Calculating the Living Area or Square Footage of a Plan

The information in this article applies to:

**QUESTION**
I see that Home Designer displays a Living Area label, but do not understand how this value is calculated.

**ANSWER**
The Living Area label displays the area of the floor platform for living areas in a plan. By default, it is found near the bottom center of the plan as soon as a room area is defined by walls and/or railing.

You can, however, choose to move the Living Area label by selecting and using its
The Living Area displays for an individual building if half or more of that building's area is living area. For example, a Living Area label would not display for a detached garage that contains a bathroom, or a small shop.

The Living Area should not be mistaken for the footprint of the house. Only true livable areas are included in the Living Area calculation. Exterior and hybrid room types such as Garage, Deck, and Porch are not included, neither are the rooms labeled as Open Below or Attic.

You can choose to include or exclude a room from the Living Area calculation by utilizing the settings in the Room Specification dialog.
To manually include or exclude a room from the Living Area calculation

1. Using the Select Objects tool, select a room and then click on the Open Object edit tool.

2. On the General panel of the Room Specification dialog that opens, choose the option to Include in Total Living Area Calculation or to Exclude from Total Living Area Calculation.

3. Click OK to save the changes.

Note: Living Area is measured from the outer surface of the structural layer of exterior walls. When walls separate the living area from exterior or hybrid room types, it is measured to the wall center line.

To calculate the area of the plan's footprint*


1. Once your floor plan is finalized, navigate to the floor that you would like to calculate square footage or square meters from.
2. Next, select **CAD > Draw Polyline**.

   In Home Designer Pro, select **CAD > Boxes > Rectangular Polyline**.

3. Drag a rectangular marquee around the entire structure.

4. Use the **Break Line** and **Change Line/Arc** edit tools to reshape the polyline around the main structure that you want to calculate square footage or square meters from.

   To use the **Break Line** 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
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, the Area of the polyline is provided in Square Feet or Square Meters.

Make a note of this area value, then click Cancel to close the dialog without making any changes.
7. 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.

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**Related Articles**

- [Displaying the Square Footage of a Room with the Room Name](https://support/article/KB-00552/displaying-the-square-footage-of-a-room-with-the-room-name.html)
- [Restoring a Missing Living Area Label](https://support/article/KB-00390/restoring-a-missing-living-area-label.html)