

■ Free Starter Guide: Building an ADU in Massachusetts (2025)

Thinking about adding a detached ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) in Massachusetts? This starter guide breaks the process into clear, actionable steps — and shows you how to begin with the right plans for your property.

1■■ Start With Ready-to-Build ADU Plans

Your first step should be selecting a code-compliant plan. Massachusetts now allows ADUs statewide, but every town has slightly different zoning. Starting with a professionally designed plan helps you:

- 1 Understand what's possible on your lot
- 2 Save thousands compared to fully custom drawings
- 3 Speed up permitting

On our website, you can choose from three plan tiers tailored for Massachusetts homeowners:

- 1 Tier 1 — Pre-Designed Plans (\$1,200): Ready-to-build PDFs with up to 3 minor edits.
- 2 Tier 2 — Plans + Detailed Cost Analysis (\$1,800): Includes material & subcontractor cost breakdown so you know what to expect before building.
- 3 Tier 3 — Fully Custom Design (\$3,500): Tailored drawings that meet your site's zoning and design preferences.

Optional add-on: request a licensed Massachusetts General Contractor to contact you directly for a build estimate.

2■■ Check Local Zoning & Bylaws

Even though Massachusetts legalized ADUs statewide in 2025, each town has unique requirements such as:

- 1 Maximum size (often 900–1,200 sq. ft.)
- 2 Setbacks from property lines
- 3 Parking (extra off-street parking may be required)

Call your town's Building or Zoning Department and provide your parcel address to confirm.

3■■ Evaluate Utilities & Septic

- Septic: If your property is on septic, you'll likely need a capacity check or upgrade.
- Water & Electric: Plan for trenching and possible service upgrades.

Starting with our Tier 2 or Tier 3 plan packages helps you anticipate these costs.

4■■■ Build a Realistic Budget

Detached ADUs in Massachusetts typically cost \$300–\$450 per sq. ft. (higher in coastal areas and the islands). Our Plans + Cost Analysis package gives you a line-item estimate before you talk to contractors.

5■■■ Choose Your Builder

- DIY (if experienced): Pull your own permits and hire trades directly.
- Hire a GC: We can connect you with vetted ADU builders — just select the contractor referral option when you purchase plans.

6■■■ Permitting & Approvals

Once your plan set is ready, submit to your town's building department with stamped drawings (if required) and septic approval (if applicable). Having plans already built for Massachusetts code means less back-and-forth with the town.

7■■■ Construction

Typical timeline is 4–7 months once permits are approved and your contractor mobilizes.

■ Get Started Today

- Visit our website and explore ADU Plans.
- Choose the plan package that fits your needs and budget.
- Add cost analysis & contractor referral if you want full clarity from day one.

Starting with the right plan set is the smartest way to save time, avoid zoning surprises, and control costs.