

Floor Area in Pitkin County

FLOOR AREA means the sum of the gross horizontal surfaces of each floor of a building or structure. In calculating floor area, the following rules apply:

A. For properties within the Rural Area and properties within the Aspen Area Urban Growth Boundary not subject to floor area ratio restrictions through underlying zoning, the following shall apply to the calculation of floor area:

1. General: In measuring floor area, all dimensions shall be taken from the outside face of framing or other primary wall members or from the center line of walls separating adjoining units of a building or portion thereof. Fireplaces, elevators, stairs and similar features are included in the floor area on each floor.

2. Measurement of Total Floor Area for a Property: In measuring floor area for a property, all structures shall be included in the calculation except those enclosing wastewater treatment plants, and Barns on certain parcels as provided in Section 9-110-057.

3. Roof Overhangs and Decks: The floor area of a building, or portion thereof, not provided with surrounding exterior walls shall include the area under the horizontal projection of roofs or floors, when the roof or floor exceeds five feet (5'). These architectural projections are exempt for five feet (5') of the perimeter of each story of the structure. This exemption cannot be used to transfer space between floors.

4. Decks, Balconies, Stairways and Similar Features: Structures that exceed thirty inches (30") above natural or finished grade, and that are not covered by a roof or architectural projection from a building, are exempt from floor area for up to fifteen percent (15%) of the approved floor area for the subject parcel or lot. Any areas in excess of fifteen percent (15%) shall be counted toward floor area.

5. Crawl Space: Crawl spaces shall be exempt from the calculation of floor area, even if exposed above natural grade, so long as the height of the crawl space does not exceed five feet six inches (5'6").

6. Attic Space: That portion of attic space shall be exempt from the calculation of floor area, so long as the height of the attic space does not exceed five feet six inches (5'6").

B. For properties within the Aspen Area Urban Growth Boundary subject to floor area ratio restrictions through underlying zoning, the following shall apply to the calculation of floor area:

1. General: In measuring floor area, all dimensions shall be taken from the outside face of framing or other primary wall members or from the center line of walls separating adjoining units of a building or portion thereof. Veneer facades up to eight inches (8") in thickness shall be excluded from the calculation of floor area; that portion of a facade which exceeds eight inches (8") shall be included. Fireplaces, elevators, stairs and similar features are included in the floor area on each floor.

2. Roof Overhangs and Decks: The floor area of a building, or portion thereof, not provided with surrounding exterior walls shall include the area under the horizontal projection of roofs or floors, when the roof or floor exceeds five feet (5'). These architectural projections are exempt for five feet (5') of the perimeter of each story of the structure. Architectural projections may project up to ten feet (10') and still be exempt, so long as the total perimeter space for a floor is less than or equal to the total area allowed for the five foot (5') exemption. This exemption cannot be used to transfer space between floors.

3. Decks, Balconies, Stairways and Similar Features: Structures that exceed thirty inches (30") above natural or finished grade, and that are not covered by a roof or architectural projection from a building, are exempt from floor area for up to fifteen percent (15%) of the maximum floor area allowed. Any areas in excess of fifteen percent (15%) shall be counted toward floor area.

4. Exempt Below-Grade Spaces for Principal Single-family and Duplex Residences: Spaces below grade shall be exempt from Floor Area calculations for up to a maximum of 4,000 square feet, provided such spaces comply with the following requirements:

a) Exempt Below-grade spaces are located below both the natural and finished grades. If any part of the below-grade space is exposed above natural or finished grade (such as walk-out basement, walls or courts) the entire below-grade area shall be included in the floor area calculations. Exempt Below-grade spaces are no greater than twenty feet (20') in depth and no more than a single story. For purposes of this definition, "Story" shall mean that portion of a building included between the upper surface of a floor and the upper surface of the floor next above.

b) Exempt Below-grade spaces are accessed only by stairway or elevator from the story directly above, or through a door from a garage adjacent to the below-grade area.

c) Exempt Below-grade spaces are no greater than twenty feet (20') in depth and no more than a single story. For purposes of this definition, "Story" shall mean that portion of a building included between the upper surface of a floor and the upper surface of the floor above.

d) Exempt Below-grade spaces do not contain doors to the exterior of the structure.

e) Exempt Below-grade bedrooms are allowed no more than one egress window per bedroom. Exempt Below-grade spaces that contain no bedrooms are allowed only one egress window. When below grade egress is achieved through one or more below grade bedrooms, no additional egress shall be provided. Egress window well size shall not exceed the minimum allowed by the IBC/IRC.

f) Habitable Exempt Below-grade spaces may be provided with aggregate glazing area of not more than 8% of the habitable area of the room. For purposes of this exemption, "Habitable" shall mean a space in a building for living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Unfinished basements shall be considered habitable spaces. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas shall not be considered habitable spaces. Window wells for Natural Light have a maximum dimension of 3 feet from the exterior wall. The maximum window well width shall be no more than the width of the window.

g) Foundation walls for exempt below-grade spaces may be exposed above natural and finished grade to the minimum degree required by the IRC pertaining to foundation design.

h) Up to ten percent (10%) of any particular below-grade wall surface may extend above natural grade as long as the finished grade covers the wall surface that would otherwise be exposed.

i) Garages up to seven hundred and fifty (750) square feet may be incorporated into below-grade space and shall not affect this exemption as long as the only sections of building so exposed are directly related to the garage structure.

Floor area below natural and finished grade which exceeds the four thousand (4,000) square foot exemption provided herein shall count toward the calculation of allowable floor area.

5. Garages and Carports: For the purpose of calculating floor area ratio and allowable floor area for a lot where the principal use is a single-family residence, garage and carport floor area

shall be exempted up to a maximum of seven hundred fifty (750) square feet. On a lot which contains a duplex, garage and carport floor area shall be exempted up to a maximum of five hundred (500) square feet per side. All garage or carport space in excess of the exempted areas shall be included as part of the residential floor area calculation. When an existing legal single-family or duplex dwelling exceeds the allowed floor area, the exempt garage space shall be reduced by subtracting the excess floor area from the exempt garage space.

6. Crawl Space: Crawl spaces shall be exempt from the calculation of floor area, even if exposed above natural grade, so long as the height of the crawl space does not exceed five feet six inches (5'6").

7. Attic Space: That portion of attic space shall be exempt from the calculation of floor area, so long as the height of the attic space does not exceed five feet six inches (5'6").

NOTES:

1. Maximum floor area is based on Lot Area *not* Lot Size.
2. To demonstrate compliance with the "Below grade" exemption, building section must be submitted indicating the existing grade.
3. The 750 sf garage exemption does not allow for a new structure to be designed above the allowed floor area with a proposed reduction in garage area.