



FLOOR AREA VS. COVERAGE

Information Bulletin No. 2

The Pacific Grove Zoning Code includes regulations pertaining to **Gross Floor Area**, **Building Coverage** and **Site Coverage**. The three are often confused, but require very different calculations.

What is Gross Floor Area (GFA)? Enclosed areas of all floors of buildings greater than 120 square feet, plus carports, where the ceiling is at least seven feet tall. In calculating GFA, buildings shall be measured to the outside surface of exterior walls, and carports to the outside surfaces of supporting posts. GFA is expressed in square feet. Gross floor area is regulated by zoning district. PGMC [§23.08.123](#)

What do I count towards Gross Floor Area?

- Covered and fully enclosed porches, regardless of whether conditioned/unconditioned; and
- Mezzanines, hallways, breezeways, and corridors.

What do I not count towards Gross Floor Area?

- Accessory structures less than or equal to 120 square feet;
- Covered open, or partially open, porches;
- Those portions of cellars/basements where the ceiling is not more than two feet above finish grade at any point;
- Eaves and/or cantilevered portions of buildings;
- Garden structures.

The following provisions also apply:

- Areas with an interior finished height that is greater than 16 feet shall be counted twice, with the exception of interior stairways that are no wider than eight feet.
- If required covered parking is not provided, the allowed gross floor area shall be reduced by the equivalent square footage.

What is Building Coverage? The portion of a site which is covered by the fully enclosed portion of all buildings larger than 120 square feet, as well as by open carports. Building coverage is expressed as a percentage. Maximum building coverage is regulated by zoning district; e.g., R-1 is 45% for sites that are 4,000 square feet or less and 40% for sites that are greater than 4,000 square feet and R-2, R-2-B-3, R-3 and R-3-PGR is 50%, etc. PGMC [§23.08.078](#)

What do I not count towards Building Coverage?

- Eaves and/or cantilevered portions of buildings, decks, open porches, and open stairways/landings.

What is Site Coverage? The sum of building coverage plus areas covered by impervious surfaces. Site coverage is expressed as a percentage. Maximum allowed site coverage is 60% for all sites, except for the Asilomar Dunes neighborhood, which is 15%. PGMC [§23.08.079](#)

What do I count towards Site Coverage?

- Sand-set bricks and/or pavers, paving and/or flag stones, asphalt, concrete, mortared brick and stone, and decomposed granite;
- Open porches; and
- All accessory structures not already counted towards building coverage.

What do I not count towards Site Coverage?

- 400 square feet of any driveway, except for portions that serve as required parking space(s) or which occupy a required side yard;
- 60 square feet of walkway, stoop, landing, stairway and/or steps in the front yard on building sites which are 50 feet or more in width;
- Turf block driveways and walkways, unless covered; and eaves and/or cantilevered portions of buildings.

-See the reverse for visual aides-

Figure 1: Gross Floor Area = A + B + C, whereas Building Coverage = A + C

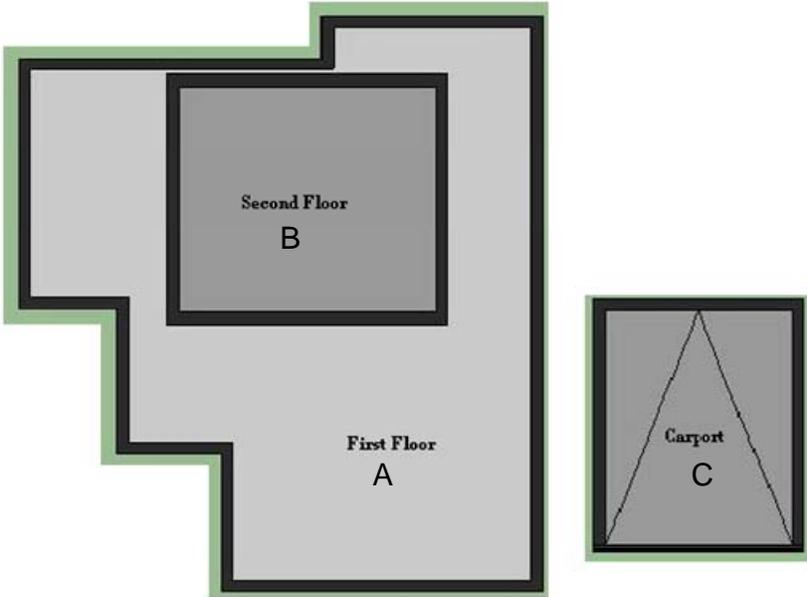


Figure 2: Site Coverage = A + B + C + D

