Glossary

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Arch

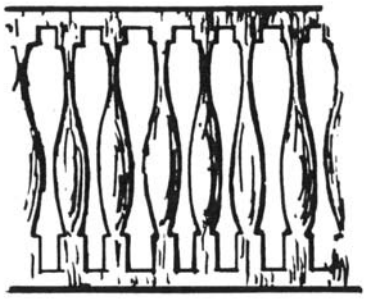
A

ARCADE: A series of arches supported by columns or piers; a building or part of a building with a series of arches; a roofed passageway.

ARCH: A structural member shaped in the arc of a curve.

ARCHITRAVE: The lower part of a classical entablature, resting directly on the capital of a column; the molding around a window or door.

ASPHALT: A brownish-black solid or semisolid mixture of bitumens used in paving, roofing and waterproofing.



Balustrade

B

BALCONY: A platform extending from the façade of a building and surrounded by railing.

BALLOON FRAMING: A type of light-weight construction consisting of two-inch boards of varying widths held together by nails and sometimes extending through two stories.

BALUSTER: A vertical, often vase-shaped, support for a rail.

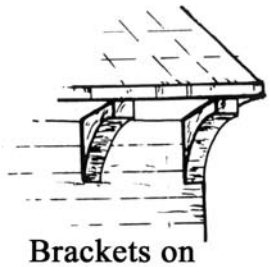
BALUSTRADE: A series of balusters with a top and bottom rail.

BARREL TILE: A semi-cylindrical tile used for roofing.

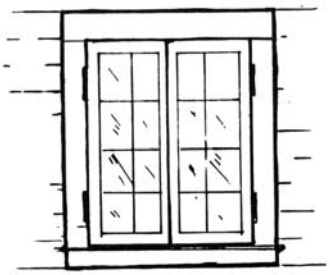
BAS RELIEF: Sculptured figures projecting from a wall.

BAY: One unit of a building that consists of a series of similar units, commonly the number of window and door openings per floor or by the number of space between columns or piers.

BRACKET: A support element under eaves, shelves, or overhangs, often more decorative than functional.



Brackets on
Boxed Cornice



Casement Window

Cornice

C

CANOPY: An ornamental roof-like structure, or a cloth covering held horizontally over an entrance.

CANTILEVER: A projecting beam or part of a structure supported only at one end.

CAPITAL: The decorated top of a column or pilaster which supports the entablature.

CASEMENT WINDOW: A window with the sash hung vertically and opening inward or outward.

CAST IRON: Iron shaped in a mold. It is brittle, hard and not weldable.

CINDER BLOCK: A hollow, concrete building block made with coal cinders.

COLUMN: A vertical structural member , usually long and slender

CORNICE: Projecting ornamental molding along the top of a building or wall.

CURTAIN Wall: A non-loadbearing wall used for enclosure which is applied to or in front of a structural system.

D

DORMER: A window used for lighting the space in a roof in the same plane as the wall (wall dormer) or projecting from the slope of the roof (roof dormer).

DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW (SASH WINDOW): A window with two sashes, one above the other, arranged to slide vertically past each other.

E

EAVE: The projecting overhang at the lower edge of a roof.

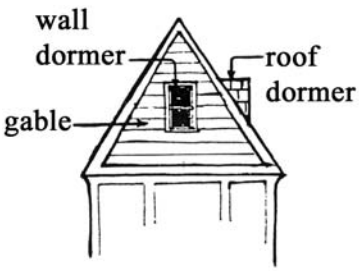
ELL: A wing or addition extended from the back of a house containing full-sized rooms.

F

FAÇADE: The face or elevation of a building.

FENESTRATION: The design and placement of windows.

G



Gabled Roof with Dormers

GABLE: A triangular wall section at the end of a pitched roof.

GABLED ROOF: A double-pitched roof with pitches at opposite but equal angles meeting at the roof's ridge.

GALLERY: A porch or veranda.

GRILLE: A framework of cast iron, or other material, in the form of bars.

Ground Sign

GROUND SIGN: Any sign which is supported by structures or supports in or upon the ground and independent of support from any building.

H

HIPPED ROOF: A roof with four uniformly-pitched sides.

J

JALOUSIE: A type of window or door with numerous horizontal slats, usually glass or wood, operated by a crank mechanism.

K

KIOSK: A small freestanding structure used as an information center.

L

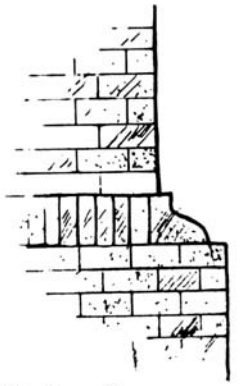
LATH: A narrow, thin strip of wood or metal used as a base for plaster or stucco.

LATTICE: A network of diagonally-interlocking lath or other material used as screening.

LIGHT: A window or opening in a wall that admits light.

LINTEL: The horizontal beam over a door or window.

LOUVERED: A door or window with fixed or movable slanted slats.



String Course of Molded Brick

M

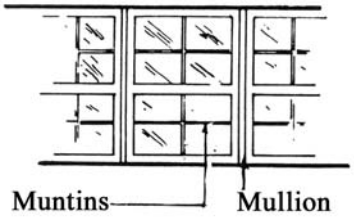
MANSARD ROOF: A roof having two slopes on all four sides with the lower slope steeper than the upper.

MASONRY: Stone work or brick work used in wall construction.

MASSING: The combining of several masses to form a building volume.

MOLDED BRICK: Brick shaped in a mold for decoration.

MOLDING: A continuous decorative band that is either carved into or applied to a surface.



MULLION: A vertical member separating windows, doors or panels set in a series.

MUNTINS: The wood or metal strips separating the panes of glass in a window.

P

PALE: A pointed stick or picket used in a fence.

PARAPET: A low, solid protective wall or railing along the edge of a roof or balcony, usually used to surround a flat or built-up roof.

Pylon Sign

Triangular Pediment

PEDIMENT: A wide low-pitched gable end of the roof; also the triangular crowning element used over doors and windows.

PILASTER: A shallow pier attached to a wall.

PYLON SIGN: A sign which is supported by structures or supports in or upon the ground. It is independent of support from any building and has a sign face which is constructed from ground level.

R

RAFTER: Part of a wooden roof frame, sloping down from the ridge to the eaves and establishing the pitch.

RIDGE: The highest part of a roof running end to end.

S

SASH: A frame in which the panes of glass in a window or door are set.

SETBACK: The distance from the lot line to the building. See zoning code for the required building setbacks for new constructions.

SHED ROOF: A single pitched roof over a small room: usually attached to a main structure.

SHUTTER: A hinged cover or screen for a door or window.

SIDELIGHT: A framed area fixed glass along the side of a door or window opening.

SIDING: Building material used for surfacing a frame building.

SOFFIT: The exposed undersurface of an overhead component of a building structure.

SPALLING: The flaking of brickwork due to movement of the building structure or other causes.

SPANDREL: The triangular space between the exterior curves of two arches.

SPINDLE: A turned wooden element used in stair railings and porch trim.

STRING COURSE: A narrow, continuous ornamental band set in the face of a building as a design element.

STUCCO: A type of plasterwork, coarse or fine, used for surfacing exterior or interior walls.

STOCKADE FENCE: A fence made of upright, tightly-spaced wooden slats.

Transom Window

T

TERRA COTTA: A fine-grained, brownish-red, fired clay used for roof tiles and decorations.

TRANSOM WINDOW: A small window over a door or another window.

W

WAINSCOT: The lower part of an interior wall when finished in a material different from the upper part.

WALL SIGN: A sign which is attached to or erected against the wall of a building with its face in a parallel plane to the plane of the building façade or wall. Also includes the painting of a sign on a wall surface.

WINDOW SIGN: A sign which is painted on, attached to or visible through a window excluding displays of merchandise.