

# Basic Residential Construction Terminology

1. <b>baseboard</b>	A board around the bottom of a wall perpendicular to the floor. Sometimes called wains, baseboards cover the gap between the floor and the wall, protecting the wall from scuffs and providing a decorative accent	15. <b>frame</b>	The wooden skeleton of the house consisting of the floors, walls, ceilings, and roof
2. <b>basement</b>	Story-high space below the first floor that is totally or partially below the exterior grade; floor is usually concrete slab	16. <b>frieze board</b>	A wooden board fastened at the top of the exterior wall under the eave soffit to prevent penetration of weather elements; frequently the base for additional exterior decorative trim
3. <b>BTU(British Thermal Unit)</b>	A measure of heat used in rating the capacity of heating and cooling systems	17. <b>girder</b>	A heavy wooden or steel beam supporting the floor joists and providing the main horizontal support for the floor
4. <b>building code</b>	An ordinance that specifies minimum standards of construction, for building to protect public safety and health	18. <b>header</b>	The extra thick framing over doors and windows to bear the weight of the building above the opening
5. <b>building permit</b>	Written governmental permission for the construction, alteration, or demolition of an improvement, showing compliance with building codes and zoning ordinances. See certificate of occupancy	19. <b>HVAC</b>	An acronym for heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning
6. <b>ceiling joist</b>	Attached to the top plate of a wall, these joists carry the weight of the roof	20. <b>insulation</b>	Pieces of plasterboard, asbestos sheeting, compressed wood-wool, fiberboard, or other material placed between inner and outer surfaces, such as walls and ceiling to protect the interior from heat loss. Insulation works by breaking up and dissipating air currents
7. <b>certificate of occupancy (CO)</b>	A certificate issued by a government authority stating that a building is fit for occupancy and there are no building code violations; the end result of a successful building permit	21. <b>pier</b>	A column, usually of masonry block or steel-reinforced concrete. Piers are evenly spaced under a structure to support the weight. May also refer to the part of the wall between the windows other openings that bears the wall weight
8. <b>concrete slab</b>	same as slab - a flat, horizontal reinforced concrete area, usually the interior floor of a building but also an exterior or a roof area	22. <b>pitch</b>	The slope of a roof measured as the vertical distance in inches (rise) divided by the horizontal distance in feet (run)
9. <b>crawl space</b>	The space between the ground and the first floor; frequently found in houses without basements that are not built on a slab foundation	23. <b>rafter</b>	One of a series of sloping beams that extends from the center ridge board to an exterior wall and provides the main support for the roof
10. <b>eave</b>	The overhang of a sloping roof that extends beyond the walls of the house	24. <b>ridge board</b>	A heavy horizontal board, set on edge at the apex of the apex of the roof, to which the rafters are attached
11. <b>fascia board</b>	A flat strip of wood or metal that encloses the ends of the rafters; gutters are usually attached to the fascia board	25. <b>roofing felt</b>	Sheets of flat or other close-woven, heavy material placed on top of the roof boards to insulate and waterproof the roof
12. <b>floor joist</b>	A horizontal board laid on edge, resting on the beams that provide the main support for the floor. The subflooring is nailed directly to the joists	26. <b>R-value</b>	The insulation value of materials. The higher the R-value, the more resistant the material is to the transfer of heat
13. <b>footing</b>	A concrete support under a foundation, chimney, or column that usually rests on solid ground and is wider than the structure being supported. Footings are designed to distribute the weight of the structure over the ground	27. <b>sheathing</b>	Insulating material that is applied to the wall. Framing; siding is applied on top of the sheathing
14. <b>foundation wall</b>	The masonry or concrete wall below ground level that serves as the main support for the frame structure. Foundation walls form the walls of the basement or crawlspace	28. <b>shingles</b>	Exterior roofing material frequently made of fiberglass, asphalt or wood
		29. <b>siding</b>	Boards nailed horizontally to the vertical studs, with or without intervening sheathing, to form the exposed surface of the outside walls of the building. Siding may be made of wood, metal, or masonry sheets

30. <b>sill</b>	The lowest horizontal member of the house frame, which rests atop the foundation wall and forms a base for the studs. The term can also refer to the lowest horizontal member in the frame for a window or door
31. <b>soffit</b>	The external underside of the eave; usually contains ventilation for the attic and/or roof
32. <b>sole plate</b>	The bottom of the wall frame that connects the studs to the flooring
33. <b>stud</b>	The vertical members in the wall framing; usually placed roof and/or the story above
34. <b>subflooring</b>	Boards or plywood sheets nailed directly to the floor joist, serving as a base for the finish flooring. Subflooring is usually made of rough boards, although some houses have concrete subflooring
35. <b>top plate</b>	The top part of the wall framing that connects the stud to the ceiling framing