

FAQ:

I want to build or place a shed on my property. What kind of permits do I need?

Background:

In most cases, the City of Philadelphia requires that an owner obtain a zoning permit and a building permit prior to building a structure. The code does; however, include some exceptions for smaller structures, like sheds.

If a zoning or building permit is required, an application must be submitted to L&I for review and a permit must be obtained prior to starting the project.

Answer:

Both Zoning and Building Permits are required for sheds that are accessory to any use other than one-or-two-family dwellings.

The following table outlines permitting requirements for sheds that are accessory to **one- or two-family dwellings**:

Size of Shed	Zoning Permit Requirement	Building Permit Requirement
≤ 130 ft ² (in rear yard)	Zoning Permit Not Required ^{1, 3}	Building Permit Not Required ⁵
≤ 130 ft ² (in front/side yard)	Permitted by Zoning Code ^{2, 3} Zoning Permit Required	
> 130 ft ² and ≤ 200 ft ²	Not permitted per Zoning Code ^{2, 4} Zoning Permit Required	
> 200 ft ²		Building Permit Required

- Notes:**
1. Same requirements apply to playhouses and pergolas.
 2. Minimum yard and setback requirements apply.
 3. Shall not exceed 15 feet in height.
 4. If the application includes a shed that is not permitted by the zoning code, a refusal will be issued by L&I. An appeal must be filed with the Zoning Board of Adjustments. The appeal requires a community meeting and a public hearing.
 5. Shall not exceed one-story.

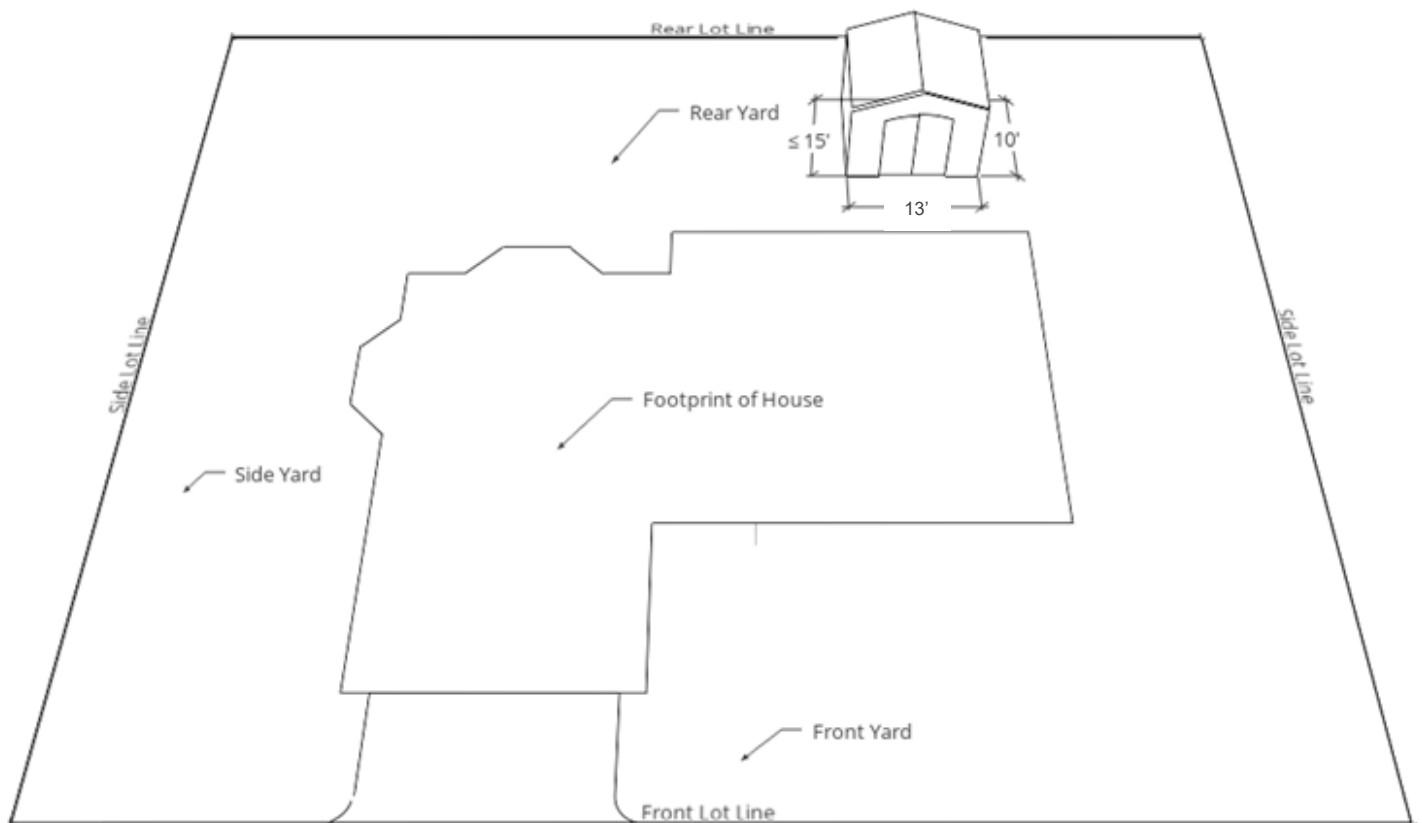
Additional Notes:

- Additional permits may be required, such as electrical, mechanical or plumbing permits.

Example #1:

- The shed is accessory to a single-family dwelling.
- The shed is located in the rear yard (between the house and the rear lot line).
- The shed is not greater than 130 square feet.
- The shed is not taller than 15 feet or one-story.

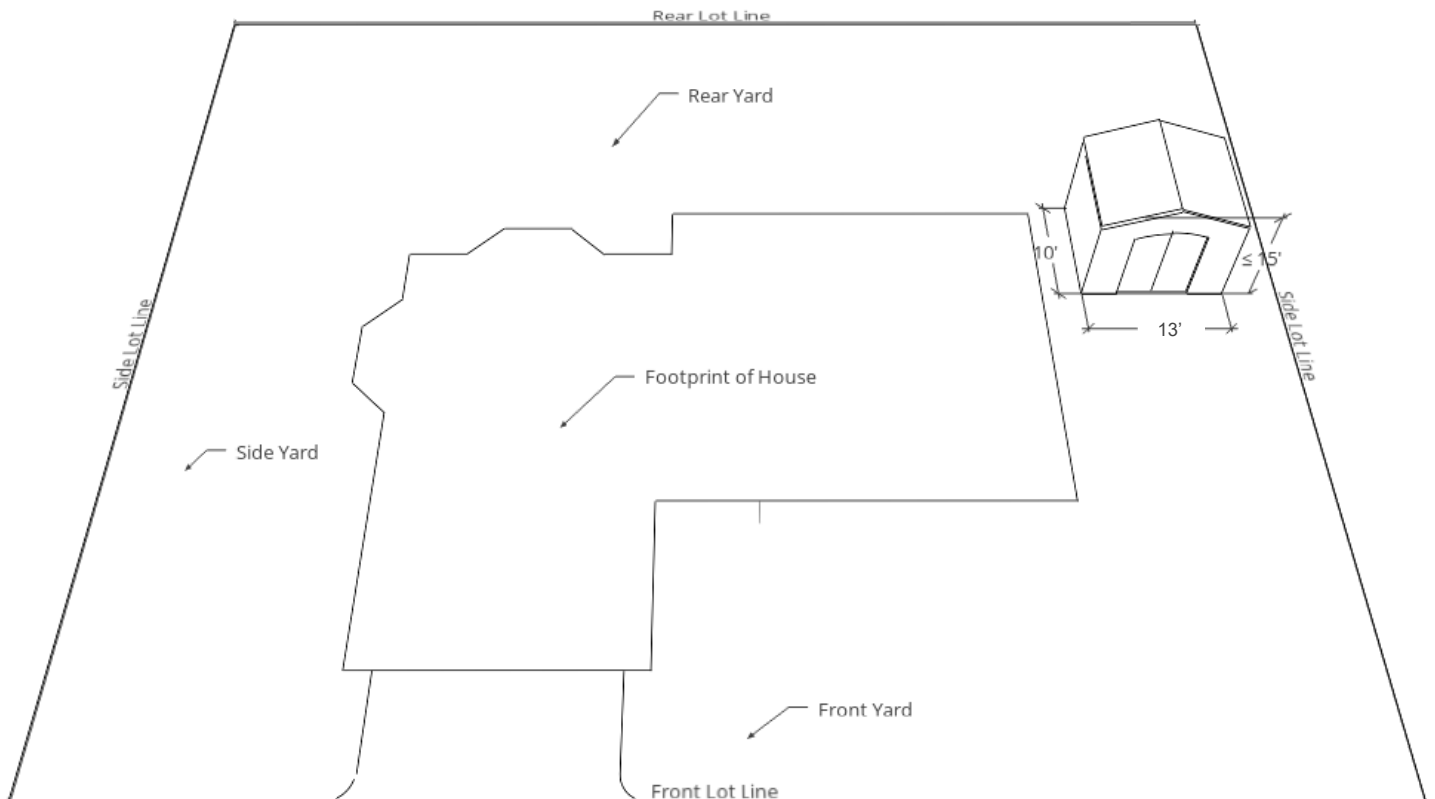
In this example, a **zoning permit is not required**, and a **building permit is not required**.



Example #2:

- The shed is accessory to a single-family dwelling.
- The shed is located in the side yard (between the house and the side lot line).
- The shed is not greater than 130 square feet.
- The shed is not taller than 15 feet or one-story.

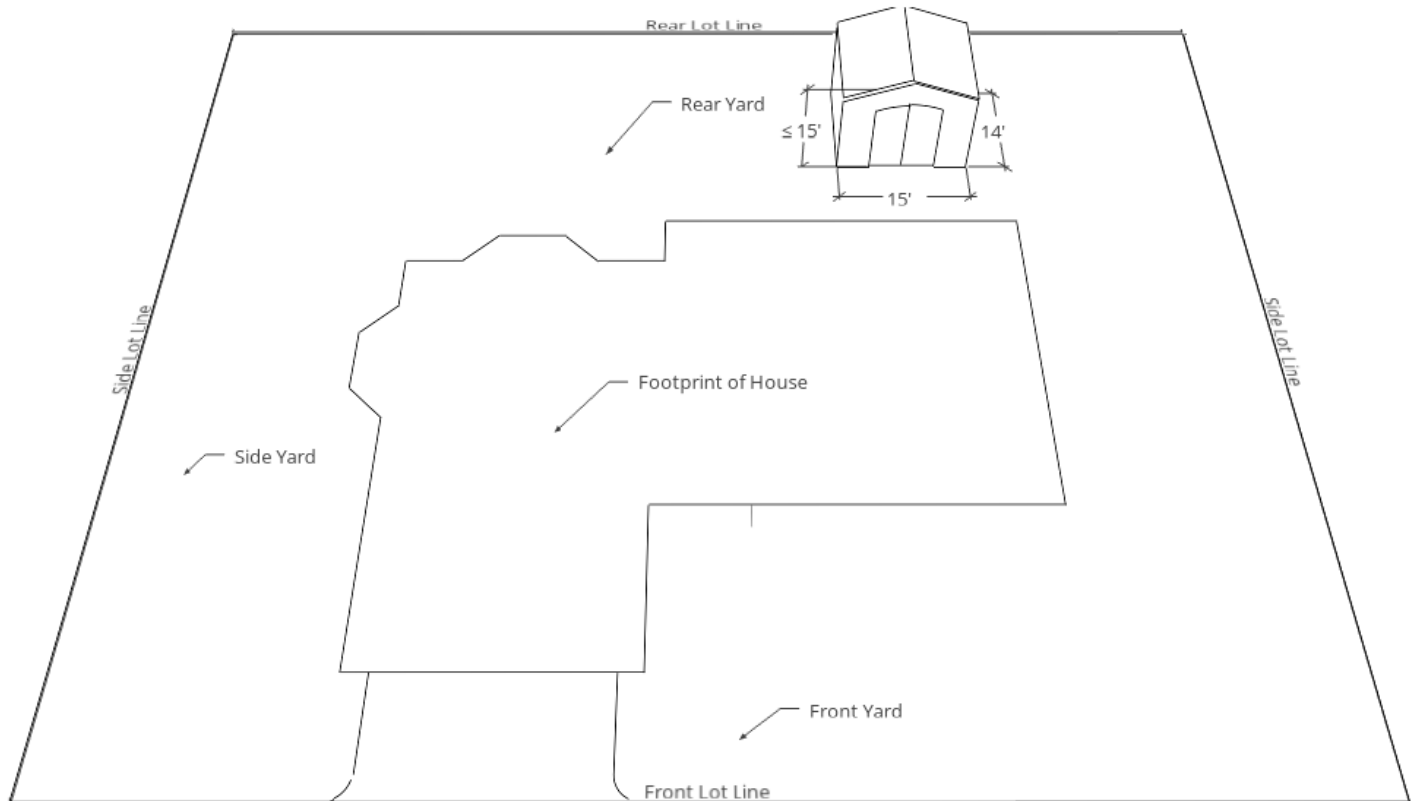
In this example, a **zoning permit is required**, and a **building permit is not required**.



Example #3:

- The shed is accessory to a two-family dwelling.
- The shed is located in the rear yard (between the house and the rear lot line).
- The shed is greater than 200 square feet.
- The shed is not taller than 15 feet or one-story.

In this example, a **zoning permit is required**, and a **building permit is required**.



Questions?

Call 311 or (215) 686-8686 (if outside Philadelphia) or submit an online form via <http://www.phila.gov/li/get-help>.

Disclaimer:

This interpretation, policy or code application is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code application to specific projects may vary. There may be other ways to comply with the Code. If so, you are not required to use this method. You may want to investigate other options or consult with a professional identifying an equally code compliant solution.