

MINOR BUILDING WORK TO 1 AND 2 STOREY HOUSES

Based on the 2013 Technical Handbooks

This leaflet is designed to help you if you intend to carry out minor building alterations within a house. The alterations described in this leaflet do not require a building warrant. However, the work you undertake must meet the requirements of the building regulations. This leaflet sets out one common way that this can be achieved.

If you don't follow this guidance you should seek professional advice to make sure your proposals will meet the building regulations.

The leaflet does not apply to more complex work such as removing, or altering, a load bearing wall. It also does not apply to alterations within houses having a floor level more than 4.5 m above external ground level, or flats and maisonettes. Such work will require a warrant and you should discuss the proposals with the Building Standards Section of your local authority.

Where a warrant is required it is against the law to start work without first obtaining it.

1. Blocking Up Internal Doorways

Single doorways can be blocked up using timber framing with a minimum 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 existing wall framing. The framing must be securely fixed to the floor, ceiling and sides of the doorway and have a horizontal timber at mid-height. The timbers may be fixed using nails or screws. There must be a 25 mm thick layer of mineral wool suspended in the cavity to reduce sound transmission.

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

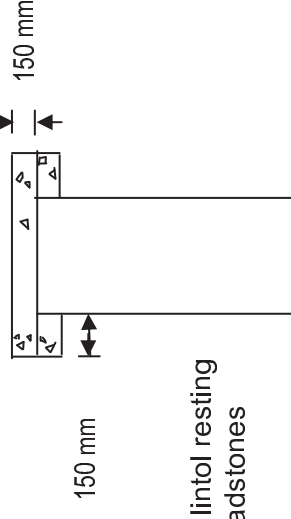
New doorways of up to 2 m in width can be formed in non-load-bearing walls of either masonry or timber framed construction. The existing walls must be of not more than 125 mm thick and not more than 2.7 m in height. If unsure whether a wall is load-bearing or not, professional advice should be sought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

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, the correct way up, bedded in mortar, or
- steel angle lintol of at least 210 mm high, 90 mm wide and 2.8 mm thick, bedded in mortar.

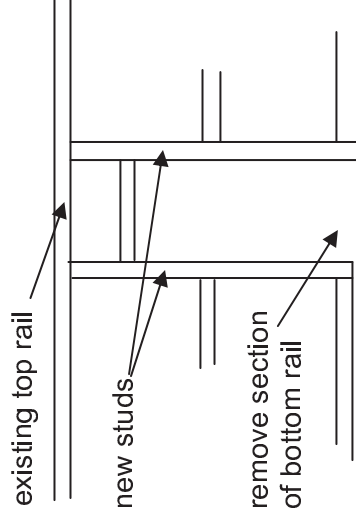
Both of these types of lintols must be long enough to have a seating of not less than 150 mm on either side of the doorway. The ends of the lintol must be seated on a whole brick, concrete block or concrete padstone.

Note - Care must be taken when removing brickwork or blockwork. When in doubt over best practice, professional advice should be sought.



New lintol resting
on padstones

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. All timbers must be securely fixed together using nails or screws. The area of walling above and adjacent to the doorway must be finished using a minimum of 12 mm plasterboard nailed or screwed to each side.



3. Building Internal Non-Load Bearing 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. There must be a 25 mm thick layer of mineral wool suspended in the cavity to reduce sound transmission. The wall must be clad with 12 mm plasterboard fixed on both sides using nails or screws. The wall timbers must be securely fixed, using nails or screws, to

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

Doorways formed in the new walls must be constructed as described in item 2.

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 and Drilling Timber

Notching or drilling of timbers must only be done through the horizontal and not the vertical members. The must also be kept to a minimum.

Notches:

The depth must be not more than 1/8 of the depth of the timber and be located between 1/4 and 1/12 of its span from the end bearing point.

Holes:

The diameter must be not more than 1/4 of the depth of the timber and be located between 1/3 and 1/4 of the span from the end bearing point. It must be located centrally within the depth of the timber and not closer than 3 times its diameter to another hole.

All notches and holes should be at least 100 mm apart.

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 may be a need to provide adequate ventilation, day lighting 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.

The Building Standards Division provides guidance on how to comply with the building regulations and this can be accessed on their web site at www.scotland.gov.uk/bsd. Follow the links to: 'Publications Library' 'Technical' 'Domestic Handbook'.