

Frequently Asked Questions

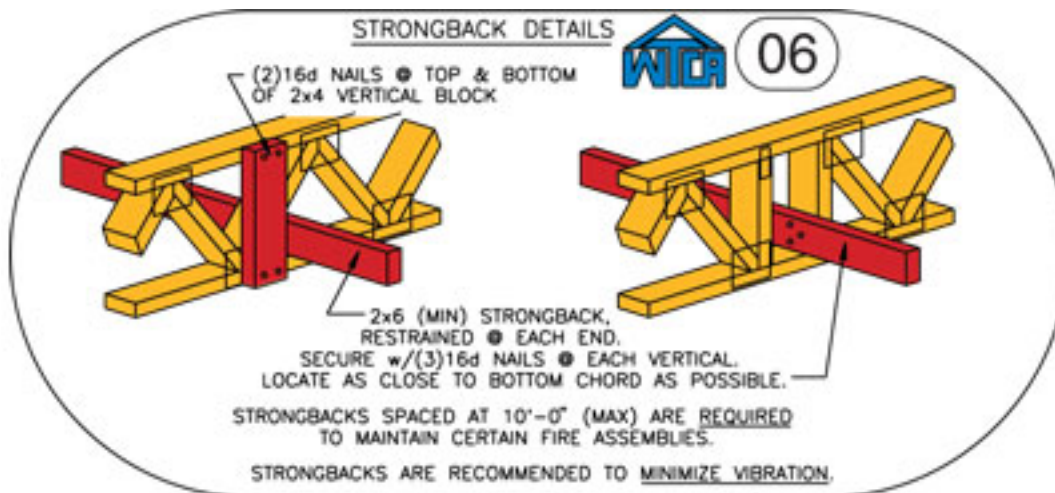
Strongback Bracing by Rachel Smith

Like most permanent bracing, strongback bracing is not usually called out on truss design drawings. However, contractors should be informed that it is one sure-fire way to improve floor system performance. Not many framers would neglect cross bridging on a solid sawn floor joist system; the same consideration should be applied to strongbacks on floor trusses. The strongback spreads out the load, thereby reducing vibration or bounce, and deflection.

One irate homeowner called me with some questions about strongbacks, or their absence, which he felt were the cause of the floor performance problems that he and his neighbors were experiencing in their tract homes. The contractor finally had to remedy the situation by jacking up their floors, cutting an opening in the end of the houses and threading strongbacks through the floor systems. This is the kind of story that makes you cringe when you think of how simple the installation would have been during the construction phase. Here are some strongback bracing guidelines.

QUESTION:

I am looking for strongback bracing requirements for a 12" deep residential floor system with trusses in lengths up to 19 feet. Can the strongback bracing end at a truss without tying into an end wall? For instance, can three trusses of a type be tied together by strongbacks, then the next series of different trusses be tied together without having to be tied back to the previous type of trusses?



ANSWER:

Strongbacks can be interrupted at transitions in the floor framing. The strongbacks should be restrained to solid framing whenever possible. If not, then you may want to consider tying the brace off with a diagonal brace, much like lateral bracing is tied off with diagonal bracing to provide triangulation of the system.

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