



WHAT ARE YARDS?

What Is a Yard?

A yard is the space between a building and the surrounding property lines. A yard is broken down into three categories: front yard, rear yard and side yard.

A front yard is most often the area between the front door of a residence or structure and the nearest road. Corner lots may have 2 or more front yards.

A rear yard is most often the area between the backdoor of a structure and the back alley or rear property boundary.

A side yard is most often the area between the front and rear yard that extends from the side of a structure to the adjacent property boundary.



The image above shows a typical residential parcel and highlights the front yard in blue, the side yard in yellow and the rear yard in red.

Yard Requirements

What Are Setbacks?

A setback is the minimum distance required between a building and the front, side and rear property lines.

Under the Town Land Use Bylaw structures and specific uses are required to meet the established front, side and rear yard setbacks within their district. Setback requirements may vary between districts.

Why Are Setbacks Required?

Setbacks are established for a number of reasons including preventing the crowding of property, allowing for safe placement of utilities, aiding in safe fire practice, preventing negative impacts of neighbouring lands and separating different uses.

Can Setback Requirements Be Changed?

A variance may be granted for the reduction of a required setback or other regulation of the Land Use Bylaw.

A variance must be approved by the Town with the issuance of a development permit for a specific structure or use.

Exceptions to Setback Requirements

Setback requirements do not apply to:

- Municipal and private utilities;
- Surface parking;
- Fences and retaining walls;
- Wheelchair ramps; and
- Unenclosed sidewalks and steps contained wholly within the site.

Certain buildings or structures may be allowed to project into required setbacks. This may include:

- Decks
 - 1.5m (5 ft.) into the front yard for unenclosed decks
 - 0.6m (2 ft.) into the side yard for unenclosed decks
 - 3m (10 ft.) into the rear yard for unenclosed decks
 - 2m (6.5 ft.) into the front yard for enclosed decks
- Balconies
 - 1.5m (5 ft.) into yards of 4m (13 ft.) or more
 - 0.6m (2 ft.) into yards less than 4.0m (13 ft.)
- Other features attached to buildings such as bay windows, chimneys, eaves, open steps, awnings, canopies and sills.
 - 0.6m (3 ft.) into yards of 1.5m (5 ft.) or more
 - 0.45m (1.5 ft.) into yards of less than 1.5 m (5 ft.)

More Questions?

Further information may be obtained by contacting the Development Services Department through the contact information below. For all requirements, restrictions and exemptions, please consult the Land Use Bylaw which may be downloaded from the Town of Ponoka website: <https://www.ponoka.ca>



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1-800-242-3447

Please note: This information sheet has no legal status and cannot be used as an official interpretation of the various bylaws, codes and regulations currently in effect. The Town of Ponoka accepts no responsibility for persons relying solely on this information.