

Decks, Porches and Patios

What's the difference between a deck, porch or patio (or even a veranda, portico or pergola)?

Decks are raised platforms, usually made of wood. Patios are flush with the ground, usually pavers or concrete. Either can be covered with a pergola or roof. A porch is often on the front of a home, though it can be on any side. A porch is covered and has an elevated platform attached to the house. A deck with a cover is a porch, but a patio with a cover is not because it is flush to the ground. A veranda is like a porch but wraps around a corner, or is just a covered walkway. A portico is also just another name for a front porch. A pergola is an open roof cover, usually over a patio. An 'enclosed' patio features walls so it acts like interior space.

Can I get a Variance?

Possibly, but usually not. A variance can only be used when there is something limiting on the property, like a stream or a hill that prevents you from being able to use the site. It's not a tool that lets someone ask for a larger deck. If you think there is something limiting on your property, see City staff to discuss.

Patio

Pavers,
gravel,
concrete

Flush
with the
ground



Porch

Covered

Raised
Deck



Deck

Wood or
composite

Elevated



Pergola

Open or
closed
roof

Free standing



Veranda

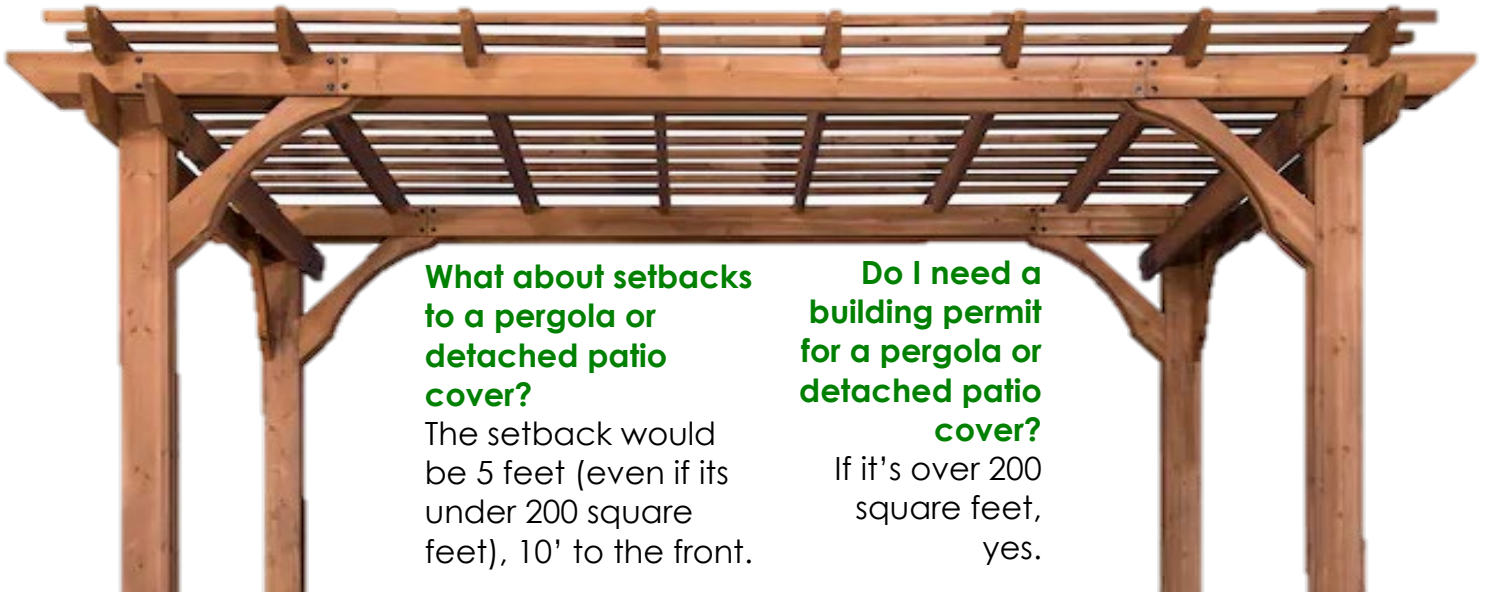
Wraps
around a
corner





	Patio	Deck	Porch
Do I Need a Building Permit?	No, usually anything that is flush with the ground does not need a permit. You should avoid drainage areas though.	Over 30" from the finished grade, yes. Under 30"- no.	If it is over 200 square feet, yes. Otherwise, no.
What are the setbacks?*	<p>Side- none</p> <p>Front- none</p> <p>Rear- none</p>	<p>Side- Decks over 12" in height have a 5' setback. Decks under 12" have no setback.</p> <p>Front- 10', they may project into front yard setback but must always be no more than 10' from the front property line.</p> <p>Rear- Decks over 12" in height have a 5' setback. Decks under 12" have no setback.</p>	<p>Side- same as the main building.</p> <p>Front- 10' from the front property line. Enclosed porches would be the same as the main structure.</p> <p>Rear- 5' from the rear property line.</p>
Lot Coverage?	Most homes are in the Residential Low Zone. In that zone there is a maximum lot coverage of 50%. That may limit how much patio, porch, or deck you can build. What's lot coverage? Think of it this way, if rain cannot soak into the soil, that probably counts against the total. Driveways, houses, patios, sheds all contribute to the 50% lot coverage.		

*(technically these are mostly driven by 'allowed projections,' not setbacks)



What about setbacks to a pergola or detached patio cover?

The setback would be 5 feet (even if its under 200 square feet), 10' to the front.

Do I need a building permit for a pergola or detached patio cover?

If it's over 200 square feet, yes.