

PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

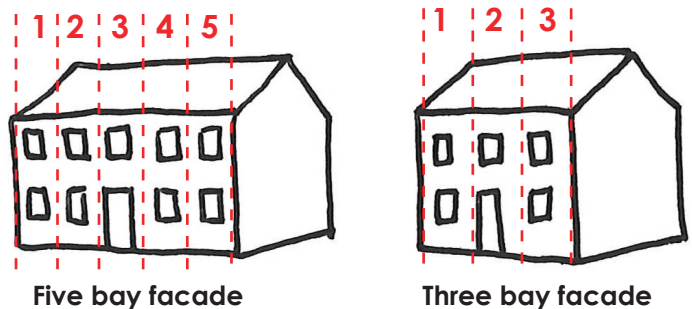
LEARNING THE LINGO: COMMON ARCHITECTURE TERMS

There are hundreds of elements that make up any given building, and hundreds of words to describe those elements. Below we explore some of the more common architectural features that can be found on commercial and residential buildings everywhere. Starting with basic vocabulary in this newsletter, we will continue to share our favorite architecture terms in future newsletters so that before long you will be describing any building like a pro!



BUILDING FORM

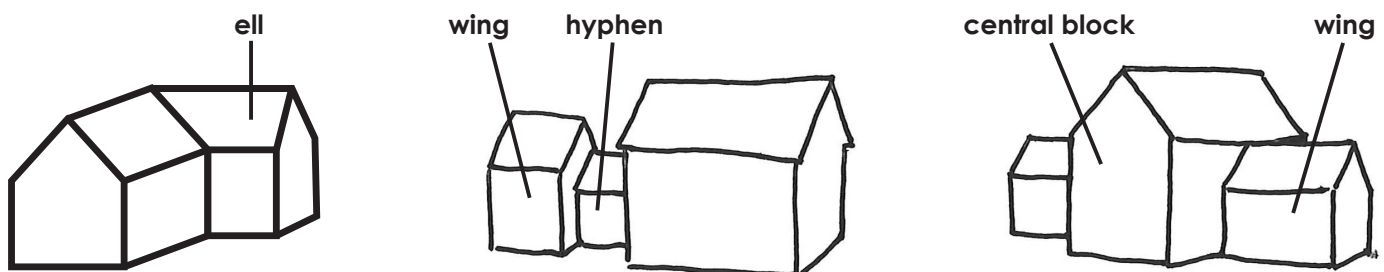
Bay - The regular division of a building between two adjacent vertical structural elements such as columns and usually marked by windows. A **bay window** is a single bay wide projection from the face of a building that has windows on every side; see **oriel** below.



Ell - The rear wing of a house, generally one room wide and running perpendicular to the principal building; the name is derived from the L shaped plan it creates.

Hyphen - A connecting space between a main building and wing or secondary building; typically diminutive to the structures it connects.

Wing - A secondary structure connected to the main or central block of a building; typically smaller in size than the main building.



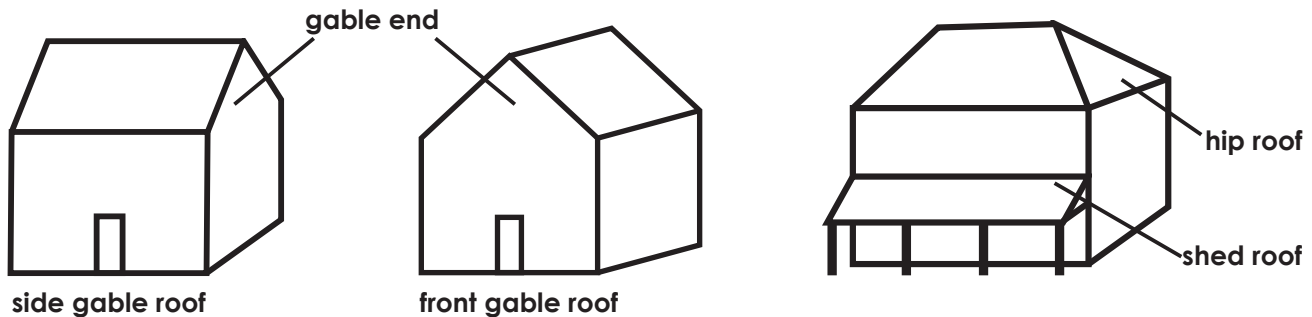
ROOF TYPES AND ELEMENTS

COMMON ROOF TYPES

Gable Roof - A roof with vertical ends and two slopes joining at a single ridge line. The gable end is the triangular section of the wall that forms the pitch of the roof.

Hip Roof - A roof with four sloped sides which meet at a ridge at the center of the roof.

Shed Roof - A roof with one slope only and is built against a higher wall. Often used for porch roofs or lean-to.

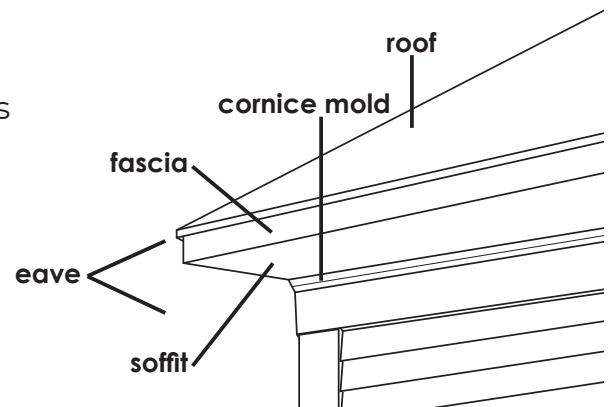


ROOF ELEMENTS

Eaves - The projecting edge of a roof that overhangs an exterior wall.

Fascia - A projecting flat horizontal member or molding; the outward facing part of an eave.

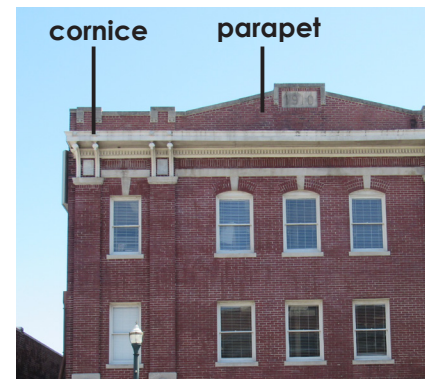
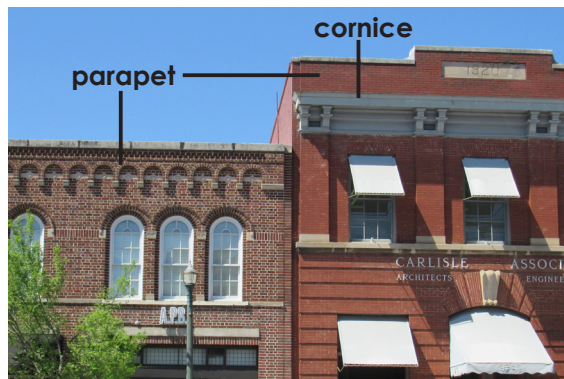
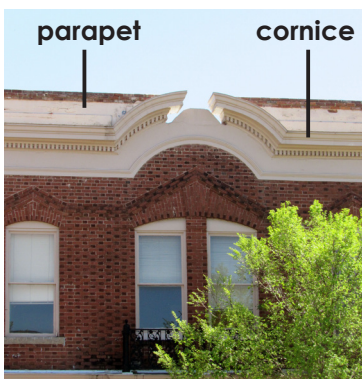
Soffit - The underside of the eave or other structural element.



COMMON ROOF DETAILS

Cornice - A crowning projection at a roof line or top of a wall, often with molding or other classical detail.

Parapet - A low wall, located at the top of a building. Often a decorative element that hides roofing on commercial buildings. A low horizontal wall at the edge of a roof.



WINDOWS AND DOORS

Fenestration - The arrangement of windows and other exterior openings on a building.

WINDOW ELEMENTS

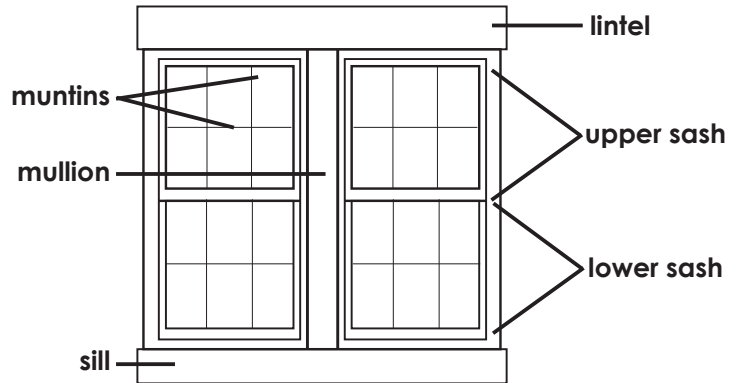
Lintel - The horizontal top member of a window, door, or other opening.

Mullions - The vertical structural units that divide adjacent windows.

Muntins - Dividing bars between panes of glass.

Sash - The frames in a window in which window panes are set.

Sill - The bottom crosspiece of a window frame.



COMMON WINDOW TYPES

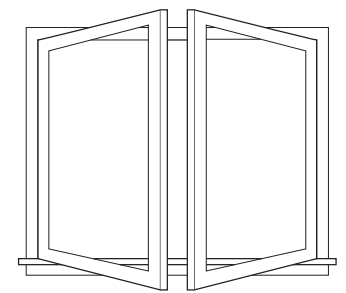
Casement Window - A window that is hinged along its side so that it opens either out or in. Casement windows often occur in pairs.

Double Hung Window - A window with two vertical sliding sashes, that move independently of each other, one over the other.

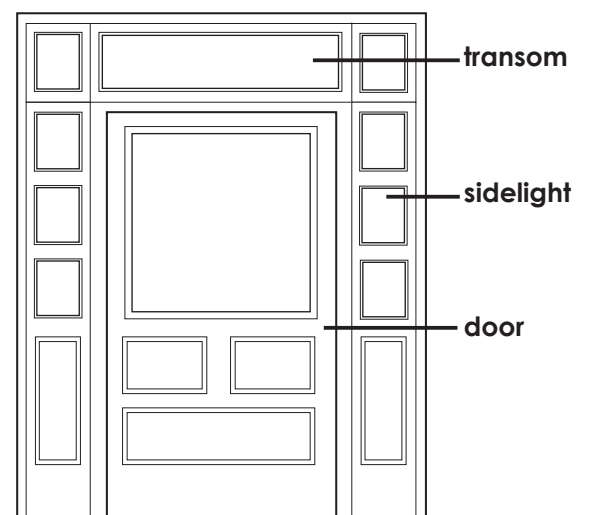
Single Hung Window - A window with a fixed upper sash and a lower sash that slides vertically.

Sidelight - Fixed vertically oriented windows placed on either side of a center window or door that are narrower than the main/center opening.

Transom Window - A horizontally oriented window located above a door or larger window.



casement window



OTHER FUN TERMS

The following architecture terms are often found in conjunction with the more common terms defined above- and also happen to be some of preservation staffs' favorites. Try dropping a few of these terms into conversations to impress (or confuse) your friends!

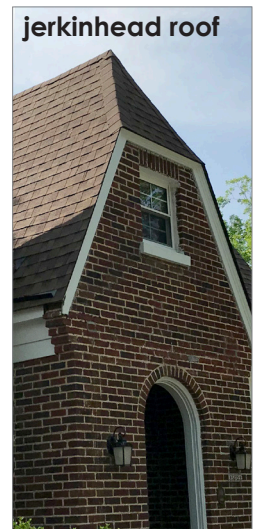
Dentils - small tooth-like square block projections adorning an area under an overhang or cornice.

Jerkinhead - A roof form similar to gable but with the top of the gable clipped back. Also known as a clipped gable or hip-on-gable roof.

Oriel - A projecting window of an upper floor; a cantilevered bay window.

Pilaster - A shallow, non-structural rectangular column, attached to, and projecting only slightly from, a wall surface as a decorative element.

Porte-cochère - Originally referred to an entrance or gateway to a building large enough to permit a coach to be driven through it into the interior courtyard beyond. Translated from French, porte-cochère means "coach door". Today the term is applied to a porch roof built over a driveway at the entrance to a building to provide shelter for those getting in or out of a vehicle; basically a fancy carport attached to a house!



Interested in learning more? Check out these online resources to pick up some extra architecture and preservation vocabulary.

- The National Park Service's [Preservation Terminology: https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_10.htm](https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_10.htm)
- The Preservation Handbook for Historic Residential Properties & Districts in Salt Lake City's [Glossary of Terms: http://www.slcdocs.com/historicpreservation/MFDG/AC.pdf](http://www.slcdocs.com/historicpreservation/MFDG/AC.pdf)



We Are Columbia

This newsletter was created by the preservation staff of the City of Columbia's Planning and Development Services Department. If you have any questions about your specific historic property please contact your district's preservation planner. Contact information can be found on our [website](#).

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