

Glossary of heritage building terms

Term	Definition
Architrave	A moulding surrounding a door or window opening.
Ashlar	A wall made from carefully hewn squared uniform blocks of stone laid in regular courses.
Baluster	Small post used to support a handrail.
Balustrade	A series of balusters supporting a handrail.
Belfry	A tower in which a bell is hung.
Capital*	The head or crowning feature of a column.
Cavity Wall	A hollow wall, usually consisting of two brick walls erected a few inches apart and joined together with ties of metal.
Ceiling Rose	A fitting from which a lamp may be suspended.
Cement (Portland)	Obtained by crushing and burning limestone in kilns, the resulting clinker being finely ground with gypsum and with the addition of various aggregates is used for many purposes (e.g. concrete, mortar).
Concrete	A conglomerate artificial stone. It is made by mixing in certain proportions cement, water, sand and crushed stone, gravel or other inert material. The chemically active substance in the mixture is the cement, which unites physically and chemically with the water and, upon hardening, binds the aggregates together to form a solid mass resembling stone.
Cornice	a. Horizontal projection at the top of a wall. b. A mould placed at the junction of wall and ceiling.
Cul de Sac	An access street with a blind end usually in the form of a turning space for vehicles.
Eaves	The lower part of a roof that overhangs the walls.
Façade	The face or front wall of a building.
Fenestration	The arrangement of windows or openings in a building.

Gable	The triangular end of a house formed at the end of a pitched roof, from eaves level to apex.
Hip Roof	A roof with an end roughly pyramidal in shape, with surfaces sloping upwards from all three eaves.
Jambs	Side surfaces of an opening in a wall.
Lintel	A beam spanning an opening.
Mantel	A shelf over a fireplace.
Mortar	A composition of lime and/or cement and sand mixed with water in various proportions.
Parapet	A low wall at the edge of a roof, balcony, bridge, or terrace.
Pediment*	A triangular or other geometrically shaped decoration above doors, windows, etc.
Pilaster	A rectangular pillar attached to a wall but treated as a column with a capital, shaft and base.
Pitch	The angle of inclination to the horizon of a roof or stair.
Plaster	Material of a mortar-like consistency used for covering walls and ceilings of buildings usually made of Portland mixed with sand and water.
Porch	A covered entrance to a building.
Quoins*	The corner stones at the angles of buildings.
Reveal	The thickness of wall from the wall face to the door or window frame. The remainder of the thickness of wall is known as the 'jamb'.
Rubble	Unhewn stones of varying sizes laid so as to fit between and against each other as well as possible. When stones are laid without any attempt to arrange them in courses they are known as 'random rubble'. When courses are made at regular intervals, the wall is said to be constructed of 'coursed rubble'.
Sash	The framework in a window, into which the glass is fitted.
Skirting	The trim fixed on a wall at its junction with the floor.
Studs	The vertical members in the wall framework of a building.
Surveying	The science of measuring land.
Terrace Housing	A group of one or two storey dwellings separated by party walls. Also known as row housing.
Terrazzo	Material produced by setting irregular fragments of marble in a matrix of cement, and rubbing them down to a smooth surface.
Veneer	Thin slices of wood or other material for finishing purposes to cover an inferior piece of material.

Source: Excepting those with asterisks, these terms are derived from *A Glossary of Building and Planning Terms* (AGPS 1975).