



Bottom Plate

The bottom, horizontal structural member of a stud framed wall, sometimes called the sole plate. The bottom plate sets on the subfloor, nails through the subfloor into floor joists.

Bridging

Small pieces of wood or metal strapping placed in an X-pattern between the floor joists at midspan to prevent the joists from twisting and squeaking.

Cap Plate

The upper top plate, the top of the double plate.

Compound Miter

A miter (angle) cut with the saw blade sloped at a specified angle (i.e. 22°, 45°).

Corner Braces

Diagonal braces placed at the corners of framed walls to stiffen them and provide extra strength.

Corner Post

The wall stud and spacer blocks that create an interior nailing surface for drywall at a framed corner.

Cripple Stud

Short studs placed between the header and a top plate or between a sill and sole plate.

Crown

The upward bow, curve or rise along the length of a board. Deck boards are set on end with the crown up. Over time, the crown will sag and the board will straighten.

Decking

Usually referring to outside projects, the lumber that forms the floor surface. Decking fastens directly over the floor joists.

Girder

A larger beam of wood or steel used as the principle support of concentrated loads at points along its span.

Face-nail

Driving a nail perpendicularly through the width side board (i.e. straight, 90-degree angle)

Fascia

The visible flat front board that caps the rafter tail ends and fly rafter edges.

Floor Joists

The main subfloor framing members that support the floor span. Joist are usually made of engineered wood I-beams or 2x8 (or larger) lumber.

Fly Rafters

The end rafters that form the outside edge of the roof's rake (overhang).

Header

A beam placed perpendicular to wall studs above doors, windows or other openings to carry the weight of structural loads.

Joist

Parallel framing member installed horizontally to support floor and ceiling loads.

Joist Hangers

Metal brackets designed to hold joist ends. Using hangers is usually faster and easier than toenailing joists.

Ledger Board/Strip

A strip of lumber nailed to a beam, girder, or rim joist on which the floor joists rest for support.

Load-bearing Wall

A wall that supports structural weight above it. Identified by having overlapped or butted ceiling joists running perpendicularly above it.

Lookouts

Rake cross-bracing between the fly rafters and end gable rafters that the soffit nails to.

Miter

An angled cut, usually 45°. Unlike a compound miter cut, the saw blade remains straight at 0°.

Non Load-Bearing Wall

A wall that supports no load other than its own weight.

On Center (O.C.)

The term used to define the measured spacing between studs, joists, rafters, etc. O.C. measurements are taken from the center of one member to the center of the adjoining member.

Penny

A term applied to nails that originally meant the price per hundred. Today, it indicates nail length and is abbreviated with the letter "d," the English sign for one cent.

Plumb

The term used to define a vertical element that is perfectly perpendicular to a level surface above or below.

Plywood

A piece of wood made of three or more layers of wood veneer laminated together with glue.

Pitch

The angle of the roof slope, measured as "X" inches per 12" (x/12). Roof pitches commonly range from 4/12 to 8/12. To calculate a roof's pitch, place a carpenter's level positioned level on roof line, measure out 12" on the level, from that 12" point measure down to the roof line. This figure (i.e. 4" to 8") is the first number of the pitch.

Rough Opening

The framed-in opening, slightly larger than the actual window/door, that replaces wall studs to support the structure and accommodate a window/door.

Sheathing

The structural covering applied over studs, rafters or roof trusses.

Sill

The piece of structural wood forming the lower side of a window opening.

Sill Plate

The horizontal wood member that is anchored to the foundation masonry to provide a nailing surface for floors or walls built above.

Soffit

The underside board of eaves and rakes. Soffits are often vented to draw air into the attic.

Sole Plate

The bottom horizontal structural member of a stud framed wall.

Spacer Blocks

Short 2x4 or 2x6 blocks nailed to corner studs. A wall stud is nailed to the spacers that creates a new nailing surface.

Span

The distance between the structural supports in floors, ceilings and roofs.

Stick-Building

Assembling framing one member at a time on the job site, instead of raising prefabricating walls or trusses as a unit.

Stud

A 2x4 or 2x6 vertical framing member used to construct walls and partitions.

Subfloor

Boards or plywood installed over joists on which the finish floor is laid.

Tack

A temporary nailer. An object is "tacked" into place to assist in positioning, measuring, handling, etc.

Toenailing

Starting a nail at an angle or slant in one framing member and driving it through into a second (usually perpendicular) framing piece.

Top Plate

The top horizontal framing members of a framed wall.

Valley

The inward angle of two sloping roof sections. Framing consists of a doubled valley rafter in the middle that extends from a top plate corner to a second ridge board, with angled jack rafters for support.