

## Smart Builder Tips

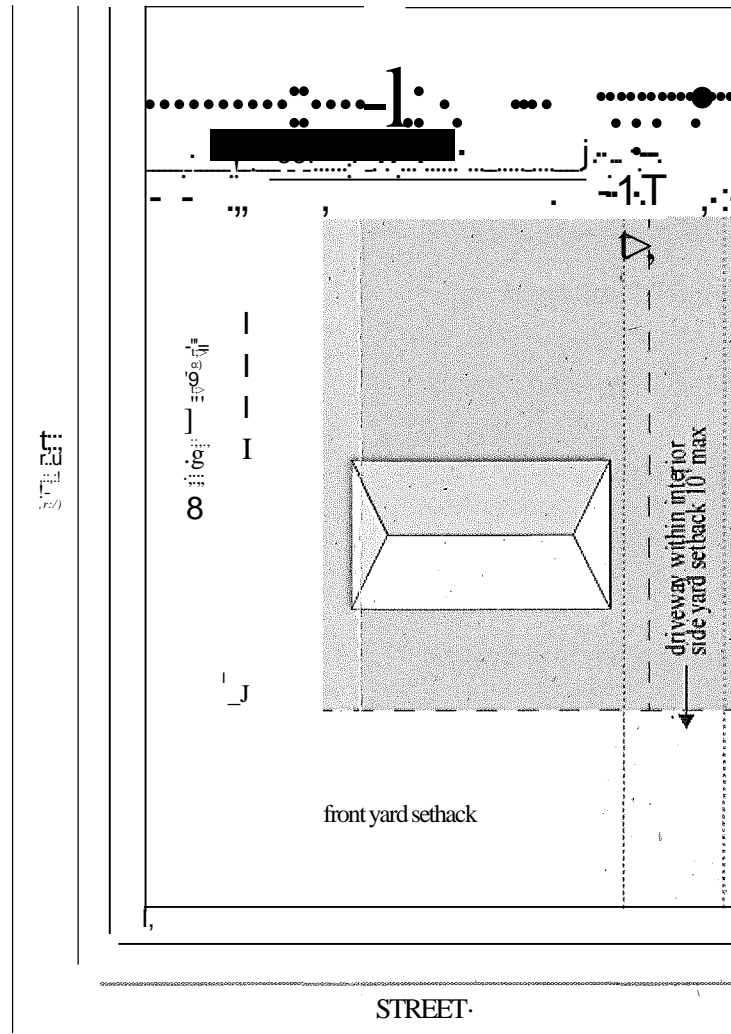
- Try to get at least three estimates: Check contractors references. Visit projects the contractor has built.
- If you have a concern about a contractor you may contact the Wisconsin Agricultural Department, Consumer Protection Division, 266-9836 or the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Consumer Protection Division, 266-852.
- Check with the Register of Deeds for deed or plat restrictions prior to construction. Building Inspection and Zoning do not have this information.
- Not all garage and shed kits meet building code. Check with Building Inspection before you buy a kit.
- Building the overhead door higher to accommodate vans and boats can be a good resale feature.
- Use ceiling and rafter space as storage area. Build it in when constructing your project.
- Seal concrete floors to prevent salt damage. They clog your neighbor's property.
- To prevent wall damage, place a 2x10 board at bumper height across the end of your garage.
- Position and install lights to assure your safety; Make sure they do not shine on your neighbor's property.

## Where to Place Your Garage

Garages not allowed in the shaded area

Corner lots or irregularly shaped lots will have different front, side and rear setbacks than the lot shown on the right. Draw your site plan to scale (1"=20') and contact Zoning for help in placing your structure.

Your specific yard dimensions may vary according to your zoning district.



parking allowed in shaded areas and on driveways in approved locations

- Show all structures, dimensions of all structures and distance from property lines of all structures. Show the driveway, sidewalks, patios, or other impervious surfaces.

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Yard Improvement Series ...

# Detached Garages



Department of Planning & Community  
& Economic Development

# Follow these 6 Steps " " " " " "

1 Find out if your proposed detached garage meets the size, placement and driveway requirements.

## Size

- .. A garage must be smaller than your house.
- The maximum area of all accessory buildings, including garages, on a property is 10% of the total lot area but no more than 1,000 square feet.
- The maximum size of an individual garage is 576 square feet in the TR District and 800 square feet in all other districts.
- Garages **cannot** cover more than 50% of your required rear-yard.
- Open space and lot coverage requirements may limit the size of your garage. These requirements vary depending on the zoning district.
- The maximum height of a garage is 15 feet measured from the ground to a point midway between the eave and top of the roof. The garage cannot exceed the height of the house.

## Placement

- Detached garages must be at least 3 feet away from your house or other structures.
- Garages cannot be closer than 3 feet from a rear lot line or 3 feet from a side lot line if located behind the rear plane of the house.
- A garage placed at the side of your house requires a greater setback from the side lot line. Generally between 5 and 7 feet of space is required. Your zoning district determines the side yard setback distance.

.. Call or visit the Building Inspection Office for assistance in determining the rear yard area if your lot is on a corner or is irregularly shaped.

## Driveways

- Driveways must be at least 8 feet wide but no greater than 22 feet wide at the property line.
- All driveways must lead only to a garage or legal parking space.
- There is no setback required between a driveway and side lot line.
- If you want to expand an existing driveway opening or add a second driveway opening, check with the Engineering Division at (608) 266-4751 to find out the specific driveway opening requirements in your area.

2 **Prepare a site plan.** With these requirements in mind, make an 8 1/2 by 11 inch drawing (site plan) drawn to scale showing your house, proposed garage, and any other structures on the property. Also show the driveway, sidewalks, patios, and other impervious surfaces. Label the property and building dimensions, the distances from all lot lines, and the distances from all other structures. Using a scale of 1"=20' or 1"=16' usually works best. City Zoning staff can review your site plan to help you determine where you can build your garage and the size you can make it.

3 **Apply for a permit.** You need a building permit to build any garage. Come to the Building Inspection Permit Counter and apply for the permit. Bring in the following information, and we will set up your permit in the computer system.

- Bring 2 copies of the 8 1/2 x 11 inch **site plan** you made in Step 2.

.. You also need 2 sets of the construction detail plans, floor plans with structural information, and a building section.

Staff will review your plans for completeness and zoning compliance while you wait.

For simple projects, your plans can be reviewed and a permit issued in about one hour. More complex projects may take up to 5 working days for review.

4 **Pay the fee and receive your permit.** The City charges for building permits to cover the cost of plan review and on-site inspections.

The fee for new buildings is based on the square footage of the building: Staff will calculate your project's exact fee once they have approved your plans. A fee schedule is available at the Permit Counter.

5 **Start the work** authorized by your permit. Be sure to display the permit where it can be seen from the street for the duration of the construction project.

6 **Call for an inspection.** When your permit is issued, Permit Counter staff will tell you when inspections are required and the name and phone number of the Building Inspector for your area.

**It is your responsibility to schedule all required inspections during and after construction.**

If your project requires several permits (electrical, heating or plumbing), a different inspector may come out to check each type of work.

If any work does not pass inspection, it must be corrected.

## Need Help?

At any time during the planning or construction of your garage, call or visit Building Inspection staff. We are happy to answer your questions and suggest solutions to your problems.

**Phone:**  
Building Inspection Division: 608.266.4551

**Fax/Web:**  
Fax: 608.266.6377  
<http://www.cityofmadison.com>

E-mail: [bldginspect@cityofmadison.com](mailto:bldginspect@cityofmadison.com)

**Location:**  
City of Madison Building Inspection Division  
126 S Hamilton St  
Madison WI 53703

**Mailing Address:**  
City of Madison  
Building Inspection Division  
P.O. Box 2984  
Madison, WI 53701-2984