PRACTICAL GUIDE / SEPTEMBER 2026

Preparing a load-bearing wall breakthrough

Design questions, documents and construction arrangements.

Clues are not confirmation

A wall’s position, the floor span direction and elements above may indicate a load-bearing function. Tapping a wall or measuring its thickness alone does not provide a reliable conclusion.

Look at the entire carrying route

The structural engineer assesses how the floor, roof and any walls above transfer their loads. Walls that mainly provide stability may also be structurally important.

Prepare for your project

- [ ] Drawings of upper and lower floors
- [ ] Desired opening and dimensions
- [ ] Photos of accessible connections
- [ ] Previous changes to the home

This guide helps you gather relevant information and questions. Assessment and design are tailored to your building and assignment.

YOUR PROJECT WORKSHEET

Turn understanding into agreements

Use this worksheet when speaking with your designer, structural engineer or contractor. Record unknown information as an open item.

Topic	Your note / agreement
Desired opening	
Overhead construction	
Existing drawings	
Temporary support	
Assignment and drawing revision	
Construction coordination	

The construction phase requires its own assessment

When a load-bearing element is removed, the new structure is often not yet active. During this stage, the loads must be supported through another load path.

Further reading and discussing your project

How do you recognize a load-bearing wall?

Temporary support and temporary propping plan