Calculating the Living Area, or Square Footage, of a Plan

Reference Number: **KB-00309**
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This article also applies to the following legacy products:
Pro | Architectural | Suite

QUESTION

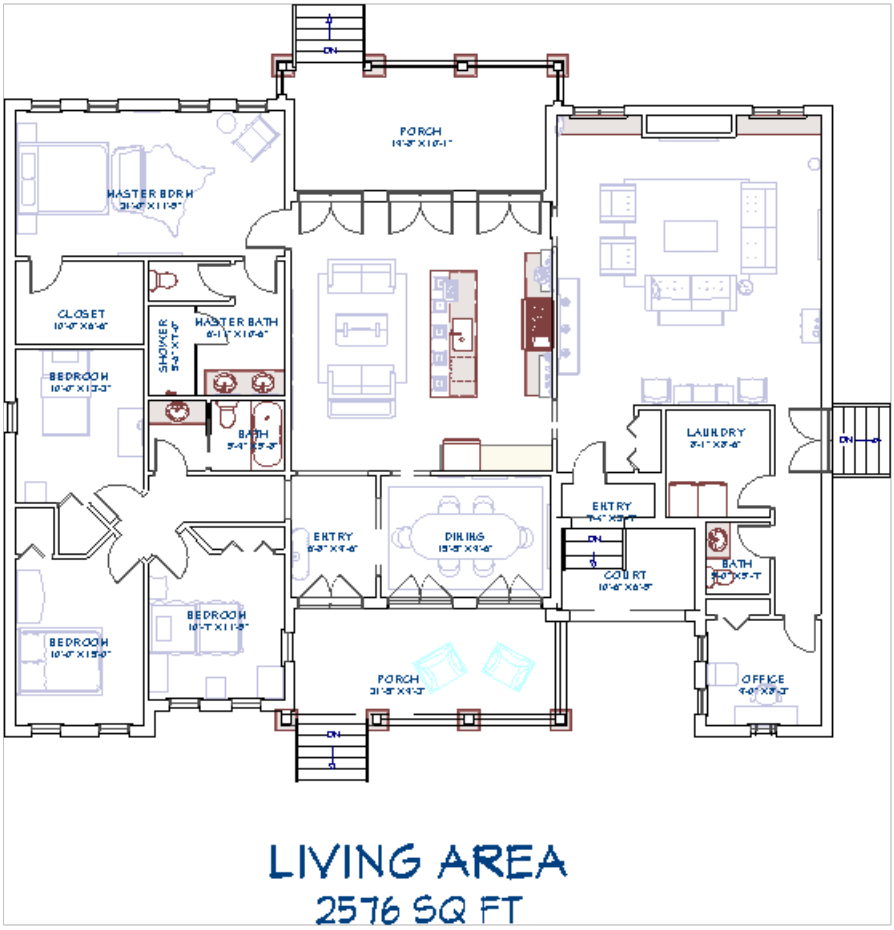
How does Home Designer calculate living area?

ANSWER

The Living Area label is an automatically generated text object that reports the area of the current floor specified as living space. This label is created as soon as a room area is defined by walls and/or railings and is recalculated every time you add, remove, resize, or redefine a room. If multiple, separate buildings are created, each will have its own Living Area label.

By default, interior type rooms are defined as part of this calculation, while exterior and hybrid type rooms are not. Some of the room types that are not included in the Living Area calculation are: Attic, Court, Deck, Garage, Open Below, and Porch. In addition, rooms with a Rough Ceiling height less than 48" (1200 mm) are excluded from this calculation by default. Regardless of the room type or height, you can specify whether a room or room type is included in this calculation within the Room Type Defaults as well as the Room Specification dialog.

Note: If you don't see the Living Area label, but you have rooms that are specified as conditioned in your design, please refer to the "Restoring a Missing Living Area Label in Home Designer" resource in the Related Articles section below



The Living Area should not be mistaken for the entire footprint of the house. Only true livable areas are included in the Living Area calculation.

To manually include/exclude specific room types or individual rooms from the Living Area calculation

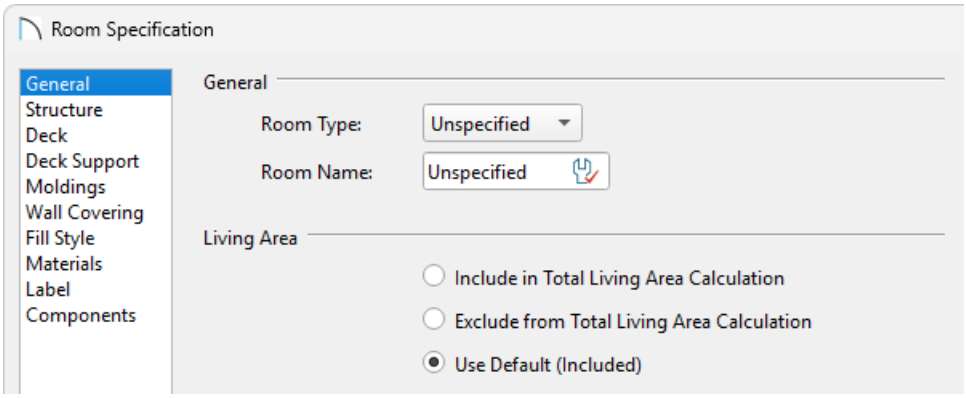
1. Navigate to **Edit> Default Settings**, expand the **Floors and Rooms** category, select **Room Types**, then click **Edit**.

   If you'd like to specify an individual room, or select rooms, that already exist in a design to have a different calculation method, skip to Step 2.

2. In the **Room Types** dialog that opens next, select a Room Type of your choice, then click **Edit**.

To specify an individual room, or select rooms, to have a different calculation method, use the **Select Objects** tool to select the room(s), then click on the **Open Object** edit tool.

3. On the GENERAL panel of the **Room Type Defaults** or **Room Specification** dialog that opens, choose the option to **Include in Total Living Area Calculation** or to **Exclude from Total Living Area Calculation**.



4. Click **OK** on all dialog boxes to confirm the change and notice that the Living Area label will update.

> Living Area is measured from the outer surface of the structural layer of exterior walls, by default. However, this can be changed to have the Living Area calculation measure from the walls' exterior surface within the General Plan Defaults.

To calculate the area of the entire footprint

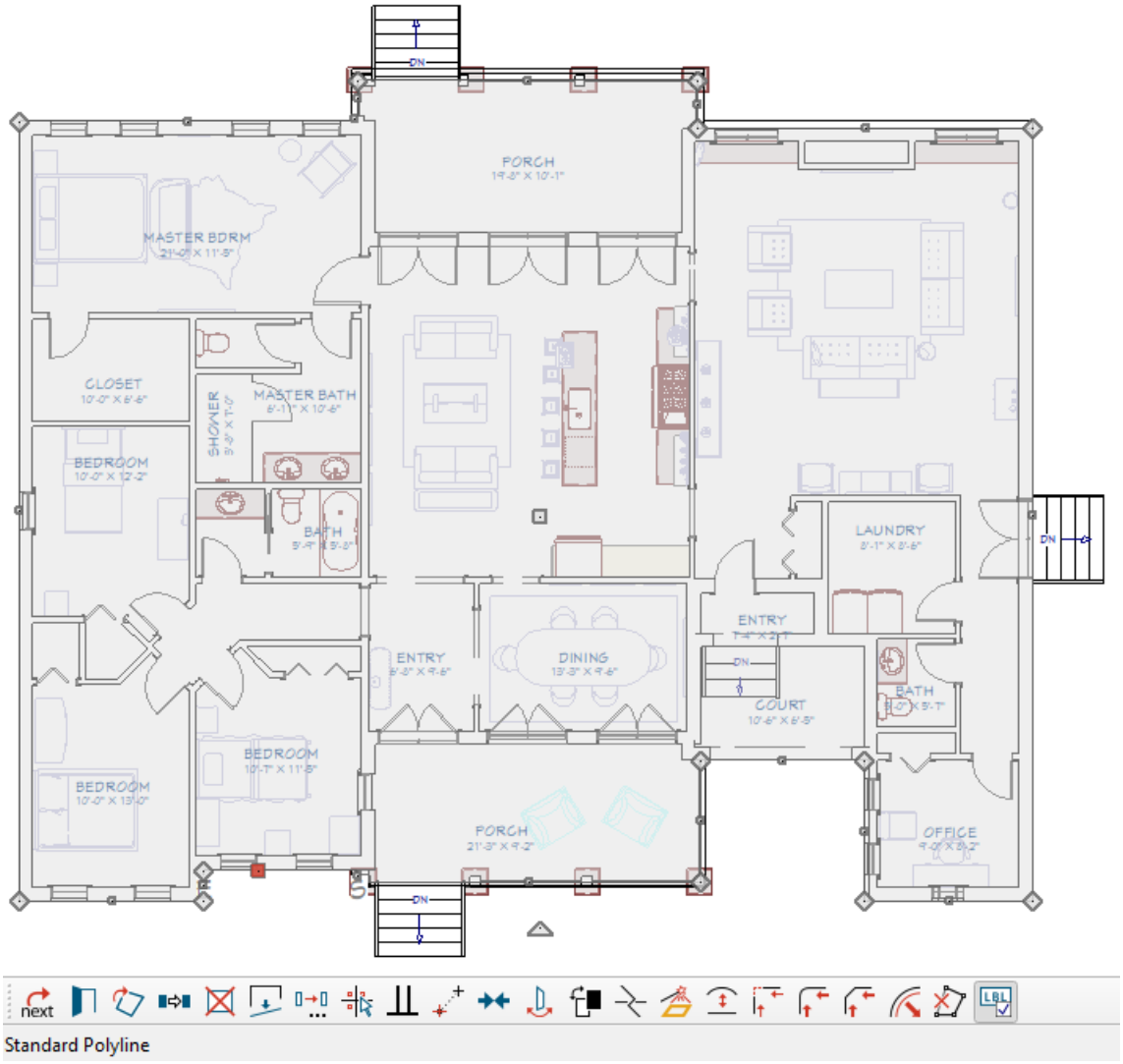
1. Once your floor plan is finalized, navigate to the floor that you would like to calculate the footprint of.

2. Next, select **CAD> Boxes> Rectangular Polyline** .

   In legacy versions, select **CAD> Draw Polyline** instead.

3. Drag a rectangular marquee around the entire structure.

4. Use the **Add Break** and **Change Line/Arc** edit tools to reshape the polyline around the main structure.



- To use the **Add Break** edit tool, click the edge that you want to break into two segments. Next, click the edit button, then click the edge to create a new corner edit handle at that location and two separate edges on either side of that handle.

  If you click and drag one of the edit handles on either side of the partial break, the edge moves at a right angle to itself and another edge forms, connecting the moved edge with the one on the other side that does not move.

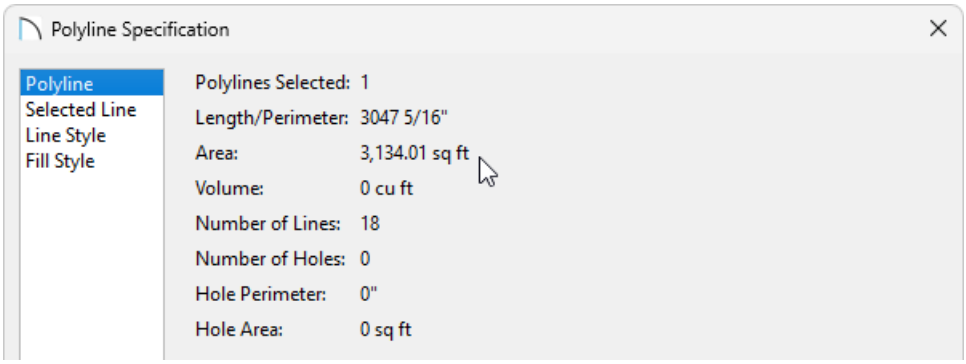
  > You can remove an edge from a polyline-based object by clicking and dragging an edit handle until it snaps to an adjacent corner handle.

- Select an individual line-based or arc-based object or a segment of a polyline-

based object and click the **Change Line/Arc** edit button to convert the selected segment from a line to an arc or vice versa.

5. With the polyline selected, click on the **Open Object** edit button.

6. On the POLYLINE panel of the **Polyline Specification** dialog that opens, take note of the **Area** listed.



7. *(Optional)* Select **CAD> Text> Rich Text** from the menu, then click once in your drawing area to open the **Rich Text Specification** dialog.

   - In the Text field, type the Area value of the polyline noted above, as well as any other additional information that you would like to include here.

     > Keep in mind that any changes made to your floor plan after adding this text box will need to have the area recalculated, and this text manually updated. It will not update automatically.

   - Click **OK** to close the dialog and create a text object.

Related Articles

- Displaying the Living Area, or Square Footage, of a Room with the Room Name (/support/article/KB-00552/displaying-the-living-area-or-square-footage-of-a-room-with-the-room-name.html)
- Restoring a Missing Living Area Label in Home Designer (/support/article/KB-00390/restoring-a-missing-living-area-label-in-home-designer.html)

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