



**ATTIC ACCESS IN GARAGE: POLICY AND INTERPRETATION**

**R309.1 Opening protection.** ... Other openings between the garage and residence shall be equipped with solid wood doors not less than 1-3/8 inches in thickness, solid or honeycomb core steel doors not less than 1-3/8 inches thick, or 20-minute fire-rated doors.

**R309.2 Separation required.** The garage shall be separated from the residence and its attic area by not less than 1/2-inch gypsum board applied to the garage side.

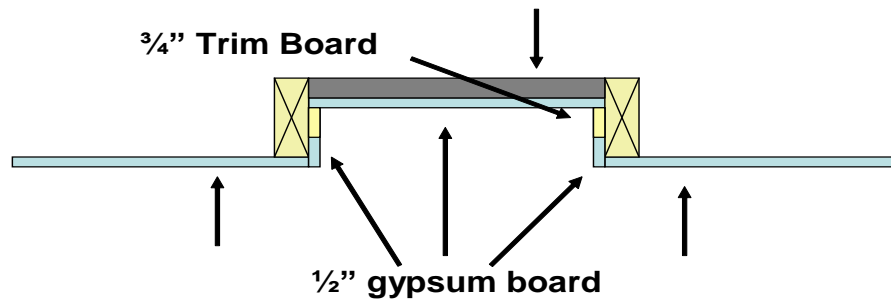
**Interpretation:** This includes the horizontal attic access located in the ceiling of garages when the ceiling is used as the fire separation and a common attic is shared by both occupancies. This requirement means that the attic access must be constructed of: 1) a 2x framed access hatch with 1/2 inch gypsum applied to the bottom side or 2) 3/4" plywood drop-in hatch/door with 1/2" gypsum board applied to the garage side. Hatched /door shall be supported by 3/4" wood shelf/ledge.

If a Folding Stairway is installed, a framed enclosure shall be constructed as above and around the folding stair rough opening. Minimum 1/2" gypsum board shall be installed on the garage side of the enclosure. An access hatch as described above shall be mounted at the top of the enclosure. Supported by 3/4" shelf/ledge around the stairway. The gypsum covering shall be tight to the surrounding ceiling.

INTERPRETATION OF CODE REQUIREMENTS  
SUGGESTED METHODS

**ATTIC ACCESS IN GARAGE**

Attic access panel made of a minimum 1/2" gypsum screwed to 3/4" plywood backer

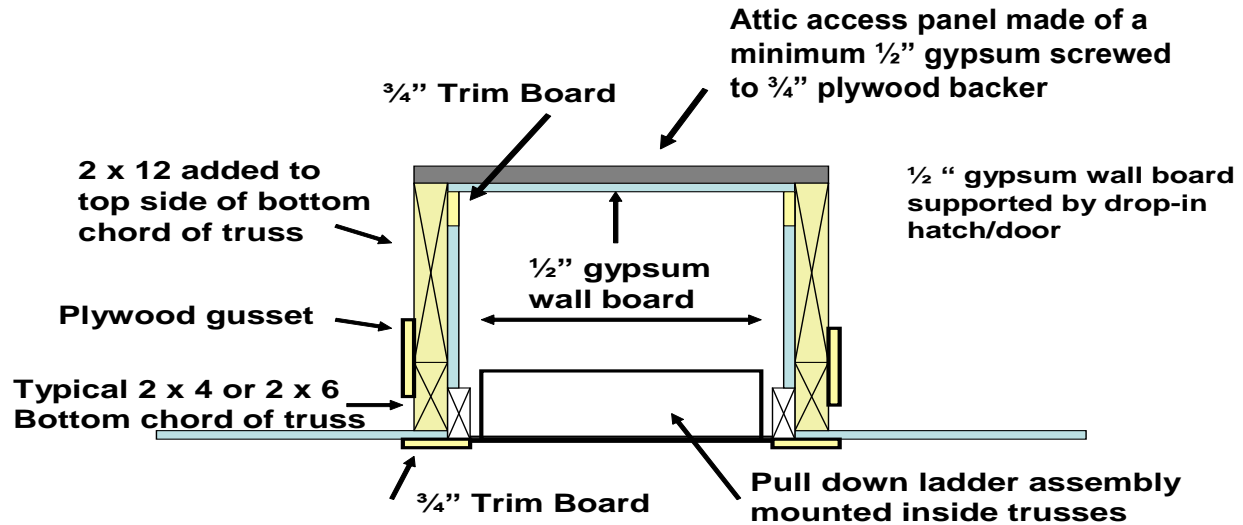


**TABLE R702.3.5 MINIMUM THICKNESS AND APPLICATION OF GYPSUM BOARD**

- d. ... On ceiling applications to receive a water-based texture material, either hand or spray applied, the gypsum board shall be applied perpendicular to framing. When applying a water-based texture material, the minimum gypsum board thickness shall be increased from 3/8 inch to 1/2 inch for 16-inch on center framing, and from 1/2 inch to 5/8 inch for 24-inch on center framing or 1/2-inch sag-resistant gypsum ceiling board shall be used.

INTERPRETATION OF CODE REQUIREMENTS  
SUGGESTED METHODS

## ATTIC ACCESS IN GARAGE



**Pull down garage attic ladder installation requirements to maintain fire resistive separation**

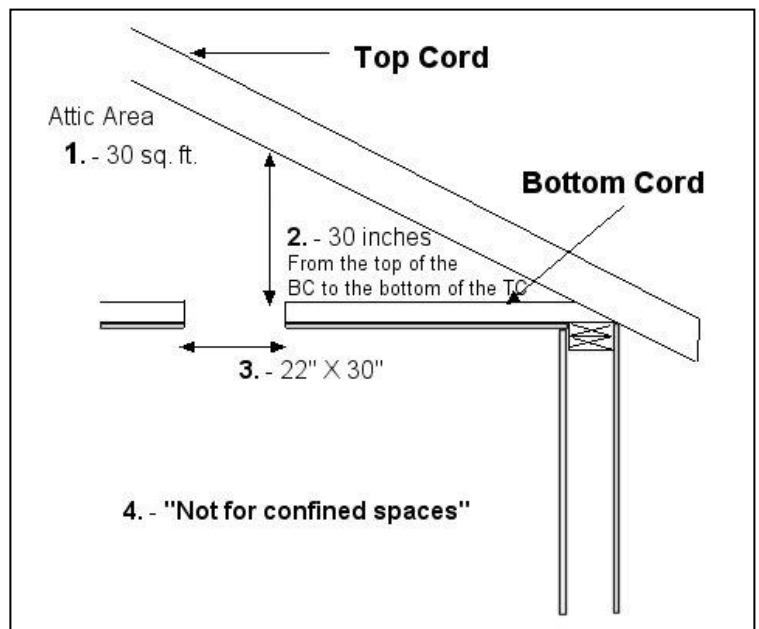
**TABLE R702.3.5  
MINIMUM THICKNESS AND APPLICATION OF GYPSUM BOARD**

THICKNESS OF GYPSUM BOARD (inches)	APPLICATION	ORIENTATION OF GYPSUM BOARD TO FRAMING	MAXIMUM SPACING OF FRAMING MEMBERS (inches o.c.)	MAXIMUM SPACING OF FASTENERS (inches)		SIZE OF NAILS FOR APPLICATION TO WOOD FRAMING <sup>c</sup>
				Nails <sup>a</sup>	Screws <sup>b</sup>	
Application without adhesive						
3/8	Ceiling <sup>d</sup>	Perpendicular	16	7	12	13 gage, 1 1/4" long, 15/64" head; 0.098" diameter, 1 1/4" long, annular-ringed; or cooler nail, 0.080" diameter, 1 3/8" long 7/32" head.
	Wall	Either direction	16	8	16	
1/2	Ceiling	Either direction	16	7	12	13 gage, 1 3/8" long, 19/64" head; 0.098" diameter, 1 1/4" long, annular-ringed; 5 cooler nail, 0.086" diameter, 1 5/8" long 15/64" head; or gypsum board nail, 0.091 diameter, 1 5/8" long, 9/32" head.
	Ceiling <sup>d</sup>	Perpendicular	24	7	12	
	Wall	Either direction	16	8	16	
5/8	Wall	Either direction	16	8	16	
	Ceiling	Either direction	16	7	12	13 gage, 1 5/8" long, 19/64" head; 0.098" diameter, 1 3/8" long, annular-ringed; 6 cooler nail, 0.092" diameter, 1 7/8" long 1/4" head; or gypsum board nail, 0.091 diameter, 1 7/8" long, 19/64" head.
	Ceiling <sup>b</sup>	Perpendicular	24	7	12	
	Wall	Either direction	24	8	12	

**R807.1 Attic access.**

Buildings with combustible ceiling or roof construction shall have an attic access opening to attic areas that exceed 30 square feet and have a vertical height of 30 inches or more.

The rough-framed opening shall not be less than 22 inches by 30 inches and shall be located in a hallway or other readily accessible location. A 30-inch minimum unobstructed headroom in the attic space shall be provided at some point above the access opening. See Section M1305.1.3 for access requirements where mechanical equipment is located in attics.



1. An attic access opening shall be provided to attic area that exceed 30 square feet and
2. that has a 30-inch minimum unobstructed headroom in the attic space.
3. Rough-framed opening shall not be less than 22 inches by 30 inches.
4. Shall be located in a hallway or other readily accessible location as approved by the Building Inspection Department.