





An introduction to dry-stone building techniques

Type of activity	An introduction to building with dry-stone.
Theme	Transmitting simple techniques to restore heritage and discover its connection with rural life and the landscape.
Learning goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the practical involvement of young people in enhancing heritage by learning simple techniques. • Switching from an understanding of heritage to action on the ground; learning why dry-stone walls were built, then taking part in restoring a low wall. <p>Dry-stone has the advantage of being simple to handle and requires few tools. As such, participants can take part in a hands-on, cost-effective and low-risk restoration project. The learning process can also be applied to other building techniques (mud-bricks, wood, renders, etc.).</p>
Target audience	<p>All audiences, aged 15 to 30 – no prior specific knowledge required, just the need to respect some simple safety rules.</p> <p>This activity is suited to a group of 10 to 15 people (maximum).</p>
Type of activity	<p>Sharing practice and theory – Practical exercise to apply knowledge.</p> <p>A technical supervisor (builder) is needed to supervise the workshop, while cooperation with an association specialising in the techniques used is recommended.</p>



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Keywords	Awareness-raising – introduction – practical application – restoration – discovering heritage without a historical, territorial or environmental context.
Step-by-step	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the use of building using dry-stone techniques: origins of techniques, links to local rural history, geology and landscape, what dry stone contributes, etc. 2. Show, or organise a visit, to examples of various constructions to gain an overview of simple to more elaborate examples, such as terraces, low walls, cisterns, sheepbarns and sheepfolds, etc. (slide-show, exhibition or site visit). We study the techniques currently used and the specific characteristics of the materials. We make the link between photos of constructions and the local area (rural life, agricultural produce, current state and eventual justification of this situation, etc.) 3. Describe and analyse a feature built of dry-stone, using the same principle as point 2. We look at technical details, eventual aspects of strength (solidity) or weakness and raise the question of justifying whether we should keep or restore this heritage. 4. Observation and transmission of techniques: passing on practical building techniques. The technical supervisor describes these manual techniques and asks the participants to try them by themselves. Main points of attention: choice of stone (size and shape, etc.) based on the geology (limestone, schist, etc.) and placing stones on top of each other to make a solid and strong construction. 5. Application: The young participants move on to an outside area where they apply what they have learned, by building a low wall.

	<p>The site must be prepared beforehand to ensure it is safe and appropriate for the work to be undertaken. This practical exercise can be run with small groups of 2 people.</p> <p><i>Debriefing</i> With the help of the technical supervisor and the participants, the activity leader conducts a review to check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That everyone has a good understanding of dry-stone building techniques. - Construction techniques and the quality of the feature built are satisfactory.
Venue	<p>A work room may be required for the theory-based presentation (parts 1 to 3).</p> <p>An outdoor area is needed for the following activities. It is preferable to have a dry-stone construction (a low wall to be restored, for example) already on the site rather than start from scratch.</p>
Materials required	<p>Safety equipment: Gloves, goggles/safety glasses, safety boots</p> <p>Tools: walling hammers, cords.</p>
Duration	Half-day to one day.
References	<p>Dry Stone workcamps and training session</p> <p>Aurelio Lalov – Union APARE-CME</p> <p>chantiers@apare-cme.eu</p>
Contact  	<p>Union APARE-CME – France</p> <p>www.apare-cme.eu</p> <p>Contact: Armonie Segond</p> <p>chantiers@apare-cme.eu</p>