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### How Does an Appraiser Determine the Size of a Home?

*Your client is frustrated – two different appraisers came up with two different measurements for his home – both differing from what the public records say. How can this be, you might ask, especially when square footage is one of the most important considerations for a prospective homeowner?*

Believe it or not, [USPAP](#) (the principles that guide appraisal practice) does not determine measurement standards for appraisers. As a result, appraisers' measurement practices vary, and this is permissible.

**What is important, is for appraisers to consistently apply the practices that they have adopted.**

There are two main standards from which residential appraisers typically choose: [ANSI](#) and [AMS](#).

Depending upon the standard the appraiser follows, here are some differences that may account for why the appraisers' measurements differ amongst each other, with blue prints, and with public records:

- Measuring to the tenth or half foot and/or rounding to the nearest whole foot
- Including or not including stairwells
- Including or not including finished, below grade space (when even just one wall is below grade)
- Including or not including space with low ceiling height (especially problematic in steeply pitched rooms or with bay windows).

Also, remember that non-contiguous space (a detached in-law for example), space without a permanent heating source, and unwarranted space should never be included in the gross living area.

*Axis Appraisal Management is the **national** solution for **local** appraisals.*