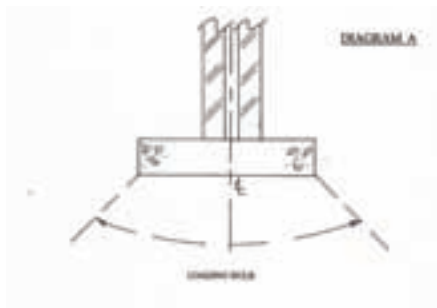


# Beware of Eccentric Loading Of Foundations

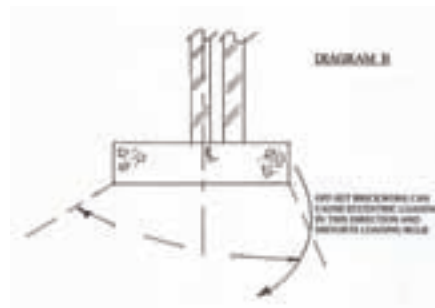
Getting your foundations right is vital writes our technical expert, Don Waterworth.



When either you or your sub-contractor are setting out foundations for an extension, conservatory, porch or another similar structure, it is vitally important that the trench block or the cavity wall being laid on to it sits centrally and the foundation has the right width of spread, writes Don Waterworth.

The loading bulb of a typical foundation is shown in the attached Diagram A. Note the central placing of the wall on top of the foundation. This ensures that the loads are evenly distributed through the loading bulb.

However, if you look at Dia-



gram B, either through miscalculation or lack of knowledge, the building contractor has laid the brick off-set from the foundation.

When this happens, the loads can be unevenly distributed through the foundation strip and this can give rise to eccentric loading which can cause subsidence. Unfortunately, this type of subsidence can take 12 months to two years to manifest - and invariably cause problems with the brickwork above the ground. The cost of repairing such a defect can be prohibitive as underpinning is almost certainly going to be required.

## Keep centred

Laying the masonry off centre on a strip is a common occurrence and can be easily covered over by a building contractor whilst in the ground. As you know the work needs to be guaranteed by you whether you are the main contractor or the sub-contractor. So I can only advise caution again and to be aware of what your builder is doing - make sure s/he lays the wall centrally on the foundation strip and you surely won't come a cropper. **■ Don.**



Picture: Diagram A – note the central placing of the wall on top of the foundation, which is good.

Diagram B – either this is a miscalculation or shows a lack of knowledge.

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