

RETAIL BUILDINGS:
STANDARD METHODS OF MEASUREMENT



Building Owners and Managers
Association (BOMA) International

www.boma.org



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INTRODUCTION

Measuring the area of a retail building is straightforward for most simple buildings but quickly becomes complex when variables must be considered. Such variables include ancillary space, mezzanines, articulated exterior walls and the definition of the storefront lease line. In addition, there are a large number of stakeholders in the use of terms similar to gross area in the real estate, design and construction industries, with wide variation in existing methods used to measure the gross areas of retail buildings.

In order to permit communication and computation on a clear and understandable basis, and after reviewing many different methods of calculating gross areas in retail buildings, BOMA International has published this method to clearly define these gross areas of a retail building:

Construction gross area (CGA): The larger measure of the two gross areas. It includes the area defined as exterior gross area, as well as other areas that have a structural floor, or are covered by a roof or canopy, that are typically unenclosed but within the building perimeter, exclusive of voids. It may be an appropriate measure of area upon which to base an estimated construction cost or for valuation using the replacement value approach of appraisal. Accurate construction cost estimating and replacement cost valuation should consider fully enclosed and finished space differently than unenclosed space, applying unit costs appropriate to various types of spaces.

Exterior gross area (EGA): The total of all the enclosed floor areas (as viewed on a floor plan) of all floors of a building contained within their measure lines, excluding voids (with the exception of occupant voids), interstitial space, unexcavated space and crawl space. No deductions are recognized for columns or any structural elements within the measure line. Exterior gross area is comprised of four key area components, gross leasable area, common area, parking and non-leasable area. It is fundamental to the calculation of rent and common area charges and is also commonly referred to in the retail real estate industry as gross building area.

Gross leasable area (GLA): The total enclosed floor area designed for the exclusive use of an occupant, including any basements, mezzanines, or upper floors. For each occupant, it is generally measured from the centerline of partitions that separate adjacent occupants, from the measure line on the exterior surface of exterior enclosures, from the lease line at common areas, and includes the full thickness of all other enclosing walls. No deduction is made for columns, any structural elements or occupant voids are within GLA.

Use of this document and the methods discussed herein is voluntary and is not required by any law. These methods may be at variance with other methods of measuring gross area defined in local ordinances and building codes, which take precedence over these methods for their purposes.

It is not uncommon for an area calculated from the building plans to differ from the area measured on site. It is also not uncommon for a site measurement and calculation by one party to differ from the same measurement and calculation by another party. The calculation for an area, resulting from site measurement by the building owner or manager, is deemed accurate if a re-measurement gives a result with variance of two percent (2%) or less. If the variance is greater than two percent (2%), BOMA International recommends that an independent professional third party be sought to assist in resolving the matter.

SECTION 1: SCOPE

This standard's purpose is:

- To permit clear and accurate communication among all participants in commercial retail real estate.
- To establish a consistent, unambiguous measurement of gross leasable area.
- To allow comparison of values on the basis of a clearly understood and generally agreed method of measurement.

This standard of measurement is intended for application to buildings containing retail types of occupancies. Methodologies defined are relevant to both new and existing buildings, comprised of single or multiple stories that may be leased to one or multiple occupants. Although references are made to a development parcel this standard is not intended for application to site improvements other than buildings.

The uniformity of the measurement of retail area established by this standard not only serves the interests of property owners, managers and occupants but also, because they are succinctly defined, may appeal to others like facility managers, brokers, appraisers, assessors, lenders, insurers, developers, construction and design professionals, and others who need an unequivocal, consistent measure of the physical size of a retail building.