



Tips for Locating Property Pins

What are property pins?

Property pins are thin iron bars, two to three feet long, and sometimes capped with plastic, which the original survey crew inserted on the property lines. If your property is a platted lot, there should be property pins located at all corners of your property. The top of the cap should be at ground level; however, over time they may get pushed underground. If this happens, you can locate your pins by digging for them or using a metal detector in the area that you think they are possibly located.



There are a variety of ways you can investigate the location of a missing property pin.

Find a Plat Map of Your Property

Plat maps show how an area of land is divided into individual properties and public Right-of-Way (ROW). The maps provide property dimensions, which can be used to measure from known property corners to find the missing property pin.

You can find a variety of mapping resources through the following Polk County sites:

[Polk County Assessor](#)

[Polk County Recorder](#)

[Polk County GIS Portal](#)

Measure from Centerline of Road

Using the mapping resources mentioned above, you can often find the width of the road ROW. The ROW includes the traveled portion of the road along with any shoulders, ditches and sidewalks. Once you know the width of the ROW, divide it in half. Typically, the road is centered in the ROW, so you can measure from the road centerline towards your property to find the approximate location of the front property line. Pins are normally located within 12" of the sidewalk in a newer subdivision, on the side closer to the house.

Check Sidewalks

Examine the lines that are cut in the sidewalk in front of the house. Often the contractor who poured the sidewalk started and stopped on the property lines, so those cut lines may coincide with the edges of your property. Also, the appearance of the concrete on your side of the property may be slightly different from that on your neighbor's side. This may help you locate the side property lines.

Use a Metal Detector

Contact local hardware stores to see where you can rent a metal detector. Using a metal detector, move the device over the ground beginning about one (1) foot inside the sidewalk toward the house to locate the survey pin. Pins may be buried just under the surface, or up to a foot below.

Be Aware

Existing fences may have been built without property lines being located, so do not assume they are a correct guide.

Ask Your Neighbor

Your neighbor may be knowledgeable about the property lines that you share. It's possible they know where the pins are, or had a survey performed. If they know the location of any of their other property lines, you can also use their property dimensions to measure the approximate locations of your property lines.

Beware of Moved Property Pins

Property pins are not foolproof markers. Over the years, previous owners, utility workers, or a neighbor, may have dug up a property pin and reinserted it nearby or tossed it aside. Your property line does not change just because something happened to the pin. For example, if you locate property pins 60 feet apart along the front of your property but the plat says your lot is 50 feet wide, one of those pins may have been moved, and the front of your property is still 50 feet wide.

Contact a Surveyor

A surveyor can be helpful in determining the location of your property lines. Although a surveyor can be more costly than other methods, they provide you with an accurate location of your property lines, and a survey is sometimes needed to resolve a dispute with a neighbor over the property line location. If you decide to hire a licensed land surveyor, he or she will come out to your land and place markers that mark the boundary lines of your property.

You can find a listing of licensed land surveyors in your area by simply consulting your local phone book or the internet. It is often best to call a few such companies, explain what you want them to do, and then hire the one you think best for the job.

**Example:
Plat Map & Property Pins**

