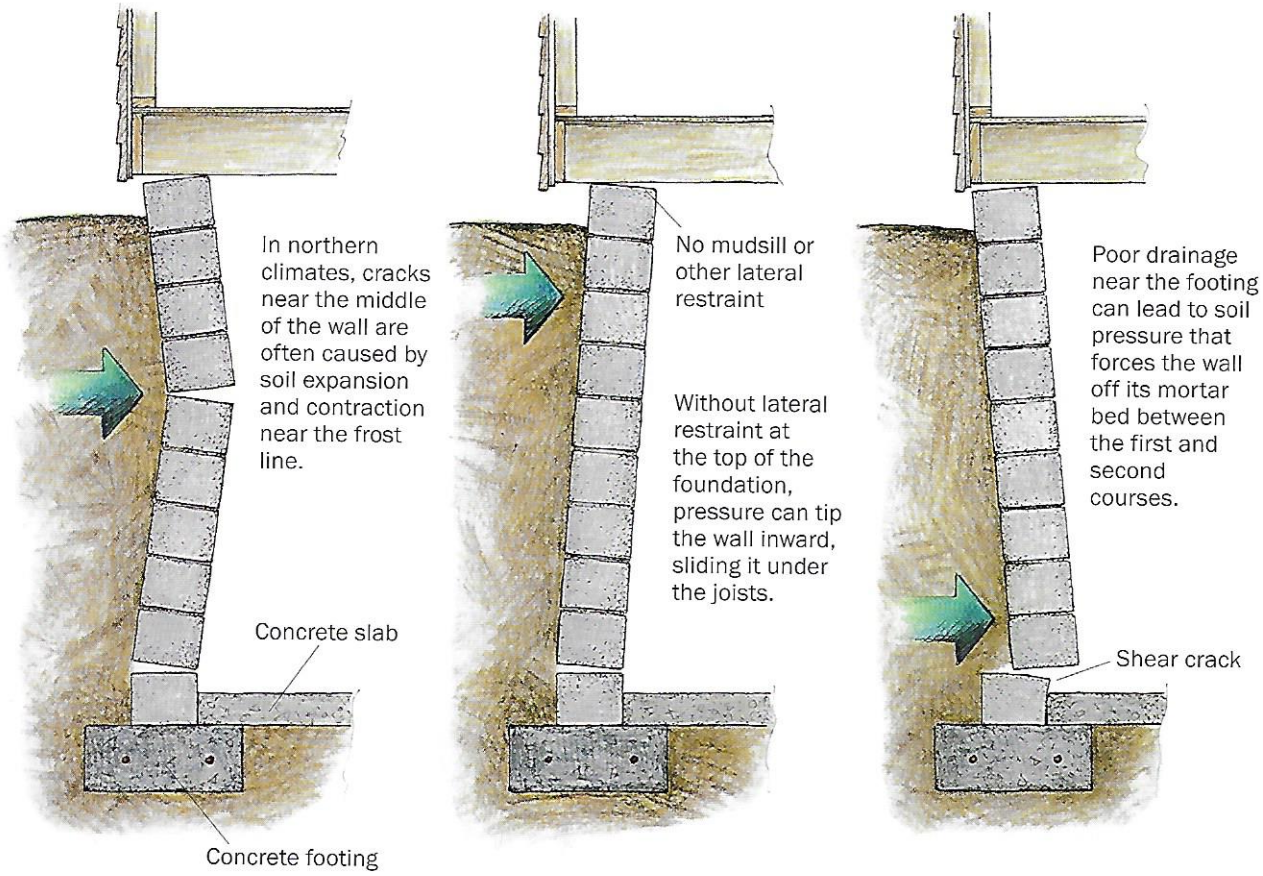


Soil Pressure Can Push a Block Wall off Its Footings



Without proper drainage, water gathers in the soil surrounding foundation walls, often finding its way into the basement. Sometimes disaster is unavoidable, as in the photo on p. 135, shot after a storm dumped 6 in. of rain in three hours. Other times, pressure builds slowly, particularly during freeze/thaw cycles. The drawing above illustrates how soil pressure can tip foundation walls inward, cracking the mortar joints. Any wall displaced more than 1 in. from a plumb position must be excavated. Walls displaced less than 1 in. can be braced from inside.