# What is the ITSO Residential Measurement Standard (RMS)

ITSO adopted the Residential Measurement Standard (RMS) from the Real Estate Council of Alberta (RECA). RMS is a consistent way to measure residential floor area so square footage is comparable and is not padded with space people cannot live in.

ITSO recommends RMS. It is not mandatory. The square footage field in the MLS® System is still required. If RMS was used, the RMS source flag may be selected. Do not select RMS unless the standard was actually followed.

RMS area is the sum of above-grade levels only. If any part of a level is below the ground, the whole level is below grade (including walkout basements) and is left out of RMS even if it is finished. Builder and MPAC figures are often larger because they can include open voids, non-livable space, or an exterior-only measure.

For information on how to use RMS, view the RMS guide.

## Key points

### Where RMS applies

- RMS applies to residential properties for sale or lease.
- This includes detached, semi-detached, and attached homes, whether fee simple or condominium.
- It includes properties with up to four dwellings, and homes on rural properties such as a farm or ranch.
- RMS does not apply to commercial, industrial, or retail properties.
- RMS does not apply to residential properties with five or more dwellings.

### How to measure

- Detached homes: measure the exterior walls at the foundation.
- If something blocks the outside, such as landscaping or a shed, measure the interior of the perimeter walls and add the exterior wall thickness. You can judge the wall thickness from the exterior door or window casings. Say you did this in the REALTOR® remarks.
- Attached homes and condos (semi-detached, townhouses, half-duplexes, apartments): measure the interior perimeter walls, paint-to-paint, at floor level.
- You may also describe an extra area that assumes exterior measurements, for comparison. Enter only the RMS area in the MLS® System.
- Use metric or imperial, and use it consistently. If you measure in metric, convert the RMS area to

square feet for the MLS® System.

- Your measurement must be within 2% of the RMS size. You may round up to the nearest whole square foot.

### Include

- All levels that are entirely above grade.
- Additions and conversions that are weatherproof and usable year-round. They must have a foundation or footings, a permanent connection to the main electrical service, and permanent heat that can keep the space at 22°C year-round. Space heaters and extension cords do not count.
- Extensions with a floor-to-ceiling height of at least 5 feet, starting at floor level, such as bay and bow windows, cantilevers, and dormers. A bay window with a window seat blocking the floor is not included.
- Stairs. Count them on the above-grade level they lead to, even if part of the stairs is below grade.

### Exclude

- Any level where any part is below grade, including walkout basements.
- Floor area where the ceiling is under 5 feet. A room needs a ceiling height of 7 feet somewhere for its sloped areas of 5 feet or more to count.
- Open areas with no floor, such as vaulted areas and a foyer open to the second floor. Deduct any part of a stair opening that is larger than the stair treads and landings.
- Structures not connected to the main home, such as a bunkie, boathouse, pool house, or a suite built over a detached garage.
- Rooms not suitable for year-round use, such as a 3-season sunroom or a covered balcony.

### Entering square footage in Matrix

- AG Fin SF is mandatory. You can enter the RMS area here.
- Set the source of the measurement to RMS only if you followed the RMS principles.
- Enter the square footage of below grade levels in BG Fin SF. In the REALTOR® remarks, say how you measured it, for example interior walls or builder plans.
- If a below grade area has a ceiling under 7 feet, say so in the REALTOR® remarks or public remarks.
- Enter areas not included in the RMS area, such as a garage, boathouse, bunkie, or 3-season sunroom, in Other SqFt. Ideally, explain in the REALTOR® remarks how you measured them.

Source: https://support.itsosystems.ca/kb/118