

## Measurement of building areas

### Construction area

#### Definition

The construction area of a building is the summation of all the areas on plan, measured at each covered floor level over the external walls or external lines of the outermost vertical enclosing planes, or, where applicable, the centre lines of party walls between buildings

#### Items to be included

Internal stairwell and staircase areas

Lift shaft areas

Duct space areas

Ground floor lobby areas

Corridor areas

Machine room and lift motor room areas

Mezzanine floor areas

Covered parking (in basements or above ground)

Basements

Finished floor areas in attic spaces

Floor areas of penthouses, staff quarters, lift motor rooms, etc

All open but covered porches, balconies and balcony corridors within the enclosing planes of the main building

Floor areas to attached sheds, carports, etc and all partially completed rooms, porches, balconies, etc provided the relevant areas are covered and have at least two of their walls not less than two thirds the height of the wall common to the main building

Corridors to multi-storey flats (apartments)

#### Items to be excluded

External steps and paved areas

Areas of projecting roof overhangs, hoods, canopies and the like not exceeding 1m

Enclosed open areas (light or ventilation wells and courtyards)

Areas of open covered ways and carports, etc

Areas of unenclosed fire escapes

Areas on plan of small projections such as pilasters, attached piers, fins, chimney breasts, etc

### Gross building area

Certain local authorities have their own definition of gross building area (sometimes referred to as floor space). It is important to check the applicable local authorities' definition against the definition below

#### Definition

The gross building area covers the entire building area, but excludes the following items:

Internal atriums, light wells, etc in excess of 9 m<sup>2</sup>

Patios

Plant boxes  
Sun screening  
Normal eaves projections (but not excessive eaves projections)  
Escape stairs  
Internal uncovered areas  
Floor areas, including basement storeys (any storey with a floor level at least 2m lower than the average level of the land around the building), reserved exclusively for the parking of vehicles  
Machine rooms, lift motor rooms, service rooms, caretakers' flats, etc  
Balconies, terraces, etc

The gross building area is mainly used by planning consultants to plan a building in accordance with the permissible floor area ratio (FAR)/ floor space ratio (FSR). The exact definition may vary from one local authority to the next

### **Sectional title area (South Africa)**

The sectional title area is the area of the unit (excluding the common property) measured to the median line of the boundary walls of each section and to the median line of the external walls

### **Rentable area and usable area (South Africa)**

Refer to the "Method for Measuring Floor Areas in Buildings" published by the South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA) for the definition of rentable area and useable area. Go to "Further sources of property data" for a link to the website of the South African Property Owners Association

