



# Thinking About Building an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)?



An Accessory Dwelling Unit or ADU is an independent, rentable dwelling unit located on the same lot as a single-family home. ADUs can be attached or detached from the main residence, but must provide their own kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping facilities. In November 2024, the City of Tempe adopted Ordinance O2024.51, which allows ADUs on lots that have an existing single-family residence in zoning districts that allow residential uses.

This document guides a property owner through the process of determining eligibility and applicable standards for building an ADU, to assess whether an ADU may be right for your property.

 This interactive guide will guide you through the steps for building an ADU.

1. Is your property eligible to build an ADU?
2. Development standards for your ADU.
3. Applying for permits.

\*If you have questions that are not answered in this guide, visit [tempe.gov/adu](https://tempe.gov/adu) for a list of Frequently Asked Questions.

## Step 1: Is your property eligible to build an ADU?

Does the property have an existing single-family home?

No

Yes

An ADU is **not** permitted on the property. The property must have an existing single-family home to be eligible for an ADU.

Does the zoning allow for residential land uses?

To find your property's zoning: [Tempe Zoning + Overlays Map](#).

For permitted land uses: [Tempe Zoning and Development Code Part 3 - Land Use](#).

No

Yes

An ADU is **not** permitted on the property. Residential land uses must be permitted in the zoning district to allow and ADU.

This property is eligible for an ADU. Note that HOA regulations and CC&Rs may prohibit the addition of an ADU or restrict the ability to rent the ADU independently.

Lot Size	Maximum # of ADUs Permitted
Less than one acre (<43,560 sq. ft.)	Two (2). One attached and one detached ADU.
One acre or larger (≥43,560 sq. ft.)	Three (3). One attached and two detached ADUs. One must be restricted affordable unit.

\*Existing Guest Quarters count towards the total quantity of ADUs on the property.

## Step 2: Development Standards for your ADU

### Size

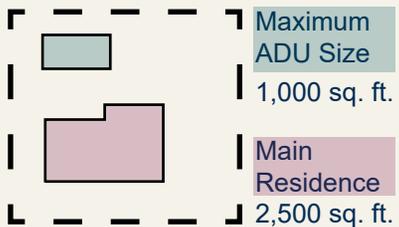
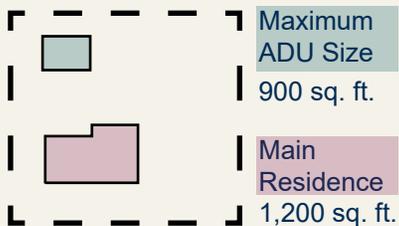
Allowable gross floor area of an ADU is determined by the gross floor area of the main residence & lot coverage requirements.

### Main Residence Size/ Gross Floor Area

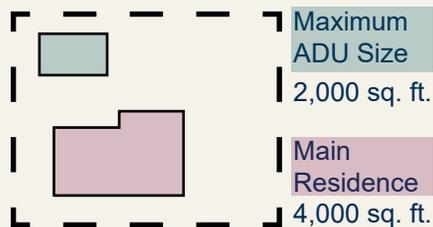
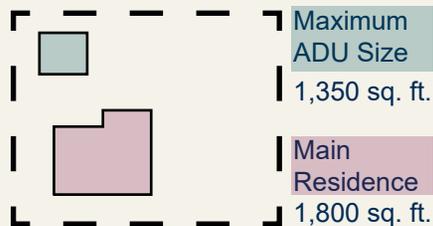
Gross Floor Area (GFA) is the interior habitable area of the single-family home or ADU excluding garages/carports or exterior storage. If the ADU is converted from an existing portion of the home, only the remaining portion of the main residence is included in this calculation.

### Examples

Lots **less than one acre**, an ADU is limited to 75% of the gross floor area of the main residence or 1,000 sq. ft. whichever is less.



Lots **one acre or larger**, an ADU is limited to 75% of the gross floor area of the main residence or 2,000 sq. ft. whichever is less.



Calculate allowable ADU size for your property.

Main Residence Gross Floor Area  sq. ft.

Write the allowable ADU gross floor area here:

× .75

Potential Allowable ADU Gross Floor Area\*  sq. ft.

\*If the lot size is under 43,560 sq. ft., ADU size is limited to 1,000 sq. ft.

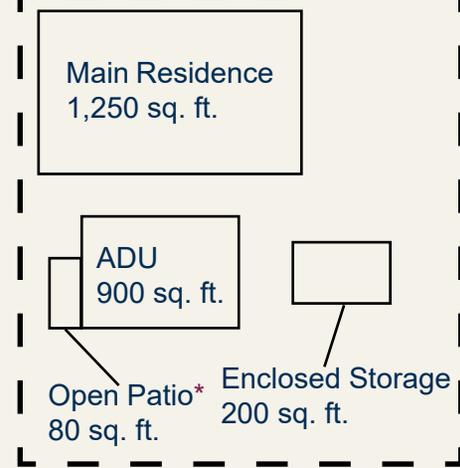
If the lot size is 43,560 sq. ft. or larger, ADU size is limited to 2,000 sq. ft.

### Lot Coverage

Lot coverage is calculated by adding the square footage of the footprints of all buildings on site, including the existing home, detached or attached **enclosed** structures, and the proposed ADU. Lot coverage **does not** include the footprints of canopies, arcades, porticos, awnings, or similar **unenclosed** structures.

### Example

Zoning: R1-6 Lot Size: 6,800 sq. ft.



Main Residence	1,250 sq. ft.
ADU	900 sq. ft.
+ Enclosed Storage	200 sq. ft.
<b>Lot Coverage (sq. ft.)</b>	<b>2,350 sq. ft.</b>

$$\frac{2,350 \text{ sq. ft.}}{6,800 \text{ sq. ft. (Lot Size)}} = 0.345 \text{ or } 34.5\% \text{ Lot Coverage (\%)}$$

R1-6 Lot Coverage Standard: 45%

*\*Note that the open patio is not included in lot coverage calculations.*



Calculate lot coverage for your property.

Main Residence  sq. ft.

ADU  sq. ft.

+ Enclosed Storage  sq. ft.

Lot Coverage  sq. ft.

Lot Coverage  sq. ft.

Lot Size  sq. ft.

See [Planning + Overlays Map](#) for zoning & [ZDC Part 4 Chapter 2 - General Development Standards](#) for maximum lot coverage.

Properties Zoning

Maximum Lot Coverage  %

=  % Lot Coverage

*Note: If the property will contain multiple ADUs, they will all be counted towards total lot coverage.*

### Parking

No additional parking spaces are required for an ADU, unless required space(s) are removed or modified.

#### Will this project result in the removal or modification of existing required parking spaces?

Yes  
↓

Parking spaces can be provided elsewhere on site, or a Use Permit must be obtained to locate required parking spaces in the front or street side yard setback. Call the Planning Division at (480) 350-4311 for more information.

No  
↓

No additional spaces are required for an ADU.

If providing additional parking, see [City Code Section 21-3\(4\)](#) for requirements for parking spaces for single family dwellings. Parking provided off an alley must maintain a 23-foot backing distance to allow safe maneuvering into and out of the space.

### Bedrooms

ADUs that are limited in size to 1,000 sq. ft. are limited to a maximum of three (3) bedrooms. There are no bedroom limitations on properties that are one (1) acre or larger.

#### Is the lot 43,560 sq. ft. or larger?

Yes  
↓

There are no limitations on number of bedrooms for the ADU.

No  
↓

A maximum of three (3) bedrooms are permitted in the ADU.

### Height

The height limitations for the single-family dwelling of the zoning district apply.

See [ZDC Part 4 Chapter 2 - General Development Standards](#) for height limitations.

### Setbacks

An ADU can be placed within 5 feet of the rear, side, and street side property lines. ADUs cannot be placed within the front building setback.

Front	Rear	Side	Street Side
See <a href="#">zoning district standard</a>	5 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.

### Addressing

A unique address shall be provided for each ADU and be placed near the primary entrance of the ADU, using a minimum 4" numbers/letters with contrasting color (E.g. 1234 A, 1234 B).

### Step 3: Apply for Permits

Apply online using the [Citizen Access Portal](#)

Submit the following documents:

- Site Plan
- Floor Plan (Including existing home)
- Construction Documents

For a full list of Building Permit submittal items see the [Residential Building Permit Checklist](#)

Follow the [E-Plan Review Submittal Guidelines](#) for how to submit your documents

#### Additional Resources

[Fee Information](#)

[Residential Rebate Program](#)

#### Design Suggestions

See design guidelines for the applicable [Character Area](#)

#### Questions?

For grading and drainage or Building Permit submittal requirements contact the Permit Center at [PermitCenter@tempe.gov](mailto:PermitCenter@tempe.gov) or call (480) 350-4311

For Zoning and Development Code requirements and planning related questions contact [Planning@tempe.gov](mailto:Planning@tempe.gov) or call (480) 350-4311