

Buildings

Building materials

A material is a substance from which something is made. All materials have different properties. When deciding which material to use for a certain job you must think about what properties it has.

Mud, stone, wood and plants are the most basic and natural building materials.

Stone: One of the oldest building materials known to man, mined from quarries in the ground.

Brick: Made of clay or shale and fired or cooked in a kiln. It is fairly hard and strong, easy to produce and is good for making walls.

Wood: Can be used for building when it has been cut and turned into timber. It is a very strong material and it can keep its strength whilst bending, so is particularly good for building roof supports. Different trees produce different quality wood.

Metal: A very strong material, made from ore mined from deep underground, which is useful for building frameworks.

Glass: Made from a mixture of sand and silicone. It can be used for windows, doors and even walls.

Thatch: A very old, natural way of making roofs from straw and grass. It is a special craft and there are not many 'thatchers' left in Britain to carry on the tradition.

Ice: Traditionally used by the Inuit people for building igloos, but today it has also been used to build hotels and bars as tourist attractions.

Other materials

Plastic Foam Fabric Ceramic

Did you know?

Nearly all of these materials can be **reclaimed** by taking them from older buildings that are being pulled down and reusing them in new buildings. This is an environmentally friendly way of building and is often cheaper than buying new materials.