

Brickworks

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A **brickworks**, also known as a **brick factory**, is a factory for the manufacturing of bricks, from clay or shale. Usually a brickworks is located on a clay bedrock (the most common material from which bricks are made), often with a quarry for clay on site.

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Equipment

Most brickworks have some or all of the following:

- A kiln, for firing, or 'burning' the bricks.
- Drying yard or shed, for drying bricks before firing.
- A building or buildings for manufacturing the bricks.
- A quarry for clay.
- A pugmill or clay preparation plant (see below).

Brick making

Bricks were originally made by hand, and that practice continues in developing countries and a few specialty suppliers.

In a large industrial brickworks, clay is taken from the quarry, and then carried by conveyor belt or truck/lorry to the main factory, although it may be stockpiled outside before entering the machinery. When the clay enters the preparation plant (Clay Prep) it is crushed, and mixed with water and other additives which may include breeze, a very fine anthracite that aids firing. This process, which is also known as pugmilling, improves the consistency, firing qualities, texture, and colour of the brick. From here, the processed clay can be extruded into a continuous



Large bricks on a conveyor belt in a modern European factory setting



Bricks set out to dry in Songea, Tanzania



A brick-making machine in Tanzania

strip and cut with wires, or put into moulds or presses (also referred to as *forming*) to form the clay into its final shape. After the forming or cutting, the bricks must be dried, either in the open air, in drying sheds, or in special drying kilns. When the bricks have been dried, they must then be fired or 'burnt' in a kiln, to give them their final hardness and appearance.

The brick manufacturing process was revolutionised in the mid nineteenth century with

the development of automated brickmaking machines such as the Bradley & Craven Ltd 'Stiff-Plastic Brickmaking Machine'.^[1]

Historical notes

In the past, clay was often transported from the quarry to the brickworks by narrow gauge railway or aerial ropeway.

Notable brickworks

- The London Brick Company
- Bursledon Brickworks^{[2][3]}
- Brickworks Limited - Australian brick manufacturer
- Evergreen Brickworks

See also

- Brick
- Brickwork
- Brickyard
- Masonry
- Factories

References

1. *The First Hundred Years: the Early History of Bradley & Craven, Limited, Wakefield, England* by Bradley & Craven Ltd (1963)
2. Bursledon Brickworks Industrial Museum. "The History". *www.bursledonbrickworks.org.uk*. Bursledon Brickworks Industrial Museum. Retrieved 14 October 2015.
3. Visit Hampshire. "Bursledon Brickworks Museum". Retrieved 14 October 2015.

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Categories: Brickworks | Molding processes | Manufacturing plants



Men working in the yard of a brickworks in Germany, the tall chimney of the kiln visible, 1890



Packed bricks stored in a brickworks in Croatia

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