

**SURVIVAL
SKILLS**
in the Workplace

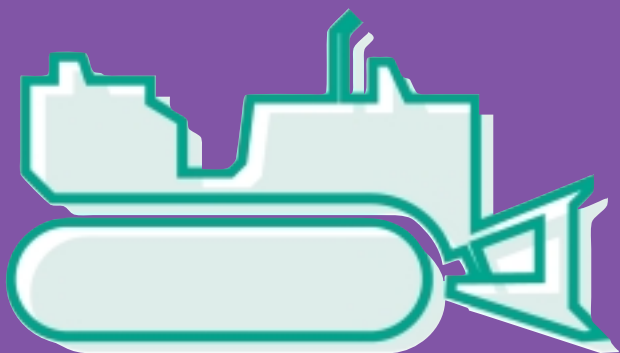
**CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRY**





Everyday tasks on a building site

- Lifting and carrying heavy building materials on the ground and up ladders
- Operating machinery
- Estimating quantities of materials and time needed for jobs
- Measuring and mixing cement and plaster
- Measuring and marking out timber and glass
- Clearing site areas
- Acting on verbal instructions



- Following safety notices and signs on site
- Carrying out own trade to construct and finish buildings
- Liaising with other tradesmen to coordinate work



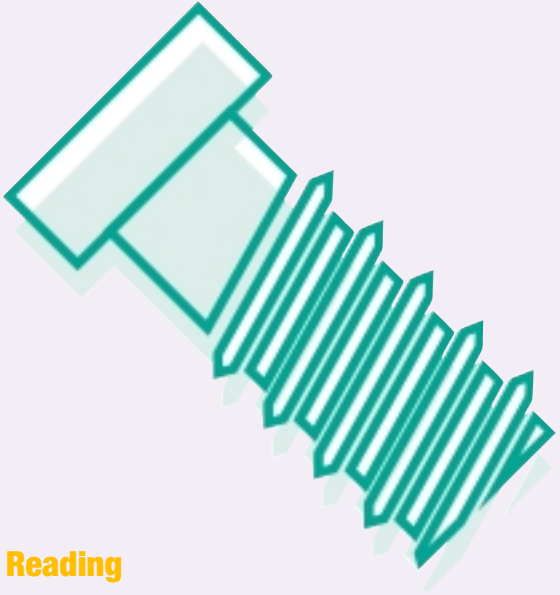
WHAT SKILLS?

Speaking and Listening

- Listen carefully to instructions face-to-face and on the telephone, e.g. from a supervisor, other tradesmen, customers



- Give clear explanations and instructions to other workers on site, or to the public, e.g. safety matters, progress of job, own needs for assistance
- Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard on site, e.g. giving safety warnings, detailed instructions for moving/fetching materials



Reading

- Obtain information from tables and charts, e.g. price lists, weight/length conversion charts, safety signs
- Follow written instructions, e.g. for operating equipment, health and safety regulations, packaging of materials
- Read straightforward information, e.g. notes from colleagues, items in trade journals and catalogues

Writing

- Write clearly and accurately on simple forms and records, e.g. job cards, order forms, accident book
- Note messages from telephone calls, e.g. from colleagues, clients, suppliers, inspectors and other officials

Number Skills

- Write numbers clearly to avoid mistakes, e.g. telephone numbers, quantities of stock, measurements on simple plans and drawings
- Estimate and count numbers, e.g. bricks, pieces of timber, floor boards, tiles etc.
- Estimate and measure length, e.g. height of walls and apertures, length of timber, dimensions of glass for windows
- Estimate and weigh dry materials, e.g. sand, cement, plaster, aggregate
- Estimate and measure liquid volume, e.g. water proofing liquid, timber treatment
- Calculate area and volume, e.g. of floors, paths, walls, foundations
- Estimate and measure time, e.g. to schedule jobs, to provide quotes, to complete time sheets
- Use simple angles, e.g. right-angles for corners and verticals, designated angles for the roof slope





Communication skills needed to work in the construction industry

- Reading – understanding straightforward written and graphical information, e.g. notes and messages, labels and packaging, health and safety signs, catalogues, simple plans and drawings
- Writing – simple notes, messages and forms, e.g. telephone messages, entries in accident book, orders
- Speaking and Listening – talking one-to-one on the telephone and face-to-face with colleagues, clients and members of the public, shouting on site, giving and receiving instructions and warnings

Numeracy skills needed to work in the construction industry

- Numbers – recording numbers and understanding charts and tables, e.g. telephone numbers, stock lists, building plans and drawings
- Measurement – straightforward estimates, weighing and measurement of length and volume, e.g. wet and dry materials, marking out timber and walls
- Time – estimate time and schedule accurately, e.g. time to complete job, schedule of different parts of job
- Calculation – proportion, area, volume and angles, e.g. sand/cement mix, area of work, volume of concrete for filling foundations, angle of roof

To start work or undertake an NVQ in the construction industry, the basic skills levels needed are:

- communication at Entry 3 (reading up to Level 1);
- numeracy at or above Level 1.



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