



Directorate for the Built Environment
Building Standards Division

MINOR BUILDING WORK TO 1 AND 2 STOREY HOUSE

This leaflet is designed to help you if you are intending to carry out alterations to existing houses. There is no need to obtain a building warrant for the simple projects described in this leaflet, but the work you undertake must meet the requirements of the building regulations. The guidance in this leaflet will explain one way that this can be achieved but it is acceptable not to follow this guidance as there are other ways of meeting the building regulations.

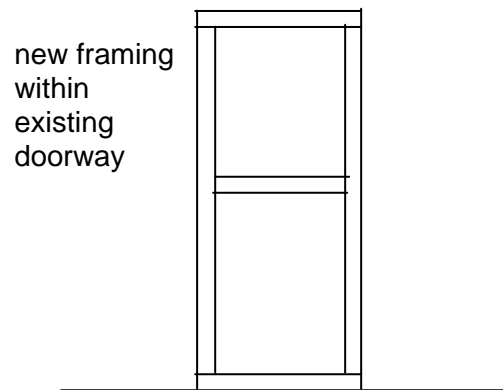
This leaflet does not cover houses which have a floor level higher than 4.5 m above outside ground level, and does not apply to flats or maisonettes. The guidance does not cover more complex work, such as where you intend to remove a loadbearing wall, or alter a wall separating a house from another part of the building. Such work will require a warrant and you should check with the Building Standards Department of your local authority. It is against the law to start work without first obtaining a building warrant when one is needed.

1. BLOCKING UP INTERNAL DOORWAYS

Single doorways must be blocked up using timber framing with a nominal size of 75 x 50 mm. However, if the doorway is within an existing timber frame wall the new timber framing must be of the same dimensions as the framing within the wall. The framing must be securely fixed around the perimeter of the door opening, and have a horizontal timber at mid-height. The timbers must be securely fixed to the floor, ceiling and sides of the doorway. The timbers may be fixed using nails or screws and either nailed straight through or cheek nailed, as appropriate.

Double doorways or single doorways wider than 900 mm must additionally have vertical studs at no more than 600 mm apart provided within the timber frame

12 mm plasterboard must be securely fixed to both sides of the framing using nails or screws.

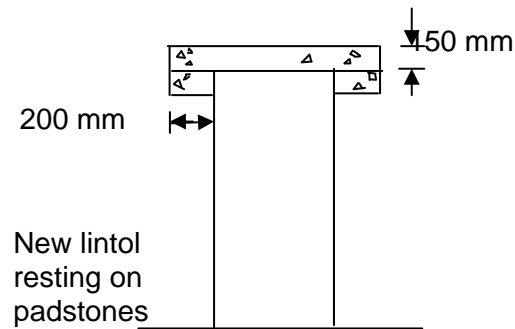


2. FORMING OPENINGS IN EXISTING NON LOAD-BEARING WALLS

New doorways of up to 2 m in width can be formed in non load-bearing walls of either masonry or timber framed construction. The existing walls must be of not more than 125 mm thick and not more than 2.7 m in height. If unsure whether a wall is load-bearing or not, professional advice should be sought before carrying out any work. If a wall is load-bearing, a warrant will be required for its alteration or removal.

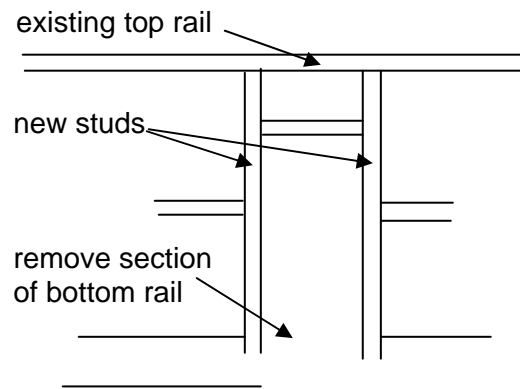
Masonry walls - the masonry above the new doorway must be permanently supported using either a 150 mm high, 100 mm thick reinforced pre-cast concrete lintol bedded in mortar, ensuring that the lintol is the correct way up. The lintol must be long enough to have a seating of not less than 200 mm on either side of the doorway. The ends of the lintol must be seated on a whole concrete brick or concrete padstone; or,
a steel angle lintol of at least 210 mm high, 90 mm wide and 2.8 mm thick, bedded in mortar. The lintol must be long enough to have a seating of not less than 200 mm on either side of the doorway. The ends of the lintol must be seated on a whole concrete brick or concrete padstone.

Note - Care must be taken when removing brickwork or blockwork. When in doubt as to best practice for such work professional advice should be sought before carrying out any work.



Timber frame walls - the sides of the new opening must be formed using timber of the same size as in the existing wall fixed between the existing horizontal timbers at the top and bottom of the wall. The head of the doorway must be formed with a horizontal timber, which must be fixed to the side studs. The timbers must be fixed together using nails or screws and either nailed straight through or cheek nailed, as appropriate.

The area of walling above and adjacent to the doorway must be finished using 12 mm plasterboard to each side, fixed to the doorway framing using nails or screws.



3. BUILDING INTERNAL WALLS

Internal walls must be built of timber frame construction. The walls must be of nominal 75 mm x 50 mm timber studs at 600 mm centres, with a horizontal timber to both the top and bottom of the wall. There must be a horizontal timber at mid height fixed between the vertical studs. The wall must be clad with 12 mm plasterboard on both sides using nails or screws.

The wall must be securely fixed to the floor, ceiling and existing wall(s) of the room in which the wall is to be built.

The timbers may be fixed using nails or screws and either nailed straight through or cheek nailed, as appropriate.

Doorways formed in the new walls must be constructed as described in item 5.

Care should be taken to ensure that any wall or part of a wall to be removed is non-load-bearing.

If unsure whether a wall is load-bearing or not, professional advice should be sought before carrying out any work.

4. KNOCKING DOWN NON-LOAD-BEARING WALLS

Care should be taken to ensure that any wall or part of a wall to be removed is non-load-bearing.

If unsure whether a wall is load-bearing or not, professional advice should be sought before carrying out any work.

5. NOTCHING & DRILLING TIMBER

Notching or drilling of timbers shown in this leaflet must only be done through the horizontal and not the vertical timber members. Notches and holes must be not more than 1/3 of the timber width and not nearer than 300 mm to other notches or holes. Holes must be central within the thickness of the timber.

6. OTHER REGULATIONS

In certain circumstances it is possible that by carrying out work other building standards may require to be met, e.g. when building a wall to create a new room there will be a need to provide adequate ventilation and possibly emergency escape to that room.

You may wish to check with the Building Standards Department of your Local Authority to determine which other standards will be required to be met.

7. GENERAL

You should ensure that you are aware of your statutory obligations under building regulations, planning legislation and any other relevant permission and that any firm or person employed to carry out work is competent.

Building Standards Division provides guidance on how to comply with the building regulations and this can be accessed on their web site at www.sbsa.gov.uk. Follow the links to 'Documents' 'Technical Handbooks' 'Domestic Handbook'.