

# RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

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# When Do You Need a Permit for a Shed or Other Accessory Structure?

What Is an Accessory Structure? An accessory structure is a structure that is smaller than and separate from your house. It is used for storage or other non-business or living (non-habitable) purposes. Some examples are:

- Sheds
- Greenhouses
- Detached Garage

- Detached unenclosed covered patio
- Detached deck with a roof

When Do You Need a Permit? A permit is a special permission you need from the city before building something. You don't need a permit for an accessory structure if:

- 1. They are less than one-story tall and under 15 feet in height.
- 2. They are **no bigger than 200 square feet** (about the size of a big room).
- 3. **If your property is larger than 2 acres**, you can build up to **400 square feet**, but it has to be at **least 20 feet** away from your property lines.

## Where Can You Put the Building?

- Small buildings (less than 200 square feet and under 10 feet tall) don't need to meet distance rules (setbacks¹) from your property lines when behind the furthest part of your house from the street (back building line²) unless stated otherwise. (See pink area in the diagram on the next page).
- **Big buildings** (more than 200 square feet or taller than 10 feet) must follow setback rules about how far they have to be from your property lines.
- If you put a building within six feet of your house, it must follow fire safety rules.

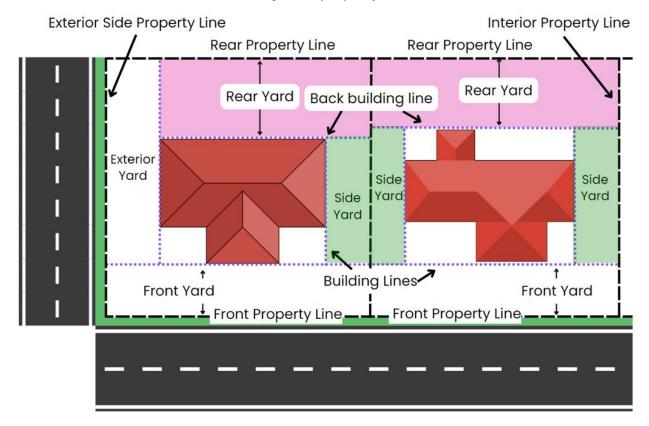
### **Specific Rules for Some Structures:**

- **Detached or attached covered patios and decks**: These can be placed in your backyard but must be **at least 10 feet** away from the rear property line. The patio or deck roof **can extend an extra 2 feet** into this area. (See pink area in the diagram on the next page).
- Detached or attached uncovered decks: These can be in the backyard or side yard, but they
  must be at least 5 feet away from property lines. (See the pink and green areas in the diagram
  on the next page.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Setback: The minimum required distance measured perpendicularly from a property line to the nearest vertical portion (including wall, support pillar, porch) of a building or structure.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Back Building Line: A line that runs parallel with the point of the house furthest from the street.

• **Play Structures**: These can go in the backyard or side yard, but if they are **over 6 feet tall**, they need to be **at least 5 feet away** from property lines.



The diagram shows the location of the back building line, side yard, and rear side yard. Below is another explanation of setbacks for the rear yard (pink area) and side yard (green area).

- Pink area (rear yard):
  - o **Small building:** No setback requirement.
  - o **Big building:** Follow setback requirements.
  - Detached or attached covered patio and decks: At least 10 feet from the rear property line, the roof can extend an extra 2 feet.
  - Detached or attached uncovered decks: At least 5 feet from property lines.
  - o Play structures: At least 5 feet from property lines.
- Green area (side yard):
  - o **Small building:** Follow setback requirements.
  - o **Big building:** Follow setback requirements.
  - Detached or attached covered patio and decks: Follow setback requirements.
  - o **Detached or attached uncovered decks:** At least **5 feet** from property lines.
  - o Play structures: At least 5 feet from property lines.

### **Temporary Storage Structures (like PODs):**

- These are allowed in your yard for up to 10 days each year.
- If you have a construction trailer (typically for the construction of a home, subdivision, commercial or industrial site), it must be removed within **2 weeks** after finishing the project (issuance of final certificate of occupancy).

### **Important Notes:**

You can't build a shed or other accessory building before building your house.

- If you want to build a detached garage, you can get the permit at the same time as your house permit.
- Even if you don't need a building permit, you may still be required to follow other rules like setback requirements or not building over an easement.

**Before You Build:** Check with your local building division (503) 434-7314 and planning division (503-434-7311) to make sure your building is allowed. They'll also help you make sure it follows all the rules.

**If You Need a Permit:** If you do need a permit, you will need to apply using our ePermitting software. Please visit <u>here</u> to create an account and provide the following information:

### 1. Site plan of your property, including:

- North Arrow
- Scale
- Lot Dimensions
- o Topographical elevations (including all corners), if flat please indicate
- Setback of buildings from all property lines
- Easements
- Street widths adjacent to property lines
- Complete street address

### 2. **Full sets of building plans** that show how the building will be built. These should include:

- Scale of each drawing (all plans must be 1/4" scale)
- Please note square footage.
- o Framing plan, including wall, roof, and floor framing if not on a slab.
- Foundation plan, including foundation and footing sizes, and bolt and holdown information (if applicable).
- Floor plan, including doors and windows.