F

Facade: The front of a building. Frequently, in architectural terms an artificial or decorative effort.

Face Brick: Brick made especially for exterior use with special consideration of color, texture and size, and used as a facing on a building.

Face Glazing: A system having a triangular bead of compound applied with a putty knife, after bedding, setting, and clipping the glazing infill in place on a rabetted sash.

Faced Concrete: To finish the front and all vertical sides of a concrete porch, step(s), or patio. Normally the "face" is broom finished.

Facing Brick: The brick used and exposed on the outside of a wall. Usually these have a finished texture.

Factory Mutual (FM): Insurance agency that has established stringent guidelines for maximum construction integrity as it relates to fire and environmental hazards. Their specifications have become industry standards.

Fall/Flow: The proper slope or pitch of a pipe for adequate drainage.

Fascia: A flat, horizontal board enclosing the overhang under the eave.

Fasteners: A general term covering a wide variety of screws and nails, which may be used for mechanically securing various components of a building.

Faucet: A device for regulating the flow of a liquid from a reservoir such as a pipe or drum.

Feathering Strips: Tapered wood filler strips placed along the butt edges of old wood shingles to create a level surface when re-roofing over existing wood shingle roofs. Also called "horsefeathers."

Felt: A very general term used to describe composition of roofing ply sheets, consisting of a mat of organic or inorganic fibers either unsaturated, impregnated with asphalt or coal tar pitch, or impregnated and coated with asphalt.

Female IPS: Pipe connection where the threads are on the inside of the fitting. See FIP.

Female Threads: See FIP.

Fenestration: Any glass panel, window, door, curtain wall or skylight unit on the exterior of a building.

Ferrous: Refers to objects made of or partially made of iron, such as ferrous pipe.

Ferrule: Metal tubes used to keep roof gutters "open." Long nails (ferrule spikes) are driven through these tubes and hold the gutters in place along the fascia of the home.

FHA Strap: Metal straps that are used to repair a bearing wall "cut-out," and to "tie together" wall corners, splices, and bearing headers. Also, they are used to hang stairs and landings to bearing headers.

Fibered Aluminum Roof Coating: High-performance metallic reflective barrier for prepared roofing, metal surfaces and exterior masonry. Reflects sun's harmful rays, reduces energy costs in summer and winter while prolonging surface life.

Fibered Roof and Foundation Coating: Combined application for this special medium-viscosity-grade fibered material. Use as a roof or foundation coating.

Fibered Roof Coating: Optimal protection for low-sloped roofs. This thick, high-quality coating seals fine cracks and openings. Renews and rejuvenates old composition roofing and prolongs roof life. Also performs well on metal or concrete surfaces.

Fiberglass Mat: An asphalt roofing base material manufactured from glass fibers.

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

Fillet Bead: Caulking or sealant placed in such a manner that it forms an angle between the materials being caulked.

FindAnInspector.US: Foremost home inspector search engine.

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 and casings and normally painted (instead of stained).

Finish: In hardware, metal fastenings on cabinets which are usually exposed such as hinges and locks.

Finish Carpentry: The hanging of all interior doors, installation of door molding, base molding, chair rail, built in shelves, etc.

Finish Coat: The last coat applied in plastering intended as a base for further decorating or as a final decorative surface. Finish coat usually consists of calcified gypsum, lime and sometimes an aggregate. Some may require the addition of lime or sand on the job. The three basic methods of applying it are trowel, flat and spray.

Finish Grade: Any surface which has been cut to or built to the elevation indicated for that point. Surface elevation of lawn, driveway or other improved surfaces after completion of grading operations.

FIP (Female Iron Pipe): Standard threads that are on the inside of a pipe fitting.

Fire Apparatus Access Road: A road, fire lane, public street, private street, or parking lot lane that provides access from a fire station to a facility.

Fire Block: Short horizontal members sometimes nailed between studs, usually about halfway up a wall. See also 'Fire Stop.'

Fire Brick: Brick made of refractory ceramic material which will resist high temperatures. Used in fireplaces and boilers.

Fire Code Official: The fire chief or other authority charged with the enforcement of a code.

Fire Department Master Key: A special key carried by fire department officials which will open key boxes on commercial properties.

Fire Rated: Descriptive of materials that have been tested for use in fire walls.

Fire Resistance Rating: The time that materials or assemblies can withstand fire exposure.

Fire Retardant Chemical: A chemical or preparation of chemicals used to reduce flammability or to retard spread of flame.

Fire Stop: A solid, tight closure of a concealed space, placed to prevent the spread of fire and smoke through such a space. In a frame wall, this will usually consist of 2x4s cross blocking between studs.

Fire Wall: Any wall built for the purpose of restricting or preventing the spread of fire in a building. Such walls of solid masonry or concrete generally sub-divide a building from the foundations to two or more feet above the plane of the roof.

Fire-Resistive: In the absence of a specific ruling by the authority having jurisdiction, applies to materials for construction not combustible in the temperatures of ordinary fires and that will withstand such fires without serious impairment of their usefulness for at least 1 hour.

Fireplace Chase Flashing Pan: A large sheet of metal that is installed around and perpendicular to the fireplace flue pipe. Its purpose is to confine and limit the spread of fire and smoke to a small area.

Fireplace Lintel: A horizontal, noncombustible member that spans the top of the fireplace opening.

Fish Tape (Fish Wire): Material used to advance wire through a conduit.

Fishplate: A wood or plywood piece used to fasten the ends of two members together at a butt joint with nails or bolts. Sometimes used at the junction of opposite rafters near the ridge line.

Fitting: A general term that usually refers to faucets, shower valves, tub fillers, or various piping parts such as tees or elbows.

Fixed Price Contract: A contract with a set price for the work. See Time and Materials Contract.

Fixture: In plumbing, the devices that provide a supply of water and/or its disposal, e.g. sinks, tubs, toilets.

Flagstone (Flagging or Flags): Flat stones, from 1 to 4 inches thick, used for rustic walks, steps, floors, and the like.

Flake: A scale-like particle. To lose bond from a surface in small thin pieces. Sometimes a paint film "flakes."

Flakeboard: A manufactured wood panel made out of 1"- 2" wood chips and glue. Often used as a substitute for plywood in the exterior wall and roof sheathing. Also called OSB or Wafer Board.

Flame Retention Burner: An oil burner designed to hold the flame near the nozzle surface. Generally the most efficient type for residential use.

Flapper Valve (Plumbing): A valve that replaces a tank stopper in a toilet. Creates a seal between the tank and the bowl.

Flash Point: The critical temperature at which a material will ignite.

Flashing: Material used around any angle in a roof or wall to prevent leakage.

Flat Glass: A general term that describes float glass, sheet glass, plate glass, and rolled glass.

Flat Grain: Flat grain lumber has been sawed parallel to the pith of the log and approximately tangent to the growth rings, i.e., the rings form an angle of less than 45° with the surface of the piece.

Flat Mold: Thin wood strips installed over the butt seam of cabinet skins.

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

Flat Seam: A seam at the junction of sheet metal roof components that has been bent at the plane of the roof.

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

Fleet Averaging: By using a point system, builders can show compliance with energy building requirements by using average figures for all air conditioning units in the same sub division.

Flex Hose: A flexible pipe or tube usually made of braided stainless steel. Commonly used with widespread or Roman tub faucets to provide variable centers.

Flexible Metal Conduit: Conduit similar to armored cable in appearance but does not have the pre-inserted conductors.

Float Glass: Glass formed on a bath of molten tin. The surface in contact with the tin is known as the tin surface or tin side. The top surface is known as the atmosphere surface or air side.

Floating: The next-to-last stage in concrete work, when it is smoothed and water is brought to the surface by using a hand float or bull float.

Floating Wall: A non-bearing wall built on a concrete floor. It is constructed so that the bottom two horizontal plates can compress or pull apart if the concrete floor moves up or down. Normally built on basements and garage slabs.

Flood Level Rim: The edge of a fixture from which water overflows.

Floor Area, Gross: The floor area within the inside perimeter of the exterior walls.

Floor Area, Net: The actual occupied area not including accessory areas such as corridors, stairways, restrooms, mechanical rooms and closets.

Floor Plan: The basic layout of building or addition, which includes placement of walls, windows and doors as well as dimensions.

Floor Plate: See Floor Plan.

Flow Rate: The rate by which water is discharged from an outlet. For example, the standard flow rate of a showerhead is 2.5 gallons per minute.

Flue: A pipe used to exhaust smoke, gas or air.

Flue Collar: Round metal ring which fits around the heat flue pipe after the pipe passes out of the roof.

Flue Damper: An automatic door located in the flue that closes it off when the burner turns off; its purpose is to reduce heat loss up the flue from the still-warm furnace or boiler.

Flue Lining: Fire clay or terracotta pipe, round or square, usually made in all ordinary flue sizes and in 2-foot lengths, used for the inner lining of chimneys with the brick or masonry work around the outside. Flue lining in chimneys runs from about a foot below the flue connection to the top of the chimney.

Fluorescent Lighting: A fluorescent lamp is a gas-filled glass tube with a phosphor coating on the inside, normally with two pins that extend from each end. Gas inside the tube is ionized by electricity which causes the phosphor coating to glow.

Flush Glazing (Pocket Glazing): The setting of a light of glass or panel into a four-sided sash or frame opening containing a recessed "U" shaped channel without removable stops on three sides of the sash or frame and one channel with a removable stop along the fourth side.

Flush Valve: The valve separating the water in the tank from the bowl.

Flux: A material applied to the surface of copper pipes and fittings to assist in the cleaning and bonding process.

Fly Rafters: End rafters of the gable overhang supported by roof sheathing and lookouts.

Folded Seam: In sheet metal work, a joint between sheets of metal wherein the edges of the sheets are crimped together and folded flat.

Foot Print: See Floor Plan.

Footing: The underground support for a foundation or support post.

Footings: Wide pours of cement reinforced with re-bar (reinforcing bar) that support foundation walls, pillars, or posts. Footings are part of the foundation and are often poured before the foundation walls.

Forced Air Heating: A common form of heating with natural gas, propane, oil or electricity as a fuel. Air is heated in the furnace and distributed through a set of metal plastic 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.

Foundation Coating: High-quality below-grade moisture protection. Used for below-grade exterior concrete and masonry wall damp-proofing to seal out moisture and prevent corrosion.

Frame Inspection: An inspection of the home's structural integrity and its compliance to local municipal codes.

Framer: The carpenter contractor that installs the lumber and erects the frame, flooring system, interior walls, backing, trusses, rafters, decking, installs all beams, stairs, soffits and all work related

to the wood structure of the home. The framer builds the home according to the blueprints and must comply with local building codes and regulations.

Framing: The structural wood and/or metal elements of most homes. The floor and ceiling framing is called the joist work. Wall framing is usually made out of 2x4 or 2x6 studs. See Rafters, Posts, and Beams.

Free-Tab Shingles: Shingles that do not contain factory-applied strips or spots of self-sealing adhesive. See also self-sealing shingles.

Frieze: In house construction, a horizontal member connecting the top of the siding with the soffit of the cornice.

Frostline: The depth of frost penetration in soil. This depth varies in different parts of the country. Footings should be placed below this depth to prevent movement.

Fully Tempered Glass: Flat or bent glass that has been heat-treated to a high surface and/or edge compression to meet the requirements of ASTM C 1048 kind FT. Fully tempered glass, if broken, will fracture into many small pieces (dice) which are more or less cubical. Fully tempered glass is approximately four times stronger than annealed glass of the same thickness when exposed to uniform static pressure loads.

Fully-Adhered: A completely attached (adhered) roof membrane.

Function: The action for which an item, component, or system is specially fitted or used or for which an item, component or system exists; to be in action or perform a task.

Functional: Performing, or able to perform, a function.

Functional Drainage: The emptying of a plumbing fixture in a reasonable amount of time without overflow when another fixture is drained simultaneously.

Functional Flow: A reasonable flow of water supply at the highest and farthest fixture from the building main when another fixture is operated simultaneously.

Fungal Wood Rot: A common wood destroying organism which develops when wood containing material is exposed to moisture and poor air circulation for a long (6 months +) period of time. Often and incorrectly referred to as dry rot.

Fungi (Wood): Microscopic plants that live in damp wood and cause mold, stain, and decay.

Fungicide: A chemical that is poisonous to fungi.

Furnace: A heating system that uses the principle of thermal convection. When air is heated, it rises and as the air cools it settles. Ducts are installed to carry the hot air from the top of the furnace to the rooms. Other ducts, called cold air returns, return the cooler air back to the furnace.

Furring: Strips of wood or metal applied to a wall or other surface to even it and normally to serve as a fastening base for finish material.

Further Evaluation: A degree of examination beyond that of a typical and customary non-intrusive physical examination.

Fusible Link: A form of fixed temperature heat detecting device sometimes used to restrain the operation of an electrical or mechanical control until a certain temperature is reached usually signifying a fire.