



Building a Garage Tips

For Homeowners

These TIPS can be also helpful for building a garage, outbuilding or tiny house in your backyard.

Detached accessory buildings can be a garage, outbuilding, shed, studio, or tiny house. Most of these tips can be applied to all of these buildings, but check with your local zoning and building codes for regulations for accessory buildings.

Please remember these aren't all the tips or zoning information you may need to know...just a start!

HOMework:

- Determine your use of the future accessory building
 - Check your local zoning and building codes for uses and allowable sizes (footprint) of accessory buildings (regulations change)
 - Determine the average height of your house's ridge point
 - Determine the roof pitch of your house
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1 Zoning and Building Codes:

Nashville building codes require that your accessory structure be located to the rear of the principal dwelling and comply with the district setbacks. In addition, your detached accessory building can be no taller than your house:

"The top elevation of an accessory structure shall not exceed the top elevation of the principal dwelling."

https://www.municode.com/library/tn/metro_government_of_nashville_and_davidson_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CD_TIT17ZO_CH17.12DIBURE

In addition, you may need to match the roof pitch (slope) of your existing house. Historic houses usually have higher pitch roofs, but brick ranchers have a lower roof pitch such as 4:12. You may only be able to build a one story accessory building if your house has a low pitch roof and/or if it is a short, one story home.

Garage plans with apartments above can be a great addition to any property. However if your house is under 23'-0" tall, you may not be able to fit a useable apartment upstairs and comply to height regulations.

What is the maximum square footage that your accessory building can be? Nashville and Davidson County Municode state that accessory buildings shall be limited to 700 square feet or 50 percent of the building coverage of the principal dwelling, whichever is greater. However, this number varies depending on the use of the accessory building.



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2 Property Site Conditions:

Do you know where your sewer line is located on your lot?

Has the sewer line been replaced with PVC pipe?

You weren't expecting those questions, were you?

Many historic houses are built in neighborhoods with smaller lots that have an alley. Usually, the sewer line will run from the house to the alley. Sometimes the sewer line will not have ever been replaced, and will still be made of the original clay tile pipe. If it your sewer line is clay tile pipe, you will need to replace this at some point.

You will definitely need to replace a clay tile pipe sewer line if you are building your accessory building over it. This will be an additional cost that you will need to be aware of, and an important piece of information to pass on to your contractor so they can include it in the bid.

It is allowable to build an accessory building over a sewer line, but I highly recommend replacing it while you are digging in the backyard, and before you build a new structure on top! If money is tight, you can partially replace the sewer line under the accessory building and install a cleanout near the building.



True story:

One of my clients once hired a questionable garage builder, who didn't acknowledge the sewer line on their lot and was going to build right over it without replacing any of it or installing a sewer line cleanout station.

HOMework:

- Determine where your sewer is located
 - Determine if it has been replaced
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3 Health and Safety

These health and safety tips pertain to a garage with an apartment above or adjacent to the garage. You can never be too cautious when it comes to the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and fire hazards.

First, we recommend you:

- 1) Install a carbon dioxide tester in the garage first floor and second floor of the building AND/OR follow all applicable building codes <http://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm>
- 2) Install a combination smoke and fire alarm that combines both ionization and photoelectric technologies with direct wire with battery backup AND/OR follow all applicable building codes <http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/fire-and-safety-equipment/smoke-alarms/ionization-vs-photoelectric>
- 3) Dwell Space® is a residential safety organization. SAFETY PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS: <https://www.dwellsafe.biz/recommendations>

Other possible building code fire and safety issues to consider:

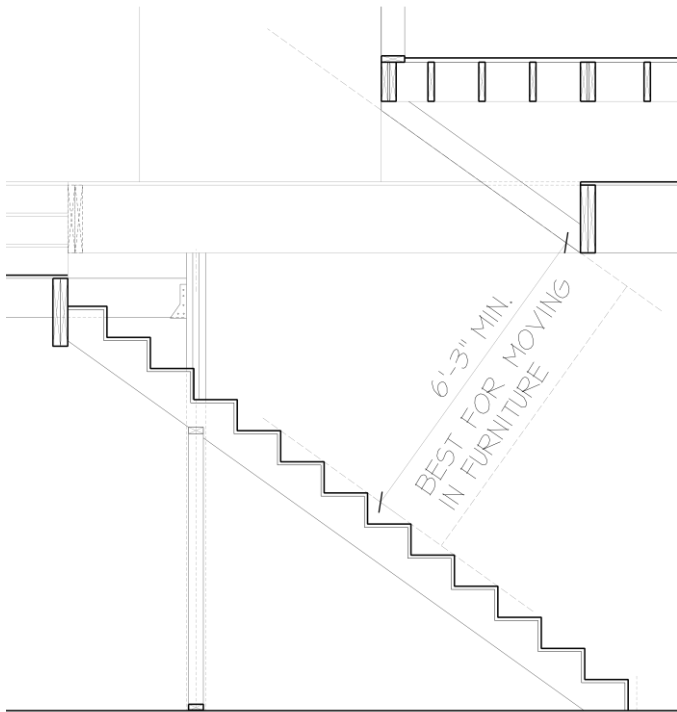
- GARAGE CEILING DRYWALL (if apartment is above garage) AND STAIRWELL DRYWALL :
Layer of 5/8 " type 'x' gypsum fire rated wallboard - tape and seal all joints.
- DOORS BETWEEN GARAGE AREA AND LIVING AREA:
3'-0" x 6'-8" - solid wood door no less than 1 3/8 " min. thickness OR solid/honeycomb core steel door no less than 1 3/8 " min. thickness OR 20 min. fire rated door; as per all applicable codes - provide lock set door hardware and insulate if possible with fire rated door.
- CEILING FRAMING BETWEEN GARAGE AREA AND LIVING AREA:
We recommended installing spray foam in the garage ceiling framing and stairway wall, to insulate and seal all holes and joints from carbon monoxide infiltration. Spray foam is the best air infiltration sealer.

Fire rating for living/sleeping areas above or next to the garage or personal areas is very important! Building codes vary from city to city, so check with a local building codes expert or design professional in your area.

Some building codes may require one or two layers of 5/8" thick fire rated drywall be used on garage ceiling and walls if a living space is above or adjacent to the garage. You will need a fire rated or approved fire door if it opens into the garage from the living space. Check with YOUR local building codes and government zoning requirements.



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SECTION OF STAIRWELL

We hope these tips have been helpful!

Again building codes, ordinances, zoning, etc. change and vary. These restrictions are subject to change even as I am typing these tips! This information is meant as a guide to get you started thinking about what questions you will need to ask your residential designer and the building code official.

Please check with your local zoning and building codes for sizes and uses of accessory buildings, and remember, these aren't all the tips or zoning information you may need to know.

Check out our FAQ at

<https://taylormadeplans.com/faqs-garages-outbuildings-tiny-houses/>

4 Stair Design and Layout:

Stair design and layout will be dictated by your local building codes, but there are important factors to consider beyond just meeting the codes. For example, clearance for head height is obviously critical. It is possible to design a staircase that meets the building codes, but doesn't allow you to move a queen box spring mattress upstairs to the bedroom...yes it does happen! Make sure your stair well is designed so you can move furniture upstairs easily.



Feeling Overwhelmed?

Contact us today and let us assist with the process.

<https://taylormadeplans.com/garages-outbuildings-tiny-house-plans/>

Garage Portfolio

Locate at

https://taylormadeplans.com/portfolio_category/garages-outbuildings-tiny-houses/

for examples of my work!

