

What is an accessory building?

An accessory building or structure is a subordinate structure on the same lot, the use of which is incidental to that of the main structure. It is also used exclusively by the occupants or owners of the main structure.

Accessory building standards:

The standards for all accessory buildings are as follows:

- The maximum height shall be 15' and no more than 1 story tall from finished or natural grade, whichever is lower and creates a lower profile. Lofts that do not have sufficient headrooms for occupancy are permitted for storage use only.
- Please refer to example (1) for illustration (SEE BACK PAGE)**
- Shall not be located in a required front or side yard.
 - Must be at least 5' from any other structures located on the same lot.
 - Must be at least 5' from any property line, except in the R-M zone where no setback is required.
 - The maximum lot coverage is 15% (calculated exclusive of the required building setbacks) and cannot exceed the allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Any accessory buildings in excess of 450 S.F. requires the approval of the Planning Director through the administrative procedure for minor residential projects.
 - When located in a reversed corner lot, accessory buildings cannot project beyond the front yard line required on the lot in the rear of such lot.

- Breezeways may be used to provide shelter between buildings
- Accessory buildings may have plumbing installed providing the fixtures may be served by a 2" diameter building drain. Building drains in excess of 2" may be approved by the Planning Director where justification can be documented.

Exceptions:

In the R-1 zones, required side and rear yards for accessory buildings other than accessory living quarters and secondary dwelling units, may be reduced to no less than 3' from a property line if an application is approved through the administrative procedure for minor residential projects. A reduction in setbacks in the side yard abutting a street and conversion of accessory buildings with reduced setbacks to an accessory living quarter or secondary dwelling unit is prohibited.

Please refer to example (2) for illustration (SEE BACK PAGE)

Example of permitted uses in residential zones :

The following uses are permitted only if they comply with the "accessory building standards":

- Private garages and carports
- Studios for private use
- Garden structures
- Greenhouses
- Hobby shops
- Recreation rooms
- Free-standing patio covers

Note: Horse barns and shelters not included. For more information, please contact the Planning Department.

All accessory living quarter shall bear a reasonable relationship to the primary structure and should comply with the following guidelines:

- The structure shall not be plumbed and wired to allow an independent living unit (220 wiring not permitted).

The structure shall not include a bar sink in addition to a bathroom sink.

- The structure shall not include more than one main room in addition to a bathroom or changing room. Baths, closets and other rooms with less than 75 S.F. of floor area are not considered a main room.
- The structure shall not include cooking facilities (e.g., stove, oven, dishwasher, refrigerator).

*Exceptions may be made by the deciding body on a case by case basis. An exception shall not be considered a precedent for any other application.

What is the definition of kitchen?

This definition is provided with the intent to prohibit the unlawful conversion of accessory living space into either temporary or permanent living quarters. A kitchen is defined as having all three of the following appliances:

- Sink
- Refrigerator
- Built-in counter top cooking facilities

Additional appliances such as dishwasher or microwave ovens that may be combined with any two or three of the above appliances to constitute a kitchen. Wet bars are defined as utilizing a sink and/or refrigerator only, with the refrigerator not over 6 cubic feet in size.

Plumbing fixtures requirements:

Accessory structures may have plumbing installed providing the fixtures may be served by a 2" diameter building drain. Building drains in excess of 2" may be approved by the Planning Director when justifications are provided. It is the policy of the Town not to approve shower or bath facilities except for pool cabana buildings, and then only when the cabana is in close proximity to the pool.

Other Questions?

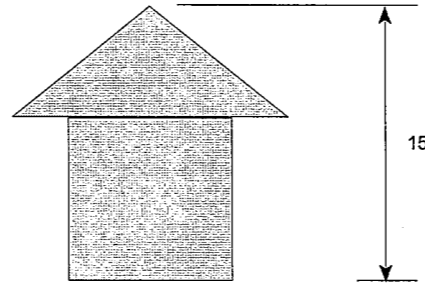
For answers to other questions, please contact the Planning Department:

Town of Los Gatos
Community Development Department
110 East Main Street
Los Gatos, 95031
(408) 354-6874

www.losgatosca.gov

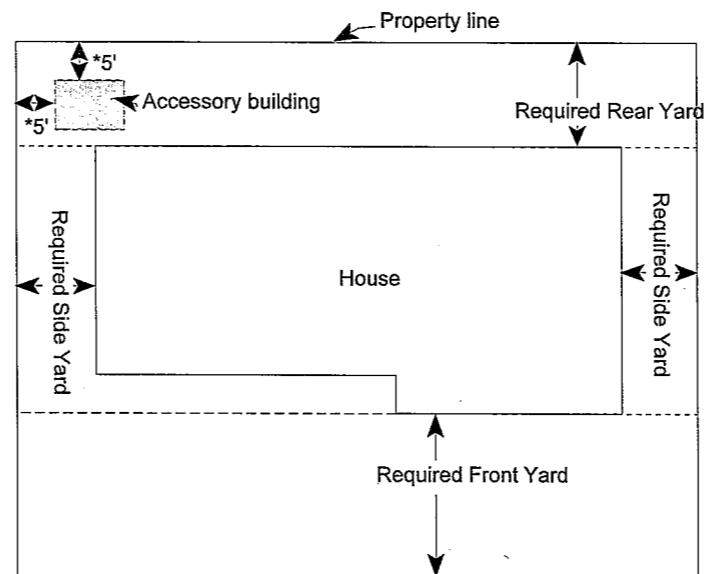
Example (1)

Note: The maximum height for any accessory structure is 15 feet from finished or natural grade, whichever is lower and creates a lower profile.



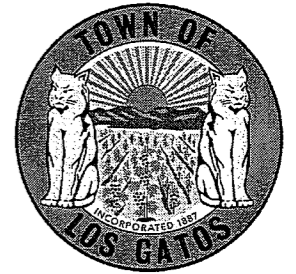
Example (2)

Note: The accessory structure cannot occupy more than 15 % of the lot and exceed the allowable FAR.



*May be reduced to a minimum of 3' in the R-1 zone if approved.

Town of Los Gatos
Community Development
Department



Accessory Building Standards
Summary Handout