



# Technical Q & A

## Tips for Homeowners: Removing Interior Walls

Do you know the right questions to ask a homeowner who is considering the removal of an interior wall for remodeling purposes? Here are some tips to help you help them!

by WTCA Staff

Homeowners often call WTCA's technical department with the classic remodeling question, "Is this a load bearing wall?" Some callers are not able to articulate it as concisely, nor can they provide a very accurate description of what the framing conditions are like. To respond to this problem, we created a series of graphics to give them a few things to check in order to determine if the wall in question can be removed.

### Question

*Do 26-foot trusses (2x4 on 24" centers) need a middle wall support? I would like to remove a dividing wall in my 1960 ranch house and I don't know if it's load-bearing or not. How can I determine this?*

### Answer

It depends on whether the dividing wall is supporting the roof truss. If it is, then it is called a load-bearing wall and cannot be removed unless some other means of support is provided at that same location. If it is a non load-bearing wall (also called a partition wall) then you can safely remove the wall without changing the structural performance of the truss. There are a couple of clues that help you determine if the wall is load-bearing or not.

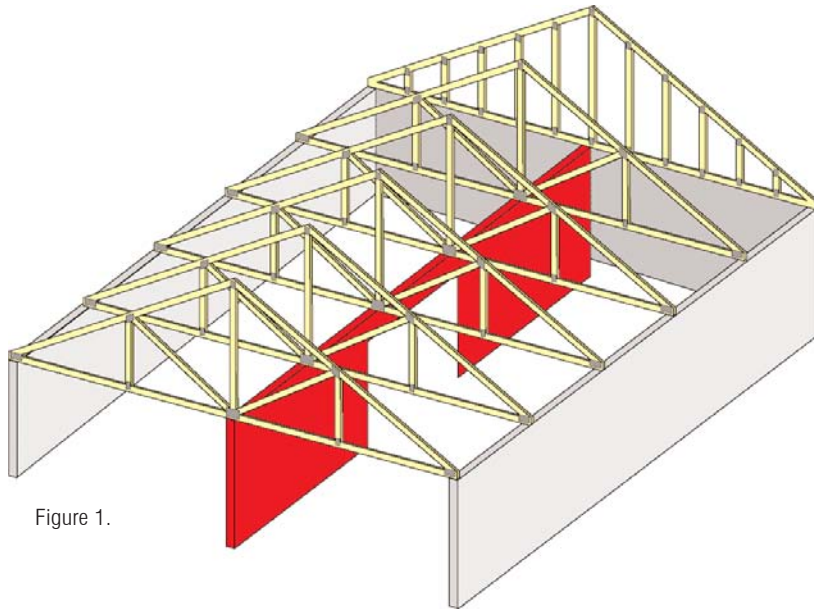


Figure 1.

1. Is the wall running lengthwise down the middle of the house? (See Figure 1.)
2. Is there a beam or bearing wall under the wall on the story below? (See Figure 2.)
3. Does the roof truss have a metal plate connected joint located at the point where it bears on the wall? (See Figure 3.)

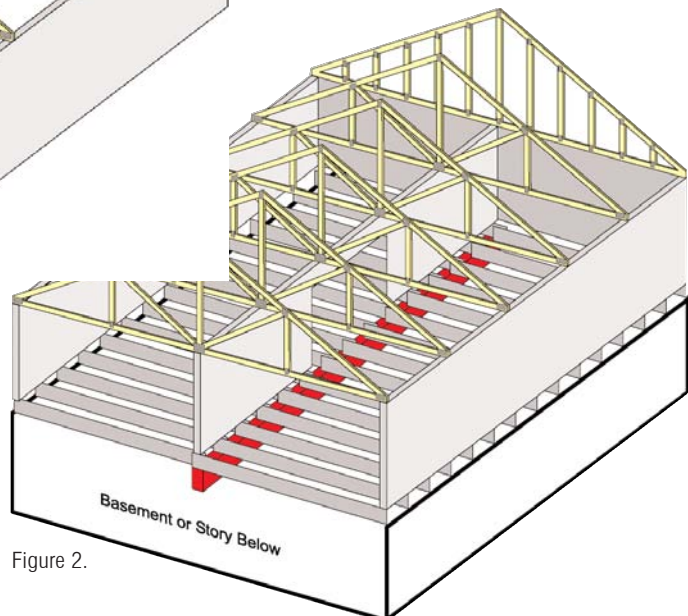


Figure 2.

### at a glance

- ❑ Three basic questions can help a homeowner determine whether or not a wall is load bearing.
- ❑ A carpenter or engineer should be consulted before a homeowner proceeds with a partition wall removal.

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then it may be a bearing wall. If you answered "no" to all the questions, then it is most likely a partition wall and can safely be removed. Either way, you should consult with a local carpenter or engineer to determine how to proceed. **SBC**

To pose a question for this column, call the WTCA technical department at 608/274-4849 or email [technicalqa@sbcmag.info](mailto:technicalqa@sbcmag.info).

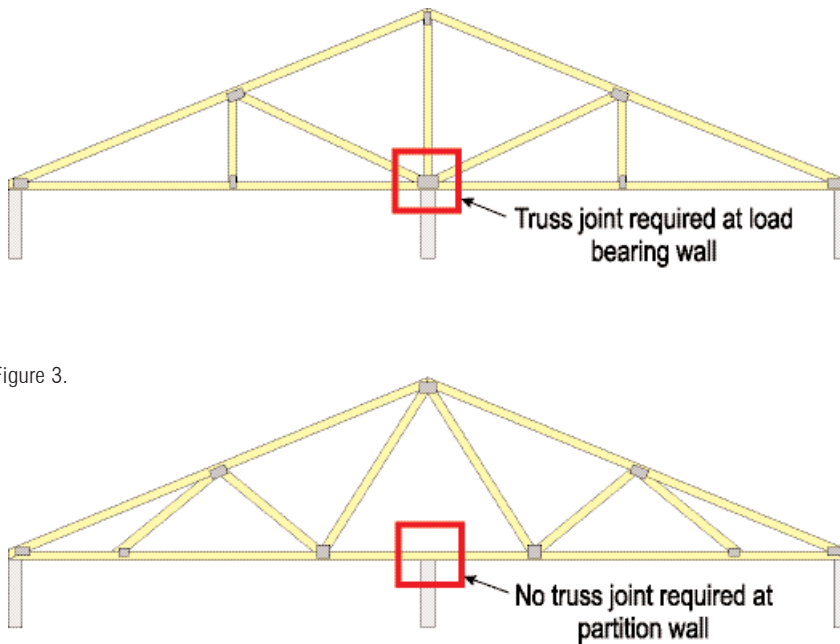


Figure 3.

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