

Datums & Benchmarks

Civil Engineering

A level means nothing without its datum.

A datum is the agreed zero for height or position; a benchmark is a physical point whose value is known.

COMMON SITE CONVENTION

Datum set at 100.000 m

TRANSFER TO SITE

From two marks, not one

- A level without its datum is not information
- A site datum may be local and arbitrary
- Record the datum on every drawing issued
- Check a benchmark before you trust it
- Benchmarks move: settlement, works, damage
- Two independent checks beat one good one

LOOK FOR IT

Two contractors working to different datums build a step into the same slab.

Educational reference. Datum, projection and epoch must be recorded. National datums are defined by the mapping agency.