

## I Want To Draw My Own House Plans. Where Do I Start?

To begin there are some things you will need to know. Depending on how much detail your builder and building inspector require, the minimum set of plans should include the floor plan, exterior elevations, foundation or basement plan, and a roof plan drawn to scale.

A scale is nothing more than a shrunken ruler so that 1' - 0" (12 inches) would be 1/4 inch long on your drawing. Here then is an example. If we use the scale and draw an eight foot (8') line. In reality the line is only Two inches (2") long on the paper.

What's in a set of house plans:

There's a Floor Plan that's a view of a house you would see if you took a knife and sliced the house to see the walls, windows, doors, etc. from the top, middle way down the walls. This is also called a dimensional plan. Typically all floor plans are drawn at the scale of one quarter inch equals one foot and zero inches. ( $1/4" = 1' - 0"$ ) It should include all the measurements of the walls, windows, and door locations, door and window sizes, stair locations, room labels, locations of exposed beams, cased opening sizes and locations, bathroom layout showing sink vanity, tub or shower, and toilet, kitchen cabinets with appliances & sink fixtures, and construction notes.

Many floor plans include the electrical symbols telling us where the receptacles, light switches, light fixtures, ceiling fans, cable connections, telephone jacks, and meter base are located in the house. These can be included in the dimensional plan but many drafters place it on a separate drawing page.

The Exterior Elevations or views include all four (4) aspects of the house. They are the front, left, rear, & right drawn also at one quarter inch equals one foot and zero inches ( $1/4" = 1' - 0"$ ) scale. Then there are some plans that have the front elevation drawn at 1/4" scale and then the left, rear & right at one eighth inch equals one foot and zero inches. ( $1/8" = 1' - 0"$ ) On these views you find notes about what type of siding or veneer, the roof pitch (angles) of the various roofs, grade locations, finished floor & ceiling locations, and a roof plan showing the house from the top view. The roof plan is usually drawn at  $1/8" = 1' - 0"$  scale or  $1/16" = 1' - 0"$  to save space on the drawing.

The Foundation or Basement Plan is the same type as the floor plan showing wall types, footing sizes, floor joist or truss locations, support beams, pilasters or piers, and ventilation vents & openings. The foundation or basement plan is also a dimensional type drawing. Most of these plans are drawn at the scale of  $1/4" = 1' - 0"$ .

If the plan is more detailed, then we would see sectional details showing total breakdown of the materials used to construct the home and how they are put together, HVAC (heating and air conditioning) plan, plumbing plan, and cabinet elevations. Even more involved plans would show the types of mouldings, pediments, & trims in greater detail as well.

### About the Author

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