

# Glossary



## GLOSSARY

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**Alignment** The arrangement of objects along a straight line.

**Arch** A structure built to support the weight above an opening. A true arch is curved. It consists of wedge-shaped stones or bricks called Voussoirs (vu-swar'), put together to make a curved bridge which spans the opening.

**Balcony** A platform projecting from the wall of an upper story, enclosed by a railing or balustrade, with an entrance from the building and supported by brackets, columns, or cantilevered out.

**Baluster** A short, upright column or urn-shaped support of a railing.

**Balustrade** A row of balusters and the railing connecting them. Used as a stair rail and also above the cornice on the outside of a building.

**Bargeboard** A projecting board, often decorated, that acts as trim to cover the ends of the structure where a pitched roof overhangs a gable.

**Bay Window** A window or set of windows which project out from a wall, forming an alcove or small space in a room; ordinarily begins at ground level, but may be carried out on brackets or corbels.

**Board and Batten** Vertical plank siding with joints covered by narrow wood strips.

**Bracket** A supporting member for a projecting element or shelf, sometimes in the shape of an inverted L and sometimes as a solid piece or a triangular truss.

**Caning** Metal struts supporting leaded glass.

**Canopy** A roofed structure constructed of fabric or other material placed so as to extend outward from a building providing a protective shield for doors, windows and other openings, supported by the building and supports extended to the ground directly under the canopy or cantilevered from the building.

**Clapboards** Narrow, horizontal, overlapping wooden boards, usually thicker along the bottom edge, that form the outer skin of the walls of many wood frame houses. The horizontal lines of the overlaps generally are from four to six inches apart in older houses.

**Column** A slender upright structure, generally consisting of a cylindrical shaft, a base, and a capital; pillar: It is usually a supporting or ornamental member in a building.

**Coursed Ashlar** A square, hewn stone used in building. It also refers to a thick dressed, square stone used for facing brick walls, etc.

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***Dormer*** A window set upright in a sloping roof. The term is also used to refer to the roofed projection in which this window is set.

***Eave*** The underside of a sloping roof projecting beyond the wall of a building.

***Elevation*** A mechanically accurate, “head-on” drawing of a face of a building or object, without any allowance for the effect of the laws of perspective. Any measurement on an elevation will be in a fixed proportion, or scale, to the corresponding measurement on the real building.

***Façade*** Front or principal face of a building, any side of a building that faces a street or other open space.

***False Front*** A front wall which extends beyond the sidewalls of a building to create a more imposing façade.

***Fascia*** A flat board with a vertical face that forms the trim along the edge of a flat roof, or along the horizontal, or “eaves,” sides of a pitched roof. The rain gutter is often mounted on it.

***Fenestration*** The arrangement and design of windows in a building.

***Floor Area Ratio*** The relationship of the total floor area of a building to the land area of its site, as defined in a ratio in which the numerator is the floor area, and the denominator is the site area.

***Finial*** The decorative, pointed terminus of a roof or roof form.

***Frame*** A window component: see window parts.

***Gable*** The portion, above eave level, of an end wall of a building with a pitched or gambrel roof. In the case of a pitched roof this takes the form of a triangle. The term is also used sometimes to refer to the whole end wall.

***Joist*** One of the horizontal wood beams that support the floors or ceilings of a house. They are set parallel to one another—usually from 1’0” to 2’0” apart—and span between supporting walls or larger wood beams.

***Lap Siding*** See clapboards.

***Lintel*** A heavy horizontal beam of wood or stone over an opening of a door or window to support the weight above it.

***Moulding*** A decorative band or strip of material with a constant profile or section designed to cast interesting shadows. It is generally used in cornices and as trim around window and door openings.

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**Oriel Window** A projecting bay with windows, which emerges from the building at a point above ground level. It is often confused with a bay window which ordinarily begins at ground level.

**Pier** The part of a wall between windows or other openings. The term is also used sometimes to refer to a reinforcing part built out from the surface of a wall; a buttress.

**Pilaster** A support or pier treated architecturally as a column, with a base, shaft, and capital that is attached to a wall surface.

**Post** A piece of wood, metal, etc., usually long and square or cylindrical, set upright to support a building, sign, gate, etc.; pillar; pole.

**Preservation** The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a building or structure, and the existing form and vegetative cover of a site. It may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

**Protection** The act or process of applying measures designed to affect the physical condition of a property by defending or guarding it from deterioration, loss or attack, or to cover or shield the property from danger of injury. In the case of buildings and structures, such treatment is generally of a temporary nature and anticipates future historic preservation treatment; in the case of archaeological sites, the protective measure may be temporary or permanent.

**Quoin** (koin) Dressed stones or bricks at the corners of the buildings, laid so that their faces are alternately large and small. Originally used to add strength to the masonry wall, later used decoratively.

**Rafter** Any of the beams that slope from the ridge of a roof to the eaves and serve to support the roof.

**Reconstruction** The act or process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure, or object, or part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period of time.

**Rehabilitation** The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural value.

**Renovation** The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible a contemporary use.

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***Restoration*** The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

***Roof*** The top covering of a building. Following are some types:

- ***Gable roof*** has a pitched roof with ridge and vertical ends.
- ***Hip roof*** has sloped ends instead of vertical ends.
- ***Shed roof*** (lean-to) has one slope only and is built against a higher wall.
- ***Jerkin-head*** (clipped gable or hipped gable) is similar to gable but with the end clipped back.
- ***Gambrel roof*** is a variation of a gable roof, each side of which has a shallower slope above a steeper one.

***Sash*** See window parts.

***Shape*** The general outline of a building or its façade.

***Siding*** The narrow horizontal or vertical wood boards that form the outer face of the walls in a traditional wood frame house. Horizontal wood siding is also referred to as clapboards. The term “siding” is also more loosely used to describe any material that can be applied to the outside of a building as a finish.

***Sill*** The lowest horizontal member in a frame or opening for a window or door. Also, the lowest horizontal member in a framed wall or partition.

***Size*** The dimensions in height and width of a building's face.

***Soffit*** The underside of a structural part, as of a beam, arch, etc.

***Stile*** A vertical piece in a panel or frame, as of a door or window.

***Stabilization*** The fact or process of applying measures designed to re-establish a weather resistant enclosure and the structural stability of an unsafe or deteriorated property while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present.

***Store Front*** The street level façade of a commercial building, usually having display windows.

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**Visual Continuity** A sense of unity or belonging together that elements of the built environment exhibit because of similarities among them.

**Window Parts** The moving units of a window are known as Sashes and move within the fixed Frame. The Sash may consist of one large Pane of glass or may be subdivided into smaller panes by thin members called Muntins or Glazing Bars. Sometimes in nineteenth-century houses windows are arranged side by side and divided by heavy vertical wood members called Mullions. For a diagram of window parts, see pages 72 and 73.