CONSTRUCTION VOCABULARY

ABC (Aggregate Base Course): used in mixing with concrete and placed below concrete prior to the pouring of sidewalks, driveways, etc. It serves as a compacted solid base.

Air return: A series of ducts in air conditioning system to return used air to air handler to be reconditioned.

Ameri-mix: Maker of the pre-blended bag mixes we use in masonry work.

Anchor Bolts: (also called J-bolts) Bolts embedded in concrete foundation used to hold sills in place.

Anchor Straps: Straps embedded in concrete foundation used to hold sills in place, most commonly MASAs in our houses.

Apron: A piece of driveway between sidewalk and curb.

Back Fill: The replacement of dirt in holes, trenches and around foundations.

Backing (aka blocking): a non-structural (usually 2x) framed support (i.e. for drywall).

Balloon Framing: A special situationally required type of construction with studs that are longer than the standard length.

Bay: The space between two parallel framing members (i.e. trusses).

Beam: A horizontal structural member running between posts, columns or walls.

Bearing wall (aka partition): A wall which carries a vertical structural load in addition to its own weight.

Bevel: To cut an angle other than a right angle, such as on the edge of a board.

Bird block (aka frieze board): An attic vent located between truss tails.

Bird's Mouth: A notch cut in the underside of a rafter to fit the top plate. Blocking (aka backing): A non-structural 2x framing support (i.e. for drywall) Board: Lumber less than 2" thick.

Board Foot: The equivalent of a board 1' square and 1" thick.

Box Header: A horizontal structural member over an opening having a rectangular cross section with a hole in the middle, which we fill with insulation.

Brick hammer: A hammer with two different ends. One end is used for splitting CMUs and the other driving stakes, nails, etc.

Builder's Level: Common name for a Surveyor's Transit (a tool used to measure comparable heights).

Building Code: A collection of rules and regulations for construction established by organizations based on experience and experiment, and enacted and enforced by local municipalities.

California corner: A framing member used at the intersection of two walls, consisting of three studs nailed together to form a U-shaped cross section.

Camber: The slight arch in a beam or truss which prevents it from bending into a downward shape under normal load.

Cantilevered: Extending horizontally beyond support.

Cant Strip: A triangular shaped strip used under the edges of roofing by walls on flat roofs.

Cap block: Typically an 8x2x16 solid block laid on top of the pilaster block to give a solid finish at the top of the wall.

Cased Opening: An interior opening without a door that is finished with jamb and trim.

Caulking: A flexible material used to seal a gap in a joint.

Ceiling joist: One of a series of parallel framing members (not part of a truss) used to support ceiling

loads and supported in turn by larger beams or bearing walls.

Cells: The vertical holes in a block where reinforcing, insulation or other materials may be placed.

Cement: (1) The gray powder that is the "glue" in concrete. (2) An adhesive.

Chalk line: (1) A cord dusted with chalk (2) A line made by snapping a taut string or cord dusted with chalk

Chase: A framed enclosed space or channel in a wall, or through a ceiling for something (usually duct work or plumbing) to pass through.

Circuit Breaker: A device which looks like a switch and is located inside the electrical panel. It is designed to (1) shut off the power to portions or all of the house and (2) to limit the amount of power flowing through a circuit (measured in amperes)

Clean out: A capped opening providing access to a drain line, used to clear blockages.

CMU: Concrete masonry unit. The technical name for concrete block, brick, etc.

Column: A vertical structural compression member which supports loads.

Compressor: 1. A piece of equipment that provides compressed air to air powered tools. 2. A mechanical device that pressurizes a gas in order to turn it into a liquid, thereby allowing heat

to be removed or added. A compressor is the main component of conventional heat pumps and air conditioners.

Condenser: The part of an air conditioning system containing the compressor and a large fan that sits outside and is responsible for transferring heat to/from the heat transfer medium (Freon).

Concrete (mud): A mixture of cement, sand, gravel, and water.

Concrete tamper: A handheld tool used to push the ABC below the surface of the concrete to help

level it and provide a smoother surface.

Control joint: Tooled, straight grooves made in concrete flatwork to "control" where the concrete should crack.

Corner bead: A strip of formed sheet metal or plastic placed on outside corners of drywall before applying drywall 'mud'. Can be either square or bull nose (round).

Counter flashing (aka "Z" flashing): A galvanized sheet metal flashing used at the roofline to cover shingle flashing ("L" flashing) and used to prevent moisture entry.

Course: 1. A row of shingles or roll roofing running the length of the roof. 2. A row of block or brick.

Cricket: A second roof built on top of the primary roof to increase the slope of the roof, designed to encourage water drainage to a scupper on a flat roof.

Cripple: Short vertical framing member installed above or below an opening.

Deadbolt: a tongued throw lock whose bolt must be manually pulled back before the door can open and close.

Deck, decked: To install the plywood or OSB sheeting on the floor joists, rafters, or trusses.

Delamination: Separation of the plies in a panel due to failure of the adhesive, usually caused by excessive moisture.

Diaphragm: In structural engineering, a diaphragm is a structural element that transmits lateral load to the vertical resisting elements of a structure (such as shear walls or frames) Diaphragms are typically horizontal, but can be sloped such as in a gable roof.

Disconnect: A large electrical ON-OFF switch found at the water heater and AC condenser.

Doorjamb: It consists of two upright pieces, called side jambs, and a horizontal head jamb. For a hinged door these 3 jambs have the "door stop molding" installed on them.

Double hung window: A window with two vertically sliding sashes.

Drip System: An automated low water usage plant watering system.

Dry in: To install the roofing underlayment (tar paper or feltex) on the roof and stucco paper on the walls in preparation for sheet rocking the house.

Drywall (aka Gypsum Wallboard [GWB] & Sheet rock): A manufactured panel made out of gypsum plaster and encased in a thin cardboard. Usually 1/2" thick and 4' x 8' or 4' x 12' in size. The panels are nailed or screwed onto the framing and the joints are taped and covered with a 'joint compound'. 'Non-paper board' type drywall has a greater resistance to moisture and mildew than regular (white) plasterboard and is used in bathrooms and other "wet areas". Soffit board is even more moisture resistant for use on exterior ceilings, and type X board (5/8”) is fire rated for use in separating livable spaces from fire hazard areas (i.e. the garage).

Ducts: The air conditioning system. Usually round or rectangular metal or flexible pipes installed for distributing warm or cold air from the air handler to rooms in the home.

Duro-Wire (ladder wire): Horizontally running metal wire placed every 16 vertical inches in a

block wall.

DWV (drain-waste-vent): The section of a plumbing system that carries water and sewer gases out of a home.

Easement: A formal contract which allows a party to use another party's property for a specific purpose. e.g. a Public Utility Easement (PUE) allows communication cables to run across a property.

Eaves: The horizontal exterior roof overhang at the bearing wall.

Egress: A means of exiting the home. An egress window is required in every bedroom. Normally a 4' X 4' sliding window or a 3’ X 5’ single (or double) hung window with a sill no higher than 44” above the floor is the minimum required by code.

Elbow (ell): A plumbing or electrical fitting (usually 45 or 90 degrees) that lets you change directions in runs of pipe or conduit.

Electrical Panel: Main power cabinet where electric enters a home’s wiring system.

Electrical Rough: Work performed by the electrician after the plumber and heating contractor are complete with their phase of work. All electrical wires, and outlet, switch, and fixture boxes are installed (this is part of the work is required for Pre-Drywall Inspection).

Electrical Trim: Work performed by the electrician when the house is nearing completion. The electrician installs all plugs, switches, plates, light fixtures, smoke detectors, wires the ventilation fans & the HVAC, and "makes up" the electric panel. The electrician does all electrical work necessary to get the home ready to pass the municipal final inspection.

Elevation sheet: The page(s) on the blue prints that depicts the house as if a person is looking straight at each of the sides (there is no perspective in this drawing).

Evaporator coil: The part of a cooling system that absorbs heat from air in your home and is located in the compressor unit.

Expansion joint: Fibrous material (1/2" thick) installed in and around a concrete slab to permit it to move up and down (seasonally) along the non-moving foundation wall. Also found between the house and adjacent flatwork (drive, sidewalk, etc.) or adjacent sections of flatwork.

Expansive soils: Earth that swells and contracts depending on the amount of water that is present. ("Bentonite" is an expansive soil). It is a common problem in Arizona. Solving this problem requires the use of a post-tensioned slab.

Fascia: Lumber (usually 2x6) attached to rafter/truss ends at the eaves and outriggers at the gables.

Felt (aka underlayment): Tar paper or feltex, installed under the roof shingles.

Female: Any part, such as a nut or fitting, into which another (male) part can be inserted. Internal threads are female.

Field measure: To take measurements (cabinets, countertops, stairs, shower doors, etc.) in the home itself instead of using the blueprints.

Finger joint: A manufacturing process of interlocking two shorter pieces of wood end to end to create a longer piece of dimensional lumber or molding. Often used in jambs, casings and baseboard which are painted instead of stained.

Fire-resistive or Fire rated: Applies to materials that are not combustible in the temperatures of ordinary fires and will withstand such fires for at least 1 hour. Drywall used in the garage and party walls are to be fire rated, 5/8", Type X.

Fire stop: (1) A solid, tight closure of a concealed space, placed to prevent the spread of fire and smoke through such a space. (2) All work performed to slow the spread of fire and smoke in the walls and ceiling (behind the drywall) and includes filling wire holes in the top and bottom plates with fire rated caulk or spray foam, and installing blocks of wood between the wall studs at the drop soffit line. This is integral to passing a Pre-Drywall Inspection.

Fish tape: A long strip of spring steel used for pulling wires and cables through conduit or enclosed wall, ceiling or floor cavities.

Flashing: Sheet metal or other material used in roof and wall construction to protect a building from water seepage.

Flat paint: A paint that contains a high proportion of pigment and dries to a flat or lusterless finish.

Flatwork: Common word for concrete floors, driveways, basements, and sidewalks.

Floating: Is the next-to-last stage in concrete work. It is when you smooth off the job and bring water to the surface by using a hand float or bull float.

Floor Plan (aka Plan View): the drawing(s) of a structure with the view from overhead, looking down.

Fluorescent lighting: A fluorescent lamp is a gas-filled glass tube with a phosphor coating on the inside. Gas inside the tube is ionized by electricity which causes the phosphor coating to glow.

Footer, footing: Continuous thick concrete pad (includes horizontal and vertical rebar per engineered drawings) installed before and supporting the stem (foundation) wall or a post.

Forced air heating/cooling: A common form of AC. Air is treated in the air handler and

distributed through a set of ducts to various areas of the house.

Form: Temporary structure erected to contain concrete during placing and initial hardening.

Foundation: The supporting portion of a structure, below the first-floor construction, or below grade, including the footings.

Framing: The act of building the house frame. Lumber used for the structural members of a building, such as studs, joists, rafters and trusses.

Frieze board (aka bird block): non-structural framing member between trusses or rafters at top plate seals attic access. Can be vented but usually is solid 2x material.

GFCI, or GFI: Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter- an ultra-sensitive plug designed to shut off all electric current. Used in bathrooms, kitchens, exterior waterproof outlets, garage outlets, and "wet areas". Has a small reset button on the master outlet.

GSN: General Structural Notes provided on your plans by the structural engineer.

Gable: The end, upper, triangular area of a home, beneath the roof.

Garage door buck: a frame of wood or metal set in a partition, to support door hardware.

Girder truss: A large or principal truss used to support concentrated loads at isolated points along its length.

Glulam (Glued Laminated Beam): A structural beam composed of wood laminations or lams. The lams are pressure bonded with adhesives to attain a typical thickness of 1 ½". (It looks like multiple 2x's are glued together). Be sure to identify and install TOP side up.

Grade: Ground level, or the elevation at any given point. Also, the work of leveling dirt, or the designated quality of a piece of wood.

Grain: The direction, size, arrangement, appearance, or quality of the fibers in wood.

Green board (aka pressure treated lumber): Lumber that has been saturated with chemical preservatives to prevent rot and infestation.

Grid: The decorative slats (muntin's) installed between glass panels.

Ground wire: The green or un-insulated wire, always connected to metal, to prevent electrical shock.

Grout Mix: A mixture of cement, sand and pea gravel. We use a pre-blended mix, add water only.

Grouting: Filling in the cells of the masonry units with mortar or grout mix.

Gusset: A flat member used to provide a connection at the intersection of wood members. Most commonly used at joints of wood trusses.

HVAC: An abbreviation for Heat, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning.

HVAC Rough: Work performed by the Heating Contractor after the interior walls are built. This includes installing all duct work and the air handler.

HVAC Trim: Work done by the Heating Contractor to get the home ready for the municipal Final Heat Inspection. This includes installing all vent grills, registers, air conditioning condenser, and thermostats, and venting range hoods.

Header: The horizontal structural member over an opening (e.g. over a door or window).

Heat pump: A mechanical device which uses compression and decompression of gas to heat and/or cool a house.

Heel cut: A notch cut in the end of a rafter to permit it to fit flat on a wall and on the top, doubled, exterior wall plate.

Hip: A roof with four sloping sides. The external angle formed by the meeting of two sloping sides of a roof.

Hip roof: A roof that rises by inclined planes from all four sides of a building.

Home run (electrical): The electrical cable that carries power from the main circuit breaker panel to the first electrical box, plug, or switch in the circuit.

Hose bib: An exterior water faucet (sill cock).

Hot wire: The wire that carries electrical energy to a receptacle or other device (normally the black wire) —in contrast to a neutral (the white wire), which carries electricity away again.

Hurricane clip: Metal connectors (usually H2.5s) that are nailed and secure the roof rafters or trusses to the top horizontal wall plate.

I-beam: A beam with a cross section resembling the letter I.

I-joist: Manufactured structural building component resembling the letter "I". Used as floor joists and rafters. I-joists include two key parts: flanges and webs. The flanges of the I joist may be made of laminated veneer lumber or dimensional lumber, usually formed into a 1 ½" width. The web or center of the I-joist is commonly made of plywood or oriented strand board (OSB). Large holes can be cut in the web to accommodate duct work and plumbing waste lines. I-joists are available in lengths up to 60 feet long.

Incandescent lamp: A lamp employing an electrically charged metal filament that glows at white heat. A traditional light bulb.

Infiltration: The passage of air from indoors to outdoors and vice versa; term is usually associated with drafts from cracks, seams or holes in buildings.

Inside corner: The point at which two walls form an internal angle, as in the corner of a room.

Insulating glass (aka thermal glass): Window or door glazing in which multiple panes of glass are used with a sealed gas space between.

Insulation: (1) Any material high in resistance to heat transmission that, when placed in the walls, ceiling, or floors of a structure will reduce the rate of heat flow. (2) the material around an electrical wire to prevent the transmission of electricity.

Interlocking Block: Typically a 4x8x16 block laid between pilasters having a male and female end which interlock. Unlike conventional masonry they do not require mortar in vertical joints.

Irrigation: Plant watering system.

Isolator: A steel pin with a plastic cap that serves as a saddle to hold the horizontal rebar in a footing.
When driven into place the isolator holds the rebar the required 3” above the dirt and isolates it from moisture.

J Channel (aka Weep Screed): Metal edging used on stucco to give the edge a better finished appearance and to allow water to drain.

Jamb: The side and head lining of a doorway.

Joint: The location between the touching surfaces of two members or components joined and held together by nails, glue, cement, mortar, or other means.

Joint compound (aka drywall mud.): A powder that is usually mixed with water and used for joint treatment in gypsum-wallboard finish

Joist: Wooden members that run parallel to one another and support a floor or ceiling, and are supported in turn by larger beams, girders, or bearing walls.

Joist hanger: A metal "U" shaped fastener used to support the end of a joist or truss and attached with hardened nails to another bearing member.

Jump Duct (aka) transfer Grill); duct/vent between two spaces to allow air movement and pressure equalization between them.

Kilowatt (kw): One thousand watts. A kilowatt hour is the base unit used in measuring electrical consumption.

King stud: The vertical, full height "2 X" framing member that runs continuously from the bottom plate to the top plate.

Knot: In lumber, the portion of a branch or limb of a tree that appears on the edge or face of the piece.

L Flashing: L-shaped galvanized metal shingle flashing.

Ladder blocking: Pieces of cross blocking used to connect building members.

Laminated shingles (aka architectural or 3-dimensional shingles): Shingles that have added dimensionality because of extra layers or tabs, giving a shake-like appearance.

Laminating: Bonding together two or more layers of materials.

Landing: The floor at each story in a flight of stairs.

Lap: To overlap the surface of one piece with another (e.g. shingles).

Lap Bar: A piece of rebar placed in the completed pilaster of a block wall. Its length is normally about 4” less than the height of the pilaster. Specifics are listed on the General Structural Notes in your plans.

Latch: A beveled metal tongue operated by a spring-loaded knob or lever. The tongue's bevel lets you close the door and engage the locking mechanism, if any, without using a key, unlike a dead bolt.

Lath: A building material of metal wire that is fastened to the frame of a building to act as a base for stucco or plaster.

Lead: A block laid or a corner built prior to starting the wall. It serves as a guide when a line is pulled horizontally from one lead to another. The line will determine level, plumb and height.

Ledger: A structural member attached to the face of a wall which supports a joist or truss.

Level: (1) True horizontal. (2) The name of a tool used to determine level.

Line Block; A block of wood to which the mason's line is attached when setting the line to lay block.

Load bearing wall: Any wall that carries structural load. Normally, any wall that has a double horizontal top plate.

Lookout (aka Outrigger): A wooden cantilever that supports the overhanging portion of a rake roof.

MDF (Medium Density Fiberboard): A manufactured wood product made of fine saw dust and resin. We use it for shelving cleats and the stairway treads.

Male: Any part, such as a bolt, designed to fit into another (female) part. External threads are male.

Manufactured wood: A wood structural product such as a glulam or microlam, or sheet goods such as OSB, MDF, particle board or finger jointed trim, which are manufactured out of smaller wood pieces and glued to form a larger piece.

Mason's Line: A line pulled horizontally that serves as the guide for level and plumb.

Masonry: Stone, brick, concrete, hollow-tile, concrete block, or other similar building units or materials. Normally bonded together with mortar to form a wall.

Mending Plates (aka Fascia Gusset, MP14): toothed metal plates used to join two pieces of fascia.

Microlam (aka laminated veneered lumber [LVL]): A manufactured structural wood beam. It is constructed of pressure and adhesive bonded wood strands. They have a higher strength rating than solid sawn lumber. Normally comes in l ½" thickness' and 9 ½", 11 ½" and 14" depth.

Millwork: Generally, all building materials made of finished wood and manufactured in millwork plants. It includes all doors, windows, moldings and interior trim.

Miter joint: The joint of two pieces at an angle that bisects the joining angle. For example, the miter joint at the side and head casing at a door opening is made at a 45° angle.

Mortar (mud): A mixture of cement (or lime) with sand and water used in masonry work. We use a pre-blended mix, adding only water.

Muntin: A small member which divides the glass or openings of sash or doors.

Natural finish: A transparent finish which does not seriously alter the original color or grain of the natural wood.

Neutral wire: Usually color-coded white, this carries electricity from an outlet or switch back

to the service panel. Also see hot wire and ground.

Nonbearing wall: A wall supporting no load other than its own weight.

Nosing: The projecting front edge of a stair tread.

O. C. (On Center): The measurement of spacing for studs, rafters, joists and trusses in a building from the center of one member to the center of the next.

Oriented Strand Board (aka OSB): A manufactured 4' X 8' wood panel made out of 1"- 2" wood chips and glue. Often used as a substitute for plywood.

Outrigger (aka Lookout): An extension from a rafter or truss beyond the wall line to form a roof overhang on a rake end, as a rafter tail or truss tail does on an eave.

Outside corner: The point at which two walls form an external angle, one you usually can walk around.

Overhang: Outward projecting eave-soffit area of a roof; the part of the roof that hangs out past
the outside wall.

Padding: A material installed under carpet to add foot comfort, isolate sound, and to prolong carpet life.

Paint: A combination of pigments with suitable thinners or oils to provide decorative and protective coatings. It can be oil based or water based.

Pallets: Wooden platforms used for storing and shipping material. Forklifts and pallet jacks are used to move these wooden platforms around.

Panel: A thin flat piece of wood, plywood, or similar material, framed by stiles and rails as in a door (or cabinet door), or fitted into grooves of thicker material with molded edges for decorative wall treatment.

Parapet: An extension of a wall past the plane of the roof to hide roof clutter (i.e. the Territorial look) and originally intended as protection, though now mostly decorative.

Particle board: Plywood substitute made of course sawdust that is mixed with resin and pressed into sheets. We use it for shelving.

Penny: As applied to nails, it originally indicated the price per hundred. The term now serves as a measure of nail length and is abbreviated by the letter "d". Normally, 10d (10 "penny") nails are used for framing.

Permit: A governmental municipal authorization to perform a building process as in: Zoning\Use permit - Authorization to use a property for a specific use e.g. a garage, a single family residence, etc.

- Building permit - Authorization to build or modify a structure.
- Demolition permit - Authorization to tear down and remove an existing structure.
  - Grading permit - Authorization to change the contour of the land
  - Electrical permit - A separate permit required for most electrical work.
  - Plumbing permit - A separate permit required for new plumbing and larger modifications of existing plumbing systems.

Pigtail, electrical: The electrical cord installed on an appliance, or another name for an electrical splitter.

Pier: A pad of concrete used to support a post.

Pilaster Block: Typically, an 8x8x16 H block laid where the vertical rebar is in the footing. The vertical steel is inside the cavity of the block and when grouted the pilaster provides structural strength to the wall.

Pilot Hole: A small diameter pre-drilled hole to guide a nail or screw.

Pitch: The slope of a roof expressed as vertical rise to horizontal run (i.e. 4/12 means a 4" rise for every 12" of run).

Plan view (aka Floor Plan): Drawing of a structure with the view from overhead, looking down.

Plate: Normally a 2 X 4 or 2 X 6 that lays horizontally within a framed structure, such as: Sill plate- A horizontal member anchored to a concrete or masonry wall.

Platform: (1) The flat section of floor between stories in a flight of stairs (2) Raised surface supporting an object (i.e. Water Heater Platform).

Plot plan: An overhead view plan that shows the location of the home on the lot and includes all easements, property lines, setbacks, and legal descriptions of the home.

Plumb: Exactly vertical and perpendicular.

Plumb bob: The tool used in determining plumb, which is usually a lead weight attached to a string.

Plumbing jack (aka Roof Jack): Sleeve (whose purpose is to prevent water leaks) that fits around drain and waste vent pipes at, and are nailed to, the roof sheeting.

Plumbing rough: Work performed by the plumbing contractor including installing all plastic ABS drain and waste lines, water lines and bathtubs.

Plumbing stack: A plumbing vent pipe that penetrates the roof.

Plumbing trim: Work performed by the plumbing contractor to get the home ready for a final inspection, which includes installing all toilets, hot water heaters, sinks, disposal, dishwasher, and all other needed plumbing items.

Plumbing waste line: Plastic pipe used to collect and drain sewage waste.

Ply: A term to denote the number of layers in built-up materials, or in any finished piece of such material (i.e. plywood).

Plywood: A panel (normally 4' X 8') of wood made of three or more layers of veneer, compressed and joined with glue, and usually laid with the grain of adjoining plies at right angles to give the sheet strength.

Portland cement: Cement made by heating clay and crushed limestone into a brick and then grinding to a pulverized powder state.

Post: A vertical framing member (often a 4" x 4" or a 6" x 6") usually designed to carry a beam.

Post-and-beam: A basic building method that uses just a few hefty posts and beams to support an entire structure, in contrast to our usual stud framing.

Pressure Relief Valve (PRV): A device mounted on a hot water heater or boiler which is designed to release any high steam pressure in the tank to prevent tank explosions.

Pressure-treated wood (aka green board): A wood product that has been impregnated with chemical preservatives to prevent rot and infestation.

Primer: The first, base coat of paint when a paint job consists of two or more coats. A first coating formulated to seal raw surfaces and hold succeeding finish coats.

P trap: Curved, "U" shaped section of drainpipe that holds a water seal to prevent sewer gasses from entering the home through a fixture's water drain.

Punch list: A list of discrepancies that need to be corrected.

Putty: 1. A type of dough used for filling small holes and crevices in wood, and for similar purposes. 2. Used in plumbing to seal joints to prevent water leakage.

PVC or CPVC: Poly Vinyl Chloride, a type of white or light gray plastic pipe sometimes used for water supply lines.

Quarter round: A small trim molding that has the cross section of a quarter circle.

Rafter: One of a series of single roof frame pieces spanning between supports to carry the roof

sheathing and roofing.

Rafter, hip: A rafter that forms the intersection of an external roof angle.

Rafter, valley: A rafter that forms the intersection of an internal roof angle. The valley rafter is normally made of double 2x members.

Rake: Sloped or slanted.

Rake fascia (aka Barge Rafter): The vertical face of the sloping end of a roof eave.

Rebar (aka reinforcing bar): Ribbed steel bars installed in foundation, concrete walls, footers, and poured in place concrete structures designed to strengthen concrete. Comes in various thicknesses and strength grades.

Rebar Size: Diameter called out in 1/8" increments. #4 rebar is ½" in diameter.

Receptacle: An electrical outlet.

Redhead (aka wedge anchor): A substitute for anchor bolts that is added (into a drilled hole) after the concrete has set.

Reducer: A fitting with different size openings at either end and used to go from a larger to a smaller pipe.

Refrigerant: A substance that remains a gas at low temperatures and pressure and can be used to transfer heat. Freon is the most well-known example.

Register: A grill placed over an HVAC duct to direct/balance air flow.

Relief valve: A device designed to open if it detects excess temperature or pressure, such as the T & P valve on a water heater.

R factor (or R value): A measure of a materials resistance to the passage of heat. Our home walls are usually insulated with 6" of batt insulation with an R value of R-19, and 12" of ceiling insulation of R-38.

Ridge: The horizontal line at the junction of the top edges of two sloping roof surfaces.

Ridge blocks: Framing members that tie rafters or trusses together at the peak.

Ridge Cap: Shingles used to cover the ridge.

Rim joist: A joist that runs around the perimeter of the floor joists.

Rise: The vertical distance from the eave line to the ridge. Also, the vertical distance from stair tread to stair tread (and not to exceed 7 3/4").

Riser: Each of the vertical boards closing the spaces between the treads of stairways.

Riser and panel: The exterior vertical pipe (riser) and metal electric box (panel) the electrician provides and installs.

Roll, rolling: To install the roof or floor joists or trusses in their correct place. (To "roll the roof" means to install the roof trusses).

Roof jack (aka Boot): Sleeves that fit around roof penetrations at, and are nailed to, the roof sheeting to prevent water leaks.

Roof joist: The rafters of a flat roof.

Roof sheathing or sheeting: The wood panels (OSB) fastened to the roof rafters or trusses on which the shingles or other roof covering is laid, and which creates a structural diaphragm.

Roof valley: The "V" created where two sloping roofs meet.

Rough opening: The horizontal and vertical measurement of a window or door opening at rough framing

Roughing-in: The initial stage of a plumbing, electrical, heating, carpentry, and/or other project, when all components that won't be seen after the finishing phase are assembled and installed.

Run, roof: The horizontal distance from the eaves to a point directly under the ridge. One half the span.

Run, stair: the horizontal distance of a stairway from end to end.

Sandwich header: a horizontal structural member over an opening made of 2xs and sandwiched OSB.

Sanitary sewer: A sewer system designed for the collection of wastewater from the bathroom, kitchen and laundry drains that is usually not designed to handle storm water.

Sash: The frame that holds the glass in a window, often the movable part of the window.

Schedule (window, door, etc.): A table on the blueprints that list the sizes, quantities and locations of windows, doors etc.

Scratch coat: The first coat of stucco, which is scratched to form a bond for a second coat.

Screed: To level off concrete to the correct elevation during a concrete pour.

Scribing: Cutting and fitting woodwork to an irregular surface.

Scupper: (1) An opening for drainage in a wall, curb or parapet. (2) The drain off a flat roof,

sometimes connected to a downspout.

Sealer: A finishing material, either clear or pigmented, that is usually applied directly over the surface (sometimes as an undercoat for the final finish).

Semi-gloss paint: A paint or enamel made so that its coating, when dry, has some luster but is not very shiny.

Service entrance panel (aka electrical panel): The main power cabinet where electricity enters a home's wiring system, which contains circuit breakers or fuses, and switches.

Service lateral: Underground power supply line from the main line to the house.

Setback Thermostat: A thermostat with a clock which can be programmed to come on or go off at various temperatures and at different times of the day/week. Usually used as the HVAC system thermostat.

Settlement: Shifts in a structure caused by improperly compacted soil or expansive soils.

Sewer lateral: The portion of the sanitary sewer which connects the interior wastewater lines to the main sewer lines.

Sewer stub: The junction at the municipal sewer system main where the home's sewer line is connected.

Sewer tap: The physical connection point where the home's sewer line connects to the main municipal sewer line.

Shake shingle: A wood roofing material, normally cedar or redwood, produced by splitting a block of the wood along the grain line. Modern shakes are sometimes machine sawn on one side.

Sheathing, sheeting: The structural wood diaphragm covering, usually OSB, used over studs, floor joists or rafters/trusses of a structure.

Shed roof: A roof containing only one sloping plane.

Sheet metal duct work: The HVAC system ductwork.

Sheet rock: A brand of Gypsum Wall Board (GWB). Also used generically for any GWB (drywall).

Shim: 1. A small piece of scrap lumber or shingle, usually wedge shaped, which when forced behind a furring strip or framing member forces it into position. Also used when installing doors and placed between the door jamb legs and 2x door trimmers. 2. The act of using a shim.

Shingles: Roof covering of asphalt. wood, tile, slate, or other material cut to stock lengths,

widths, and thicknesses.

Short circuit: A situation that occurs when hot and neutral wires come in contact with each other. Fuses and circuit breakers protect against fire that could result from a short.

Shooting Elevation: Using an instrument to place the footing level and to check the wall for level during erection.

Shutter: Usually lightweight louvered decorative frames in the form of doors located on the sides of a window. Some shutters are made to close over the window for protection.

Sill: (1) The 2X wood plate framing member that lays flat against and bolted to the foundation wall (with anchor bolts). The sill plate is treated lumber. (2) The member forming the lower side of an opening, as a door sill or windowsill.

Sill cock (aka hose bib): An exterior water faucet.

Sill seal: Foam insulation installed between the foundation wall and sill (wood) plate, which is designed to seal any cracks or gaps.

Single hung window: A window with one vertically sliding sash.

Skylight: A more or less horizontal window located on the roof of a building.

Slab, concrete: Concrete floors.

Slab, door: A rectangular door without hinges or frame.

Slab on grade: A type of foundation where a concrete floor is placed directly on the soil.

Sleeve(s): Pipe installed under driveway, sidewalk, wall or fence that will be used later to run sprinkler pipe or low voltage wire through.

Slope (aka pitch): The incline angle of a roof surface, given as a ratio of the rise (in inches) to the run (in inches).

Slump: The "wetness" of concrete. A 3-inch slump is dryer and stiffer than a 5-inch slump.

Soffit: The area below the eaves and overhangs. (2) An area of dropped ceiling such as above cabinetry.

Soil stack: A plumbing vent pipe that penetrates the roof.

Solid bridging: A solid member placed between adjacent floor joists near the center of the span to prevent joists or rafters from twisting (a type of blocking).

Spacing: The distance between individual members in building construction.

Span: The clear distance that a framing member carries a load without support.

Specifications or Specs: Written elaboration in specific detail about construction materials and methods used to supplement working drawings.

Square: (1) A unit of measure (100 square feet) usually applied to roofing material. (2) a situation that exists when two elements are at right angles to each other. (3) a tool for checking right angles.

Square-tab shingles (aka3 tab): Shingles on which tabs are all the same size and exposure.

Spreading mortar: Applying mortar to the block using a bricklayer's trowel prior to laying it.

Standard practices of the trade(s): One of the more common basic and minimum construction standards. This is another way of saying that the work should be done in the way it is normally done by the average professional in the field.

Starter strip: An asphalt roofing material applied at the edges of the roof deck that provides protection by filling in the spaces under the cutouts and joints of the first course of shingles.

Stair rise: The vertical distance from stair tread to stair tread (and not to exceed 7 3/4").

Stick built: A house built without prefabricated parts, also called conventional framing.

Stile: An upright framing member in a panel door.

Stool: Another name for toilet.

Stops: Moldings along the inner edges of a door or window frame.

Stop valve: A device installed in a water supply line, usually near a fixture, that permits an individual to shut off the water supply to one fixture without interrupting service to the rest of the system.

Story: That part of a building between any two floors or between the floor and roof.

Story, masonry: a level of masonry units in a wall. The actual dimension varies with the size block being laid. For 4" block each story would lay out on multiples of four inches.

Strike: The plate on a door frame that engages a latch or dead bolt.

Striker: A tool used to finish wet mortar joints.

Striking joints: Finishing the wet mortar joints between blocks.

Stringer: The supporting member for stair treads. Usually a LVL member notched to receive the treads and risers.
Stucco: Refers to an outside plaster finish made with Portland cement as its base.

Stud (aka wall stud or king stud): A vertical framing member, attached to the horizontal bottom plate below and the top plate above (2x @92 5/8"for an 8’ ceiling).

Stud framing: A building method that distributes structural loads to each of a series of relatively lightweight studs (how we build). Contrasts with post-and-beam.

Suspended ceiling: A ceiling system supported by hanging it from the overhead structural framing.

Sweep: The metal housing and rubber gasket attached to the bottom of a door that seals against the threshold.

Switch: A device that completes or disconnects an electrical circuit.

T & G (tongue and groove): A joint made by a tongue (a rib on one edge of a board) that fits into a corresponding groove in the edge of another board to make a tight flush joint (our subfloor sheets are T & G).

T.O.F.: Top of footing

T.O.W.: Top of wall
in the "V" area of a roof valley to prevent moisture penetration.

Veneer: (1) Extremely thin sheets of wood. (2) A thin slice of wood, brick or stone covering a framed wall.

Tab: The exposed portion of strip shingles defined by cutouts.

Take off: A list of the material necessary to complete a job.

Taping: The process of covering drywall joints with paper tape and joint compound.

TECO nail: The type of hardened nail used to attach metal straps.

Tee: A "T" shaped plumbing fitting.

Tempered: Strengthened. Tempered glass will not shatter nor create shards but will "pelletize" like an automobile window. Required in tub and shower enclosures, entry door and sidelight glass, and in windows when the windowsill is less than 16" from the floor.

Thermostat: A device which regulates the temperature of a room or building by switching heating or cooling equipment on or off.

Three-dimensional shingles (aka architectural shingles): Laminated shingles which have added dimensionality because of extra layers or tabs, giving a shake-like appearance.

Threshold: The bottom metal or wood plate of an exterior door frame. Generally, they are adjustable to keep a tight fit with the door sweep.

Toenailing: To drive a nail in at an angle to connect two members.

Top chord: The upper or top member of a truss.

Top plate: Top horizontal member of a frame wall supporting ceiling joists, rafters, or other members.

Transfer grill (aka Jump Duct): The grill covered opening through a wall or ceiling used for air pressure balancing.

Trap: A plumbing fitting that holds water to prevent air, gas, and vermin from backing up into a fixture.

Tread: The walking surface board of a stairway with a 10” minimum depth.

Treated lumber (aka green board): A wood product which has been impregnated with chemicals and pesticides, to reduce damage from wood rot or insects. Used for the bottom plates of a structure which are likely to be in contact with moisture.

Trenching: The digging of the footings usually done using a Ditch Witch or other mechanical equipment.

Trim: The work that the "mechanical" contractors perform to finish their respective aspects of work when the home is nearing completion and occupancy. (2) The finish materials in a building, such as moldings applied around openings (window trim, door trim) or at the floor and ceiling of rooms (baseboard, cornice, and other moldings). Also, the physical work of installing these items.

Trimmer (aka jack stud): The vertical stud that supports a header at a door, window, or other opening.

Trowel: Tool used to spread mortar.

Truss: An engineered and manufactured roof or floor support member with internal "zig-zag" webbing.

Truss Joist or TJ: A brand of manufactured structural building component resembling the letter "I". Used as floor joists and rafters. I-joists include two key parts: flanges and webs. The flange of the I joist may be made of laminated veneer lumber or dimensional lumber. The web or center of the I-joist is commonly made of plywood or oriented strand board (OSB). Large holes

can be cut in the web to accommodate duct work and plumbing waste lines. I-joists are available in lengths up to 60'' long.

Turpentine: A petroleum product, (a volatile oil) used as a thinner & solvent in paints and as a solvent in varnishes.

UL (Underwriters' Laboratories): An independent testing agency that checks electrical devices and other components for possible safety hazards.

Underground plumbing: The water and drain lines that are installed beneath a slab.

Underlayment (aka tar paper, roofing paper, felt paper, Feltex): A secondary roofing layer that is waterproof or water resistant, installed on the roof deck beneath shingles.

Union: A plumbing fitting that joins pipes end-to-end so they can be easily dismantled.

Utility easement: The area of the earth that has electric, gas, or telephone lines. These areas may be owned by the homeowner, but the utility company has the legal right to enter the area as necessary to repair or service the lines.

Valley: The "V" shaped area of a roof where two sloping roofs meet. Water drains off the roof at the valleys.

Valley flashing: Galvanized sheet metal flashing that is sometimes used, that lays **Vent:** A pipe or duct which allows the flow of air and gasses to the outside.

Voltage: A measure of electrical potential. Most homes are wired with 110- and 220-volt lines. The 110-volt power is used for lighting and most of the other circuits. The 220-volt power is usually used for the kitchen range, hot water heater, AC and dryer.

W.H.L.: Width, Height, Length. Masonry units are called out in this order. An 8x8x16 block is 8” wide x 8” high x 16” long.

Walk-Through: A final inspection of a home before "Closing" to look for and document problems that need to be corrected.

Warping: Any distortion in a material.

Waste pipe and vent: Plastic plumbing pipe that carries wastewater to the municipal sewage system and waste gasses out of the house through the roof.

Water closet: Another name for toilet.

Water meter box: The concrete box and cast-iron bonnet that contains the water meter.

Water tap: The connection point where the home water line connects to the main municipal water system.

Weather-strip: Narrow sections of thin metal, foam or plastic installed to prevent the infiltration of air and moisture around windows and doors.

Weep holes: Small holes in window frames that allow moisture to escape.

Whole house fan: a type of **fan** commonly venting into a building's **attic**, designed to circulate air in a home.

Window frame: The stationary part of a window unit; the window sash fits into the window frame.

Window sash: The operating or movable part of a window; the sash is made of windowpane(s) and their border.

Wire nut: A plastic device used to connect bare wires together.

Wrapped, drywall: Areas that get complete drywall covering, as in walk through openings, or the doorway openings of bi-fold closet doors.

Y: A "Y" shaped plumbing fitting.

Yard, concrete: One cubic yard of concrete is 3' X 3' X 3' in volume, or 27 cubic feet. One cubic yard of concrete will pour 80 square feet of 3 ½" sidewalk or slab.

Z Flashing (aka counter flashing): Z-shaped galvanized metal flashing used to cover L flashing to prevent moisture penetration.

Zone: (1) The section of a building that is served by one heating or cooling loop because it has noticeably distinct heating or cooling needs. (2) The section of property that will be watered from an irrigation system.

Zoning: A governmental process and specification which limits the use of a property e.g. single-family use, high rise residential use, industrial use, etc. Zoning laws may limit where you can locate a structure.