



PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS
DO I NEED PLANNING
PERMISSION FOR A SHED?

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Buying a Garden Shed in France

Practical considerations

Q: I'm hoping to buy a garden shed for our holiday home in Normandy.

I thought I could just pick one up from a garden centre, but I understand there might be planning and tax implications. Our house is in a rural hamlet that is marked in the local commune plan as being in a non-constructible zone. How big a shed would we be allowed without planning consent and do we measure it on the interior dimensions or the external footprint, including the eaves? If there's a limit, could we just buy multiple small sheds to get around the problem? Does it make any difference where we site the shed and whether it has a wooden floor (as some seem to have no floor). Also, would we have to pay *taxe d'aménagement*? We just want to store our lawnmower, bikes and garden tools in it.

A: Any construction which exceeds 5m²* footprint (external dimensions) requires permission. Realistically anything smaller is unlikely to be of any real use to you as a storage space as it will be very small. Assuming your shed is larger than 5m², but smaller than 20 m² (40m² if your property is in the urban zone of the commune), then you will need to submit a *déclaration préalable* application, with full details of the shed, including external facades, plus a site plan showing where it will be sited on the plot. Photographs and a *document géographique* (3D perspective of the shed based on the position in the garden) are also needed.

You can't buy a series of sheds to get around the requirement for planning consent, it is the total additional area which is taken into account. As a general rule, the shed will need to be either exactly on the boundary of your plot, or at least 3 metres from it, though local regulations may mean other restrictions apply. The type of flooring (or absence of any flooring) makes no difference to the planning permission. In France a garden shed is taxable space so you will pay a *taxe d'aménagement* based on the size of the shed (the tax is calculated on each square metre). The *Mairie* can advise the level of tax applicable in your commune.

Conclusion

Although buying and erecting a shed seems like a simple process, consent is needed and the requirements for the application can be a little daunting if you're unused to the process. Using a professional to prepare and submit the dossier for you can be a good, and not necessarily expensive option to ensure the submission is correct and that the permit is granted.

* In some communes there are specific restrictions which may prevent a property owner erecting a shed at all, irrespective of size.

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