



# The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture

By Rachel Carley

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Architectural historian Rachel Carley offers a richly detailed guide to 500 years of American home design. More than 600 precisely detailed illustrations show readers how to identify and describe a house of a particular style. Every element that may be found on a Beaux Arts townhouse, a Navajo hogan, or a Craftsman bungalow is displayed. An essential reference for American homeowners, restorers, and old-house buffs who, by the year 2000, will spend more on home renovation and restoration than on new-home construction.

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## **The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture By Rachel Carley Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### From School Library Journal

YA?Over 500 illustrations trace domestic architecture from indigenous dwellings of Native American groups to contemporary homes of the 1990s. Each of the 12 chapters begins with a brief narrative that summarizes a type, period, or style of architecture. Multiple interior and exterior views of representative buildings (including outbuildings) are well labeled. Features such as stairs, doors, windows, framing and wall construction, and brickwork are clearly illustrated. Insets with additional text illuminate many of the pictures. Students curious about the structures around them or seeking information for design or history classes, and apprentice carpenters will be well served, and rewarded, by this volume.?Barbara Hawkins, Oakton High School, Fairfax, VA

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#### From Library Journal

This attractive dictionary presents the details and styles of residential architecture in the United States through over 500 annotated drawings. Skibinski and Lam base these examples on magazine illustrations and measured drawings from the Historic American Buildings Survey. Particularly useful are the clearly delineated illustrations that focus on construction technology (the anatomy of a double-hung sash and a balloon frame building, for example). Carley's (*The Backyard Book*, LJ 5/1/88) text would have benefited from a more expansive discussion of regional variations in style and specific information with which to date buildings. While the most useful book of this type remains Virginia and Lee McAlester's *Field Guide to American Houses* (LJ 8/84), this dictionary, designed for use by homeowners and curious tourists, is a welcome addition to the field. [For another view of this work, see "Best References of 1995, LJ 4/15/95. p. 38.-Ed.]--H. Ward Jandl, National Park Svc., Washington, D.C.

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#### From [Booklist](#)

This collection of detailed black-and-white drawings of houses and other domestic buildings (barns, garages, gazebos) is presented in 12 chapters arranged chronologically, from Native American dwellings to contemporary trends. Each chapter is introduced by one page of text, and additional comments accompany the illustrations. Each drawing is labeled with the names of various architectural details.

Several examples are provided for each time period. For example, seven drawings reflect Federal-style homes in the chapter on neoclassical styles. The section on prefab housing in the postwar chapter includes traditional kit structures as well as Quonset huts and mobile homes. Some drawings highlight special interior or exterior features: fireplaces, staircases, gates, and so on. A series of inserts called "anatomies" look at basic construction methods: trusses, double-hung sashes, log notching. Floor plans are often provided. One helpful feature is that common usage is included in parenthesis next to technical terms that accompany illustrations; for example, split-wood shingles are also defined as *shakes*, a thatched sun shelter is also identified as a *ramada*.

Intended for architecture students and design professionals, this book could also be used as a resource for secondary school American history units. The first chapter covers Native American dwellings such as Algonquin wigwams, Apache wikiups, Navaho hogans, and Tlingit plank houses, and chapter 8 deals with folk and frontier houses. The index includes all the terms used as labels.

A better choice for public and school collections is the *Eyewitness Visual Dictionary of Buildings* (Dorling Kindersley, 1992), which uses photographs as well as illustrations and spans all sorts of structures from ancient through modern times. Other visual dictionaries, such as the *Macmillan Visual Desk Reference* (1993) and *What's What: A Visual Glossary of the Physical World* (Hammond, 1981), also include sections on architecture that satisfy many browsing and general reference needs. However, as a specialized resource, Carley's unique graphic guide will be a welcome addition to architecture and design collections.

## Users Review

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