

Walking the Hellweg

'Walking the Hellweg' is a self-guided walking tour of the Hellweg hardware store in the Moabit neighbourhood of Berlin. It is the third iteration of a project that started with an 'ArtSchool Palestine' residency in Nablus in 2011, where Tom Bogaert mapped remnants of 'inverse geometry' as described by Eyal Weizman in his 'Walking Through Walls.' The Hellweg Hardware Walk is an indoor application of a recent paper by Naomi Smith and Peter Walters in which they introduce the concept of 'desire lines' as a means of overcoming or re-imagining defensive space. 'Walking the Hellweg' questions "how individuals and social movements might practically, and in a metaphorical sense, create new collective paths, creating desire lines of resistance and change within what is often an increasingly unforgiving and dominated urban environment, created by and for capital at the expense of a vibrant public realm."

Start on the northwest corner of the Hellweg parking lot next to the [Gedenkort Güterbahnhof](#) ① [Moabit](#) ② Walk across the car park towards the main entrance and enter the [Hellweg](#) ③ store. Once inside wear a mask and disinfect your hands regularly. Roughly follow the [Rettungsweg](#) ④ as indicated on the map in green. Stroll the aisles for about twenty minutes. Don't buy anything and leave the building through the most south-eastern [emergency exit](#) ⑤

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① [Gedenkort Güterbahnhof Moabit](#) commemorates the deportation of more than 30,000 Jews from the former Moabit freight station to the extermination camps. The memorial was inaugurated in 2011 after a competition won by the Berlin artists' collective 'raumlaborberlin.' The project was financed from lottery funds.

② The name [Moabit](#) comes from the Huguenots, in the time of King Frederick William I of Prussia. These French protestant refugees are said to have named their new residence in reference to the biblical description of the Israelites in the country of Moab, where they stayed before being allowed to enter Canaan.

③ The [Hellweg](#) company is named after Europe's most important trading route in the Middle Ages: the 'Hellweg' from Aachen through today's Ruhr area to Berlin. The origin of the name is disputed. According to one account, it can be traced back to the Germanic goddess of death 'Hel' and the road to the underworld.

④ [Rettungsweg](#) escape route or path to salvation.

⑤ [Emergency exit](#) or Notausgang. Unlawful use of an emergency exit constitutes a criminal offence under German law.