

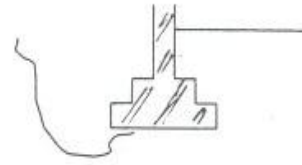
## **Guide to Exposing Building Foundations for Inspection**

The purpose of this is to establish the load-bearing capacity of the foundations, which is a function of the type of foundation and the subsoil on which it is supported.

There are five basic types of foundations, with variations according to site conditions, age etc.

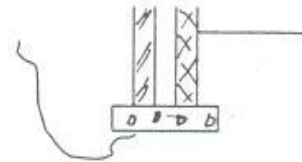
### 1. Stepped Brick Footing

Normally found on buildings earlier than c.1930  
Depth is usually 450 to 600mm below surface.



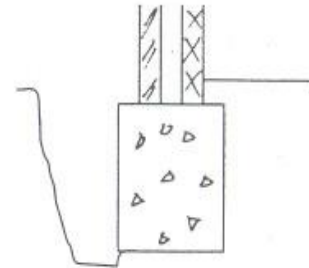
### 2. Concrete Strip Footing

Usually on newer buildings.  
Depth is 600 to 1000mm (sometimes more).  
Walls built up to ground level in brick- or blockwork.



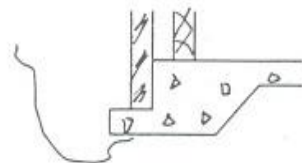
### 3. Concrete Trench-Fill Foundation

Commonly used on new buildings (eliminates bricklaying within a trench).  
Depth is 750 to 1000mm on gravel or sand, but on clay may be 1000 to 2500mm deep to counteract "ground heave" arising from moisture variations.



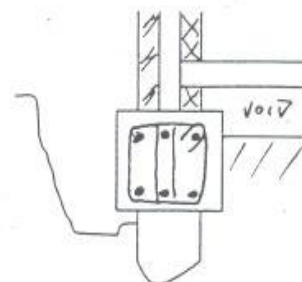
### 4. Reinforced Concrete Raft Slab

Used on soft ground from c.1930 onwards (particularly for bungalows).  
Usually reinforced with only toe of slab visible.  
Depth is usually 450 to 600mm below surface.



### 5. Piled Foundation with Ground Beams

Used on soft ground (e.g. Fens), made ground or highly shrinkable clay soils (to counteract heave).  
Ground beams 450 to 750mm below surface; piles extend from 3m to 15m below surface.



Most trial pits are best dug by hand, the same day or the day before inspection. Contact our office to book the inspection before digging, and to agree the location(s) of the pits. Should difficulties or obstacles be encountered, please call us.

The spoil should be left nearby for inspection and the hole covered to keep out rain, pets etc. and may usually be backfilled after inspection.

Samples may be taken for laboratory testing, and these should be taken from fresh undisturbed soil.