

## **Stonemason**

### ***Job Description***

Stonemasons construct walls, partitions, fireplaces, chimneys, and other structures from stone and other masonry materials. They spread a layer or “bed” of soft mortar that serves as base and binder using a trowel. The stone is then positioned and the excess mortar removed. Stonemasons must understand and work from blueprints, and be able to use measuring, leveling, and aligning tools to check their work.

### ***Working Conditions***

Much of stonemasonry work is out-of-doors and depends on suitable weather. However, modern construction methods along with heaters and temporary enclosures stretch the season and make stonemasons less dependent on good weather. Stonemasons are on their feet all day, and do considerable lifting of heavy materials with much bending—sometimes from scaffolding high above the ground.

### ***Aptitude and Interest***

Masonry construction involves a variety of duties requiring close tolerances and standards. Stonemasonry requires careful, accurate work by the craftsman. Masons should enjoy working outside under many different weather conditions. Good eyesight is important to quickly determine lines and levels. Also, manual dexterity is especially important.

### ***Training***

To become a skilled stonemason, 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 algebra, geometry, general science, mechanical drawing, and English.

### ***Wages (Average, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012)***

- **Hourly:** \$21.61
- **Annual:** \$44,950