

# BASEMENT WALL MOVEMENT FAQ'S

**My wall has been like this for years, why should I fix it now?**

One of the three forces that holds a wall in place is downward compression. Once a wall starts to bow, the compression that was a positive force, now becomes a negative force. When a wall is no longer held in place by compression, any additional forces on a bow in the wall could cause further movement or, even worse, collapse. To prevent this from happening a support system that absorbs the tension from the bow and transfers that load to the floor systems at the top of the wall and the floor slab at the bottom of the wall should be installed.

**Should I push my wall back?**

If your wall has a total deflection (bowing in the middle, tipping at the top, or shearing at the bottom) that exceeds 3" you should consider pushing the wall back. A wall with less than 3" can usually be safely reinforced to prevent further movement.

**Do I need to have the dirt outside my wall removed when pushing it back?**

Yes. While there are contractors who will tell you they'll pull the wall back with anchors or push it back with beams, to adequately move the wall requires digging out the back fill dirt.

**Once a wall is pushed back, will it stay without reinforcement?**

No. The problem that caused it to fail still exists. Once the wall is back in place it needs to be held there with a wall reinforcement system that anchors the wall to the home's structure at the top and bottom of the wall. The process of pushing a wall back can also cause cracking and deterioration of the mortar joints in a block wall.

**If I reinforce my wall, will a home inspector raise a concern when I sell the house?**

It depends on what method you choose and if it was installed correctly. Any wall reinforcement system should extend from the ceiling to the floor and be anchored on top and bottom. It should also be touching the wall from top to bottom with no gaps. Using a system with ICC Certification is significant advantage that communicates code compliance and reliability.

**I hear carbon fiber will peel off the wall, is that true?**

Carbon Fiber is far stronger than steel, but just like steel, it needs to be anchored to be truly effective. A carbon fiber fabric system without anchoring and proper bonding can fail.

**I have a block wall that has "step" cracks. Is that caused by inward wall movement?**

Step cracking can be a sign of two separate, but related issues. Step cracks in the corners may be a sign of wall movement and/or settlement. If there are also cracks in the corners of your floor this is typically a sign of settlement. Step cracks going from the top and bottom of the wall towards the middle are typically an indication of inward movements of the wall.

**My wall is only pushed in a little, can't I just repair the cracks for now?**

Repairing the cracks is usually a temporary fix. You will likely experience a failure in the crack repair or see new cracking as the pressure against the wall continues. Once pressure on the wall begins pushing the wall inward it can escalate very quickly. One bad weather event could force a more extensive repair or even be catastrophic for your wall. It is advisable to reinforce it as soon as symptoms appear.