

ARCHITECTURE 101



How many times have you tried to describe a building to someone and ended up saying, “And it has one of those curly thingamajigs under the eave”?

This is a reading is designed to give architectural empowerment and increases your comfort using building vocabulary.

Foundations

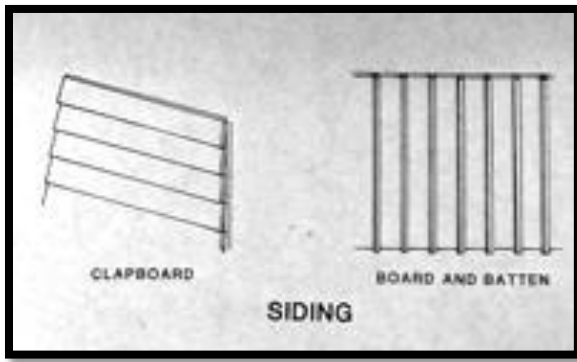


A *foundation* is dug and implies a basement. It lifts the first floor of the house off ground level. A *water table* sits at ground level and deflects water away from the building.

Exterior Materials

Wood siding

Many houses at the turn of the last century were covered with wood siding, now often made of other materials. Siding is applied in two ways - Clapboard and board and batten:



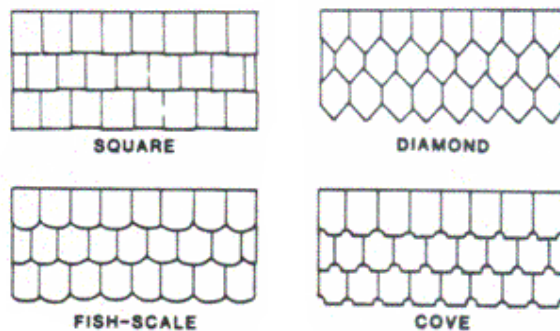
Stucco

Stucco is another very popular material in Oak Park and Hyde Park at the turn of the last century. Modern stucco is a combination of sand, Portland cement, lime, and water.



Shingles

Shingles are usually wood, but now often vinyl or other materials, add detail.



Notice the use of shingles; are purely decorative or do they help you “read” the building.
These fish-scale shingles seem to accentuate the first and second levels of this home.



These cove shingles seem to draw your eye up the turret and create a contrast to the windowpanes.

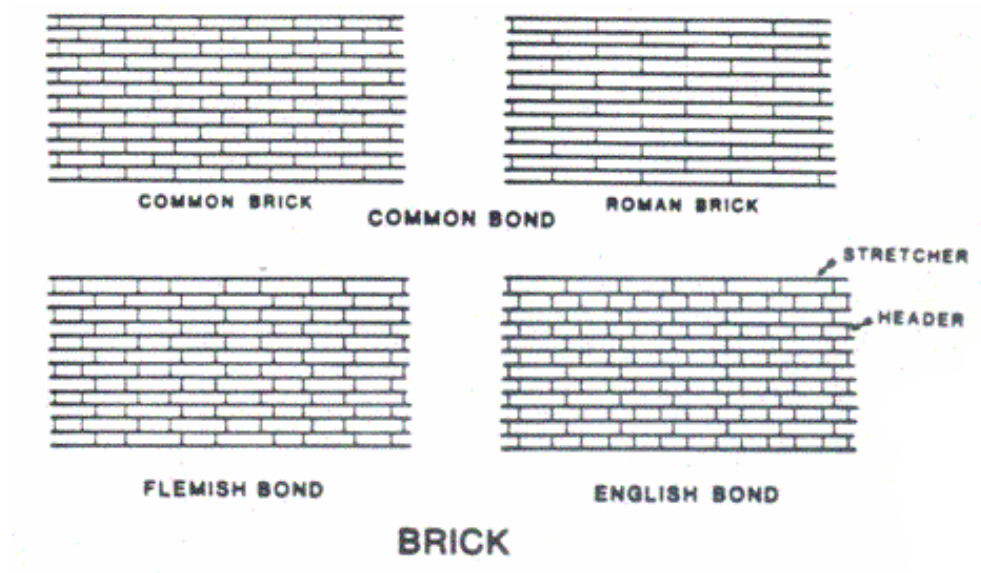


Elaborate decoration.



Brick

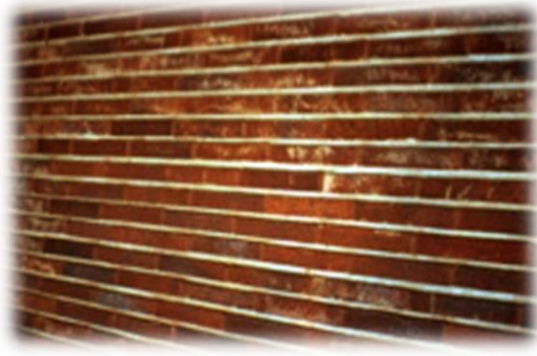
The size and the way in which brick is laid can have profoundly different effects on the appearance of a structure. Note that Roman brick is longer than common brick. It was favored by Frank Lloyd Wright because of its emphasis on the horizontal.



Even though the window dominates this photo, look closely at the brick and mortar.



Note emphasis on mortar here. It seems to protrude to provide texture. With Roman brick, this really emphasizes the horizontal line:



Here is brick laid in Flemish bond, but the colors and mortar treatment create an unusual look:



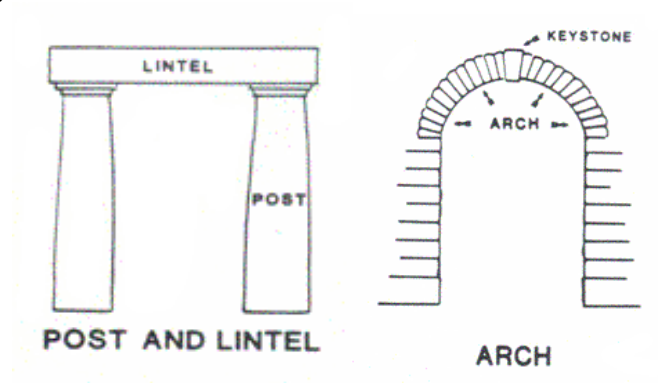
Here's an example of brick used in a decorative manner, but also as a guide to the building's structure:



Openings

Post & Lintel and Arch

Doors fall into two categories:



Post and lintel openings have been around for a while...



So have arches.



Look what happens in more modern doorways:



Pediment

The triangular piece above the doorway is called a pediment, this element was originally part of a Greek temple. Why might an architect choose a temple element for the doorway to a home or apartment building? What else do you know about symbols that might be at play in this design?

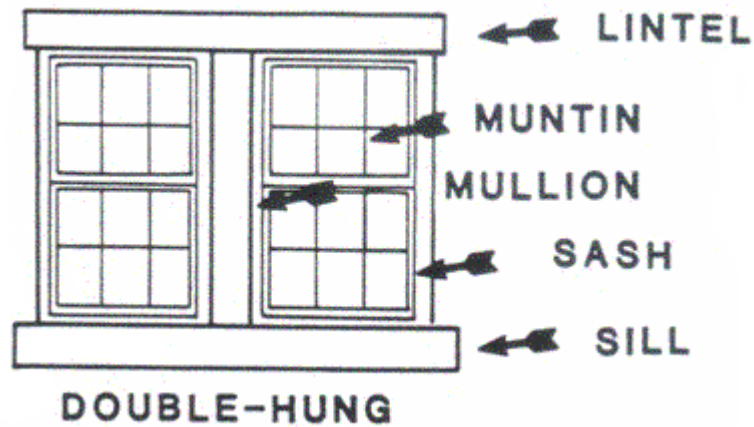


Notice the complex arch over the post and lintel, the keystone, the symbols, and the decorative brickwork.

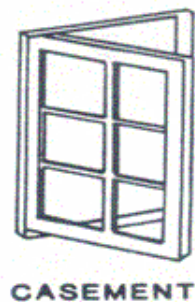
Do you think the wrought iron rail is original to the building? Thinking about change over time is another way to approach looking at buildings.

Windows

Double-hung windows are the best known. They can be plain plate glass or have panes. Wright called them 'guillotine windows'.



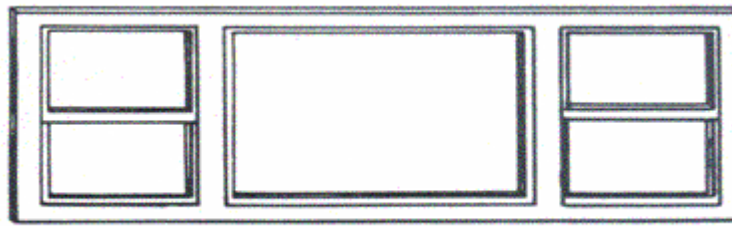
Casements swing either out or in. These were Wright's preferred windows for the Prairie style. He generally had them fabricated in art glass.



At the Heurtley house, they are configured as *ribbon windows*.



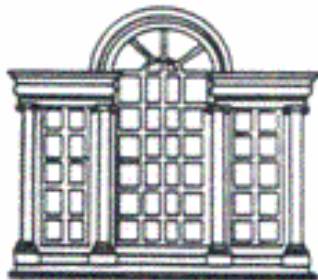
The Chicago window originated in the Chicago School of architecture to allow for both light and ventilation. The central plate glass pane was fixed and the side windows were generally double-hung windows and could open.



CHICAGO WINDOW



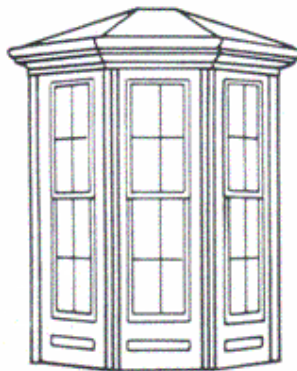
Palladian – a three part window in three sections with the center section being taller and arched. Named for Italian Renaissance architect Andreas Palladio, designer of many villas.



PALLADIAN



Bay or oriel. Bay windows usually start at the ground or extends from the foundation. Think of an Oriel as a decorative appendage.



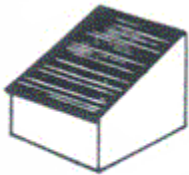
BAY WINDOW



ORIEL

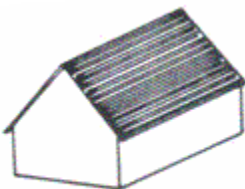
Roofs

Sheds are a very old and simple style of roof.



SHED

Gables are associated with Victorian style.



GABLE

Gambrels look like barns or Dutch colonial.



GAMBREL

Mansard is reminiscent of French architecture.

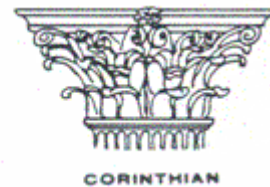
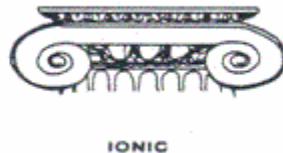
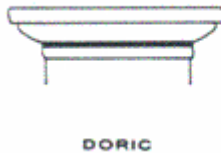


Hipped roofs were Wright's choice for Prairie style because of their straight line against the sky.



Additional Decorative Elements

Columns



Moving from the simplest to the most ornate:



Doric



Ionic



Corinthian is the most ornate.

Pilasters

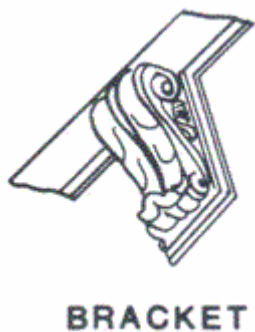
Pilasters are columns that are flush to the wall.



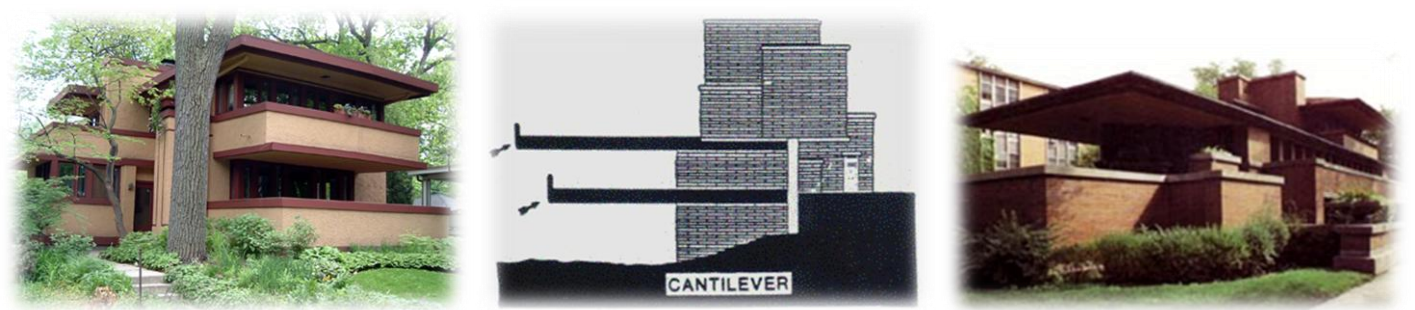
Caryatids - columns that are formed from sculptures of the human figure.



Brackets – often associated with Italianate houses, but also used in classical architecture.



Cantilever A horizontal projection with no visible means of support.



Laura Gale House is an example of a cantilever used by Wright and Robie House is another.

Turrets Tower-like structures rising from the upper floors of a building.



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