

Cement Mason

Cement masons level, smooth, and shape surfaces of freshly poured concrete on projects ranging from patios and basements to dams, highways, and foundations and walls of building.

Cement masons must have a thorough knowledge of concrete characteristics and related materials. Also, they must know the effects of heat, cold, and wind on the curing of concrete. They must be able to tell by sight and touch what is happening to concrete in order to prevent defects.

Working Conditions

Since much of the concrete finishing is done outdoors, working conditions are governed by the weather. Concrete is not usually placed in rain or when temperatures are below freezing. However, the work, either indoor or outdoors, may be in areas that are muddy, dusty, and dirty. The work requires continuous physical effort.

Aptitude and Interest

Finishers should enjoy doing demanding work. They should have pride of craftsmanship and be able to work without close supervision.

Training

To become a skilled cement mason training is essential. It can be acquired informally through "learning-by-working;" through company on-the-job training programs; by attending trade or vocational/technical schools; through unilaterally (management or labor) sponsored trainee programs; through registered labor-management apprenticeship programs, or a combination of the above. It is generally accepted that the more formalized training programs give more comprehensive skill training. Recommended high school courses include English, math, mechanical drawing, and general science.