



Garages – Accessory to One and Two-Family Homes

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You must submit plans for your new or replacement garage before a building permit can be issued. The plans will be examined by a plan examiner to ensure they conform to the State of Wisconsin building code and the Milwaukee building and zoning codes.

Plan evaluation

Here are some of the items that the plan examiner looks for when evaluating garage plans:

- A detached garage and all accessory buildings such as sheds may occupy no more than 15% of the area of the lot.
 - Garages that are attached to the house are treated as home additions, and setbacks and lot coverage are calculated differently.
 - Garage setbacks are from the wall of the garage. The eaves may project up to one third of the required setback. Gutters are not considered part of the overhang. Garages in rear yards need to be at least 1½ feet from side and rear property lines, and at least 4 feet from alleys being used for access. Corner lots require a side street setback equal to that required for the principal building, but no less than an existing principal building setback.
 - A garage may be as close as 3 feet to a house when the walls are covered with one-hour, fire-resistant drywall. Otherwise, the garage must be at least 10 feet from a house.
 - A garage may not be built on a vacant lot or in the front yard.
 - A garage may not exceed 1000 sq. feet.
 - The slab must be at least 4" thick and at least 3" above the grade of the sidewalk or alley.

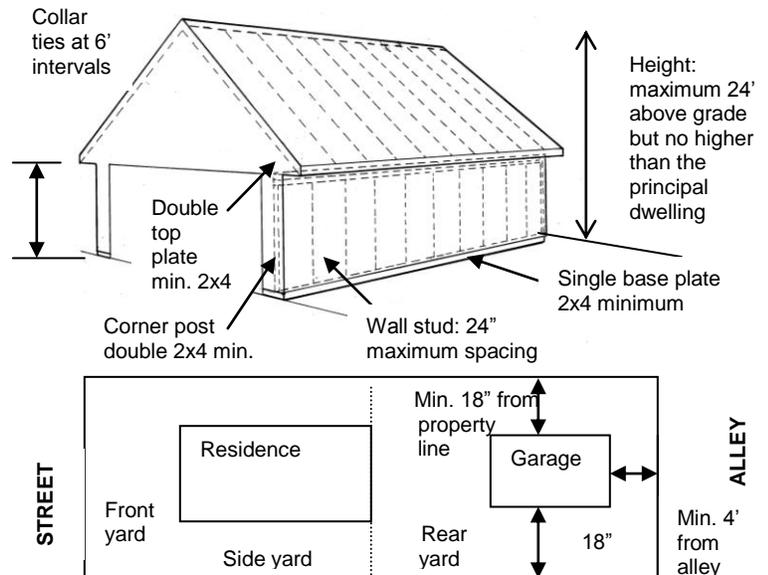
Submitting plans

Walk-in service is available for the review of garage plans. [Click here](#) and scroll down for current hours. Because we cannot predict the number of customers who will arrive for walk-in service on a given day, you may need to wait for service.

You need to bring the following materials when you apply for a building permit:

- 1) A certified survey of your property that shows where the garage will be located, OR a scale drawing or site plan that shows your property, other buildings on the property, and the location of the garage.

This sketch illustrates code restrictions. Each garage plan is reviewed for compliance.



- 2) A scope of work or plan for the garage, drawn to scale, that describes:
 - Dimensions of the garage, and overall height.
 - The type of construction such as thickness of slab and wall construction.
 - Whether trusses or rafters will be used. If rafters are used, indicate the size and spacing. If trusses are used, specifications from the supplier need to be provided.
 - Type and size of header or laminated beam for the overhead door.
 - Cost of garage

Fees

[Click here](#) for current fees. There is a plan review fee and a permit fee.

Associated permits

If you need to demolish an old garage, you may also be required to take out a *demolition permit*. An *electrical permit* is required if you run electrical service to the garage. If the garage is accessed from a street and requires a new driveway, a *curb cut permit* would be required. If you are building a garage in a locally designated historic district, you must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic reservation Commission before the permit is issued.