since those change material use. From there I price the bricks, mortar and any hire equipment like scaffolding, and factor in the labour time based on how long similar wall runs have taken me in the past, then put that together into the quote."