

# What is an ADU?

Also known as “backyard cottages” or “granny flats,” ADUs come in many shapes and sizes but are always:

- ✔ A self-contained home
- ✔ Legally part of the same property
- ✔ A unit with a kitchen and bathroom

They can range from small studios to more than 1,000 square feet with multiple bedrooms.

## ADU Types



**DETACHED** New freestanding structure separate from the main home, like a backyard cottage



**ATTACHED** New structure (may include some converted space) sharing at least one wall with the main home



**CONVERSION** Converted existing space in the main home or on the property (bedroom, basement, detached garage)



### WHAT'S A JADU?

A Junior ADU (JADU) is a smaller conversion ADU within the main house or attached garage.

- ✔ Up to 500 square feet
- ✔ Efficiency or full kitchen
- ✔ Can share bathroom with main house
- ✔ Owner must live on the property



### WHAT'S NOT AN ADU?

RVs, tiny homes on wheels, yurts, and storage structures are usually not considered ADUs.

### SHORT-TERM RENTALS

ADUs and JADUs must be rented for 30 days or more – no short-term rentals like Airbnb are allowed (with some exceptions).

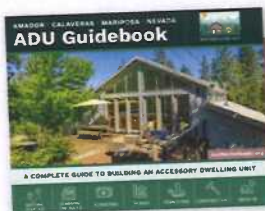
### MULTI-FAMILY

ADUs can also be added to properties with duplexes, triplexes, and apartment buildings.



## Getting Started

Building an ADU can be overwhelming. Our resources are here to help.



**ADU GUIDEBOOK** Download our step-by-step guide for your County.

[motherlodeadu.org/guidebook](http://motherlodeadu.org/guidebook)



**FLOORPLANS** Look at example floorplans including prefab ADUs.



**ADU PLANS GALLERY** View and compare existing plans to jump start your design.



**ADU CALCULATOR** Get a rough estimate of costs, fees and rents.



**PROCESS AT-A-GLANCE** Learn about the permit and build process for your County.



**CAN I BUILD TOOL** See what you can build on your property.



**COUNTY ADU RULES** Find out the ADU rules for your County before you begin.



**ADU DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST** Use to prepare for your application.

See all resources at [motherlodeadu.org](http://motherlodeadu.org)



**NEED FUNDING?** The Cal HFA ADU Program offers up to \$40k for qualified homeowners to develop an ADU. Visit [calhfa.ca.gov/adu](http://calhfa.ca.gov/adu).



## An Investment in Your Future

It's important to create a project budget early on. Use the ADU Calculator to estimate project costs and possible rental income.

[motherlodeadu.org/calculator](http://motherlodeadu.org/calculator)



Regardless of your project budget, an ADU is a great investment for your property and family. The extra space gives homeowners lots of flexibility over the years, and rental income and increased property value puts cash back in your pocket.



## Mother Lode ADU Plans Gallery

Jump start your design by visiting our Plans Gallery to view and compare dozens of ready-made designs and connect directly with the designer.



All plans need some customization for local rules and your property, but can still save you time & money.

[motherlodeadu.org/plans](http://motherlodeadu.org/plans)

## Pro Tips from Local Professionals

Realtors and staff across the region talk to folks every day who are considering building a new or permitting an existing ADU. Here are some things they have learned:

### ADU TIPS FROM A REALTOR



- 1 Having an ADU is always a benefit.
- 2 Laws and incentives support ADUs.
- 3 Existing structures like garages and barns can be turned into ADUs.
- 4 Local staff are here to help.
- 5 Prefab is a great option.

See the details at [motherlodeadu.org/realtor-tips](https://motherlodeadu.org/realtor-tips)



### TIPS ON LEGALIZING AN UNPERMITTED ADU



- 1 Talk to local staff.
- 2 Consider hiring a professional.
- 3 Build a budget and be strategic.
- 4 Gather documentation.
- 5 Prepare for a marathon, not a sprint.
- 6 An unpermitted ADU can be more expensive than bringing it up to code.

See the details at [motherlodeadu.org/ccde-tips](https://motherlodeadu.org/ccde-tips)



MOTHER LODE ADU



SCAN ME!

## Mother Lode ADU Online

Step-by-step guidance • Tools and resources  
Stories about local ADUs • Floorplans inspiration  
Showcased prefab ADUs • and MUCH MORE!

[motherlodeadu.org](https://motherlodeadu.org)



## Questions? Need help with an ADU?

Staff are here to help you. Contact them with your questions, wherever you are in the process. Use the information below or visit [motherlodeadu.org/contact](https://motherlodeadu.org/contact) for more contact information.



### AMADOR COUNTY

209-223-6422  
building@amadorgov.org  
810 Court Street, Jackson



### CALAVERAS COUNTY

209-754-6390  
buildingweb@co.calaveras.ca.us  
891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas



### MARIPOSA COUNTY

209-966-5151  
planningdept@mariposacounty.org  
5100 Bullion Street #1, Mariposa



### NEVADA COUNTY

530-265-1222 ext. 2  
planning@nevadacounty.gov  
950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 170, Nevada City

## Invest in your family and community by building an ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU)



MOTHER LODE ADU

[motherlodeadu.org](https://motherlodeadu.org)



From space for your loved ones to rental income for your retirement, an ADU will grow with you and your family over time.

Mother Lode ADU, a new partnership between the Counties of Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, and Nevada, offers resources to help you build an ADU.

## Why Build an ADU?

  
HOUSING FRIENDS  
& FAMILY

  
RENTAL  
INCOME

  
A HOME AS  
YOU AGE

  
PROPERTY VALUE

  
SAFETY

  
LOCAL SUPPORT