OTTAWA DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS

Interior Strip-Outs

Stripping rooms to the studs and removing non-load-bearing partitions.

4 Expert Answers from Demolition IQ

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Q1

What is included in an Ottawa interior strip-out quote?

A written quote for an interior strip-out should spell out exactly which materials come out, where the work stops, and what happens to the debris. Those three things are where quotes for the same job can look very different on paper.

On scope, the quote should name every element being removed: drywall, plaster, insulation, flooring, ceiling finishes, cabinets, fixtures, trim. If the quote says "gut the kitchen" without listing what that includes, ask for a line-by-line breakdown. The same goes for a bathroom or basement. Published prices seen October 2026 (Ontario, GTA and Canadian sources; we found no Ottawa-specific published price) put a kitchen strip-out at about $1,500 to $5,000, a bathroom at about $1,000 to $4,000, a single room gutted at about $1,500 to $4,500, and a basement strip-out at about $4,000 to $11,000. Interior demolition per square foot runs about $4 to $15 for selective removal and about $12 to $25 for a full gut to the studs. What moves a price is the size of the space, whether it is wood-frame or masonry construction, what is below grade and excluded from the quote, and whether asbestos or other designated substances have to be removed first by an abatement contractor.

On stopping point, the quote should state clearly where the work ends. Stripping to the studs is different from stripping to the framing and subfloor. Anything below grade, including slab removal, is excavation work and is priced separately if it appears at all. Ask whether the quote covers slab removal or stops at grade.

On designated substances, ask the contractor how the designated substances list will be handled and whether an abatement contractor is involved before the strip-out begins; asbestos testing and removal are covered at ottawaabatement.com, not in the strip-out quote.

On debris, the City says building and demolition waste is not collected with regular garbage and must go to Trail Road or another landfill. Ask whether hauling is included in the price, and if so, ask where the debris goes.

On payment, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 says that if a consumer agreement includes an estimate, the contractor cannot charge more than 10 per cent above that estimate.

When you set two written quotes side by side, check that each one names the same list of materials coming out, draws the line at the same stopping point in the structure, and accounts for debris removal in the same way, because a lower number that excludes hauling or stops short of the subfloor is not the same job.

Q2

Does an interior strip-out in Ottawa need a site fence?

Building By-law 2014-220 Part XIII requires the permit holder to erect a site fence before demolition, but it carves out an exemption: no fence is needed where all the demolition "is contained within an existing structure, and entry to the structure is limited". An interior strip-out stays inside the building, so the exemption applies when entry to the building is also limited.

The Ontario construction regulation O. Reg. 213/91 s.65 puts a parallel obligation on the constructor: a sturdy fence at least 1.8 metres high where work may endanger people on a public way. Ask the contractor whether any part of the work could endanger people on the street.

One thing to keep in mind: the by-law's fence exemption is written for the permit holder, and the regulation's fence requirement is written for the constructor doing the work. If the scope changes, for example if an exterior wall or part of the roof is opened up, ask whether a fence is then needed. Ask the contractor to confirm in writing that the scope stays entirely inside the structure, and ask what they will do if the work changes.

On the permit side, we did not find a City statement either way on whether an interior strip-out to the studs needs a demolition permit. The City's demolition page names only two exemptions: silos and barns, and non-load-bearing interior partitions. A full gut of a room or a floor is broader than removing a partition, and the renovation that follows may need its own building permit. Ask Building Code Services before work starts whether a permit is required for the strip-out itself.

Before work starts, have a written contract that sets out exactly which rooms and finishes are coming out, where the work stops, the total price, and the start and completion dates.

Q3

Is removing a non-load-bearing wall in Ottawa demolition or carpentry?

Removing a non-load-bearing wall is demolition work on this site; removing a load-bearing one is structural carpentry.

Where this site's scope ends

This site covers demolition down to grade: whole buildings and structures, interior strip-outs including non-load-bearing partitions, and debris removal. The City's demolition page names the exemption that matters here: "the demolition of non-load bearing interior partitions does not require a demolition permit." So the partition itself needs no demolition permit.

What it does not settle is whether the renovation that follows needs its own building permit. Ask the City's Building Code Services what permits the full scope of your project requires before anyone starts.

The load-bearing question is the more important one here. Whether a wall is load-bearing is a structural question this site does not answer. Load-bearing walls, beams and shoring are covered on ottawacarpenters.ca.

If the project is larger, say gutting a bathroom or kitchen to the studs, the strip-out prices apply. Published prices seen October 2026 (Ontario, GTA and Canadian sources; we found no Ottawa-specific published price) put a bathroom strip-out at about $1,000 to $4,000 and a kitchen strip-out at about $1,500 to $5,000, depending on the size of the space, whether the structure is wood-frame or masonry, and whether any designated substances need to be handled by an abatement contractor before the main work begins.

Before work starts on any interior removal, have a written contract that sets out exactly which walls or finishes are coming down, where the work stops, what happens to the debris, the total price, and the start and completion dates.

Q4

Strip-out of a water-damaged main floor in Riverside South: what to ask?

A main-floor strip-out after water damage falls into the interior demolition category. Published prices seen October 2026 (Ontario, GTA and Canadian sources; we found no Ottawa-specific published price) put a single-room gut at about $1,500 to $4,500, and selective interior demolition at about $4 to $15 per square foot, rising to about $12 to $25 per square foot for a full gut to the studs.

What moves the price for your job is the size of the area being stripped, how much of the finish comes out (flooring, drywall, cabinets, subfloor), and whether any designated substances turn up before work starts. In an older home, Health Canada says to hire a professional to test for asbestos before demolition or renovation work, and notes that homes built before 1960 probably contain lead-based paint. The City's demolition permit page says that under section 30 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, a project owner must identify designated substances and provide a list to prospective contractors before entering into a binding contract. Ask the contractor how they handle the designated substances list for a water-damaged interior, and whether a separate abatement contractor needs to come in first. Asbestos testing and removal is a job for an abatement specialist; for that part of the work, ottawaabatement.com covers the Ottawa area.

On the permit question: the City says non-load-bearing interior partitions do not require a demolition permit, but we did not find a City statement covering a full main-floor strip-out to the studs. Confirm with the City's Building Code Services before work starts, and note that the renovation following the strip-out may need a building permit of its own.

A few things to get in writing before signing:

- exactly what comes out and where the work stops (subfloor, joists, plumbing rough-in)
- whether debris removal and hauling are included in the price
- who applies for any permit that turns out to be needed

The Consumer Protection Act, 2002 says that if the contract includes an estimate, the supplier cannot charge more than 10 per cent above that estimate. It also gives you 10 days after receiving the written agreement to cancel without reason, if the contract was signed at your home.
The one question to ask each contractor before signing: where exactly does your price stop, and what would you bill separately if more damage turns up once the floor is open?

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Demolition Contractors. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa) before any demolition. The City requires a permit to demolish a building or structure, and every utility connected to the property signs off

before the permit is issued. Information is current as of November 22, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawademolitioncontractors.ca** for the latest answers.