

Glossary

ACANTHUS	A plant with thick-lobed leaves, the image of which is used in architectural, carved and moulded ornaments.
ADAM, Robert 1728-1792	British architect, decorator and furniture designer of the late 18th century.
ADJOINED PILLAR	A pillar or column which is not entirely free-standing, but has a small portion attached to a wall.
AESTHETIC MOVEMENT	A movement in art/architecture of the 1870s/80s which believed in the supremacy of the beautiful, using the peacock and sunflower as its most popular motifs.
ANTIQUARY	Student and/or collector of antiques, antiquaries and allied information.
APSE	A semi-circular or polygonal extension to a larger rectangular area, often with a rounded vault above.
ARCHITRAVE	The lintel extending from one column to another, and the lowest of the three main parts of an entablature.
ARMATURE	A metal or wooden internal support or framework for a sculpture modelled in soft clay, wax or plaster-of-Paris.
ART NOUVEAU	A style of decorative art in vogue circa 1880 to 1914, characterised by curved and expressive lines, flower and leaf motifs.
BALUSTRADE	A series of short posts or pillars supporting a rail.
BANNISTER	A staircase rail, as above.
BAY WINDOW	A window in a curved or angled projection from a house wall and, if curved, often called a bow window.
BRACE	Subsidiary timbers set diagonally to strengthen the wooden frame which supports a roof.
BUTTRESS	Stonework, brick or other masonry built against an existing wall and projecting from it in order to counteract the outward thrust.
CANOPY	A hood of any material projecting from a wall as a covering or shelter.
CAPITAL	The uppermost and wider part of a pillar, column or pilaster which supports the entablature above.
CASTELLATED	An architectural term used to describe a building decorated with battlements.
CHIPPENDALE, Thomas 1718-1779	English furniture maker and designer noted for his neo-classical, neo-gothic and chinoiserie styles.
CLASSICISM	A return to the rules of artistic law and order and the principles of Greek and Roman architecture.
COBBETT, William 1763-1835	Son of a farmer, home-educated journalist, radical, MP, best known for 'Rural Rides' (1830) which is still in print today.
COFFERED CEILING	Ceiling decoration consisting of sunken squares or polygonal ornamental panels.
COLLAR BEAM	A horizontal transverse beam connecting a pair of rafters at a height below the apex of a roof.
COLUMN	A round, square or rectangular upright structure, normally acting as a support and composed of one solid piece or a series of drums.
COMPOSITE	The most elaborate of the classical orders whose capital combines the scrolls and acanthus leaves of the two lower orders, together with other decorative motifs.
CORBEL	A projecting block or bracket which supports a horizontal beam.
CORINTHIAN	One of the classical orders identified by the acanthus leaf decoration on its capital.
CORNICE	The uppermost section of a classical entablature.
COVING	A wide, decorative moulding concealing the junction between the walls and ceiling of a room.
DADO RAIL	A wooden rail at chair-back height around the walls of a room to prevent potential damage caused by the movement of chairs.
DAME SCHOOL	Small private school for young children run by women often in their own home; precursors of nursery/infant schools; existed in England possibly before the C16th century in both towns and rural areas and survived into the C19th century.
DENTILS	Series of small ornamental tooth-like blocks used in classical decorative mouldings.
DOME	A vault of even curvature over a circular or square base.
DORIC	One of the simplest and earliest of classical orders which is sparsely decorated.
DRESSER, Christopher 1834-1904	English designer and writer on the decorative arts, particularly in household objects such as wallpapers, furniture, metalwork, pottery, glass and textiles.
DRUM	A circular vertical wall supporting a dome.
EGG AND DART	A decorative moulding based on a pattern of alternate eggs and arrow-heads.
ENTABLATURE	In classical architecture, the upper part of an order consisting of the architrave, frieze and cornice.
FANLIGHT	A window over a door, mainly in Georgian buildings.
FLUTING	Shallow, concave, decorative grooves running vertically on the shafts of columns and other surfaces.
FRET	A geometric ornament or moulding composed of horizontal and vertical lines repeated to form a border or band.
FRIEZE	The middle section of an entablature between the architrave and the cornice.
GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE	Historical division of English architecture, 1714-1880 in the reigns of Georges I, II, III and IV.
GESSO	A paste composition of gypsum, glue and water which hardens into a solid, and is used for mouldings on walls, ceilings, furniture and picture frames.
GIBBONS, Grinling 1648-1721	English Baroque sculptor known for his decorative carvings of flowers, leaves and fruit in wood, marble and stone.
GOTHIC	The style of architecture in Europe which came between the Romanesque and Renaissance and characterised by pointed arches, rib vaults and flying buttresses.
GREEK CROSS	A cross with four equal-length arms at right-angles to one another.
GREENAWAY, Kate 1846-1901	Illustrator of children's books for which she often supplied the text.
HIPPED ROOF	A roof which has sloped instead of vertical ends.
IONIC	One of the classical orders, characterised by the spiral volutes in its capital.
JONES, Inigo 1573-1652	British architect who imported the classical style from Italy together with Palladian details.
JEKYLL, Gertrude 1843-1932	Artist, craftswoman, photographer, writer and influential garden designer.
KENT, William 1685-1748	English painter, furniture designer, landscape gardener and architect.
KEYSTONE	The central stone at the crown of an arch or rib vault, which is often carved.
KINGPOST	A vertical beam standing centrally on a tie or collar-beam, and meeting the apex of a roof where it supports the ridge.
MEDALLION	A circular or oval decorative motif, often part of the mouldings on a doorway or window.
METOPE	The square section between the triglyphs in the frieze of the Doric order.
MEZZANINE	A middle storey inserted between two higher ones.
MODILLIONS	A series of small scrolls or brackets beneath a cornice.
MORGAN, William de 1839-1917	English pottery designer particularly noted for his decorative plates and tiles.

MORRIS, William 1834-1896	English poet and political theorist, designer and craftsman in the late Victorian decorative arts.
MOSAIC	A picture or pattern made from small pieces of coloured glass or stone set into cement or plaster.
MOULDING	A decorative strip used on walls, furniture and picture frames, either carved from wood or made from plaster, gesso or stucco.
MULLION	The vertical post dividing a window into two or more lights.
NEO-CLASSICISM	The radical phase of late 18 th century classicism.
NEO GOTHIC	The movement in the very late C18 th /19 th to revive the Gothic style of architecture.
NEWEL	The principal post and its balusters at the end of a flight of stairs.
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education – the government’s inspectors.
ORDERS	In classical architecture, the orders consist of variations on a standard plan made up of a column, a capital and an entablature. The five orders are: Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Composite.
ORIEL WINDOW	An upper-storey overhanging window supported on corbels.
OVERMANTEL	Ornamental structure in wood or plasterwork over a mantelpiece.
PALLADIANISM	Style of architecture derived from buildings and publications of Andrea Palladio.
PALLADIO, Andrea 1508-1580	Influential Italian architect who aimed to recapture the splendour of antiquity and to revive Roman symmetrical planning.
PALMETTE	A type of classical decorative motif which is fan-shaped, and may resemble a palm leaf or honeysuckle flower.
PARAPET	A low wall, sometimes castellated, intended as a protection against a sudden drop.
PARTERRE	Formal garden on level surface, consisting of planting beds, typically in symmetrical patterns, separated and connected by edged gravel paths
PATERA	Small circular flower-like discs.
PAXTON, Joseph 1803-1865	English architect and landscape architect who worked in glass and metal roof construction and who designed the Crystal Palace.
PEDIMENT	A triangular or low-pitched gable above a door, window or portico.
PEVSNER, Nicolaus 1902-1983	German-born British scholar of history of art/architecture best known for his 46-volume <i>The Buildings of England</i> (1951–74), often simply referred to as "Pevsner".
PIANO NOBILE	The principal floor above the ground floor in grand town or country houses, which contains the reception rooms.
PILASTER	An ornamental pillar or column represented as a flat form attached to a wall and projecting from it without a supporting function.
PISCINA	A stone basin with a drain, free-standing or against a wall, and near the altar, for washing the Communion or Mass vessels.
RELIEF	A sculpture or moulding made so that all or part of it projects from a flat surface.
RIB	Projecting band on ceiling or vault which can be functional, structural or purely decorative.
RISER	The vertical surface of a step.
RUNNING DOG	A classical ornament or moulding, similar to the image of a breaking wave, and sometimes called the Vitruvian scroll.
SASH WINDOW	A window, double-hung with wooden sashes which allow it to slide up and down in vertical grooves by means of pulleys.
SEMI-LUNAR WINDOW	A half-moon shaped window.
SERLIANA	A window named after its designer and often called a Venetian window.
SERLIO, Sebastiano 1475-1554	Italian painter and architect, and the author of the first practical and theoretical book on architecture, “ <i>L’architettura</i> ”, published posthumously 1584.
SHAFT	The central section of a column or pilaster between the capital and the base.
SOANE, Sir John 1753-1837	English architect with a very personal neo-classical style which combined unexpected spatial interplay with complexity and severity.
STAINED GLASS	Translucent coloured glass set between a framework of lead tracery to form a decorative or pictorial design and used in windows.
STRINGING COURSE	Projecting horizontal band of brick or stone running across exterior of a building.
STUCCO	A plaster made of lime and pulverised marble which is carved and chiselled for sculpture and architectural decoration. It is often confused with gesso, which is made of gypsum, not lime, and is much softer.
SWAG	A decorative festoon, often of flowers or leaves, which imitates the form of a piece of material draped over two supports.
TESSELLATED FLOOR	A mosaic of small cubes of marble, pottery, brick, glass, tile or stone set in mortar.
TIE-BEAM	The main horizontal beam which carries the ends of the principal rafters at wall level in a roof.
TRACERY	The ornamental intersecting work, often in lead, used in a window.
TRANSEPT	The transverse arms of a cross-shaped church between the nave and the chancel.
TREAD	The horizontal surface of a step.
TRIGLYPH	Small, decorative blocks separating the metopes in a Doric frieze.
TUSCAN	Style of architecture which is the simplest form in the hierarchy of classical orders.
URN	An oval, covered vase used for retaining the ashes of the dead, but often used as a decorative motif in architectural interiors.
VAULT	An arched ceiling over a space in a building.
VENETIAN WINDOW	In classical architecture, a window of three lights, the central one arched and flanked by two lower rectangular ones.
VITRUVIUS POLLIO, Marcus (active 46-30BC)	Ancient Roman architect/theorist whose treatise on architecture, ‘ <i>De Architectura</i> ’ had an enormous influence on design from the early Renaissance onwards.
VOLUTE	A spiral scroll-shape found in an Ionic capital.
WINDER	A staircase tread, wider at one end than the other.
WIRE, William 1804-1857	Self-educated skilled artisan, antiquary, diarist 1842-1857 (see Appendix)