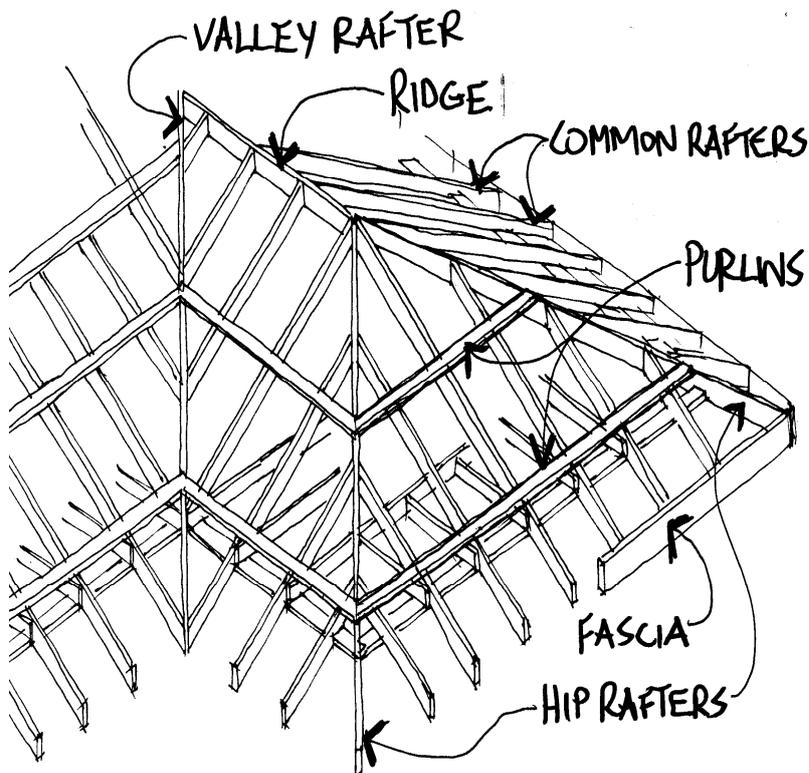
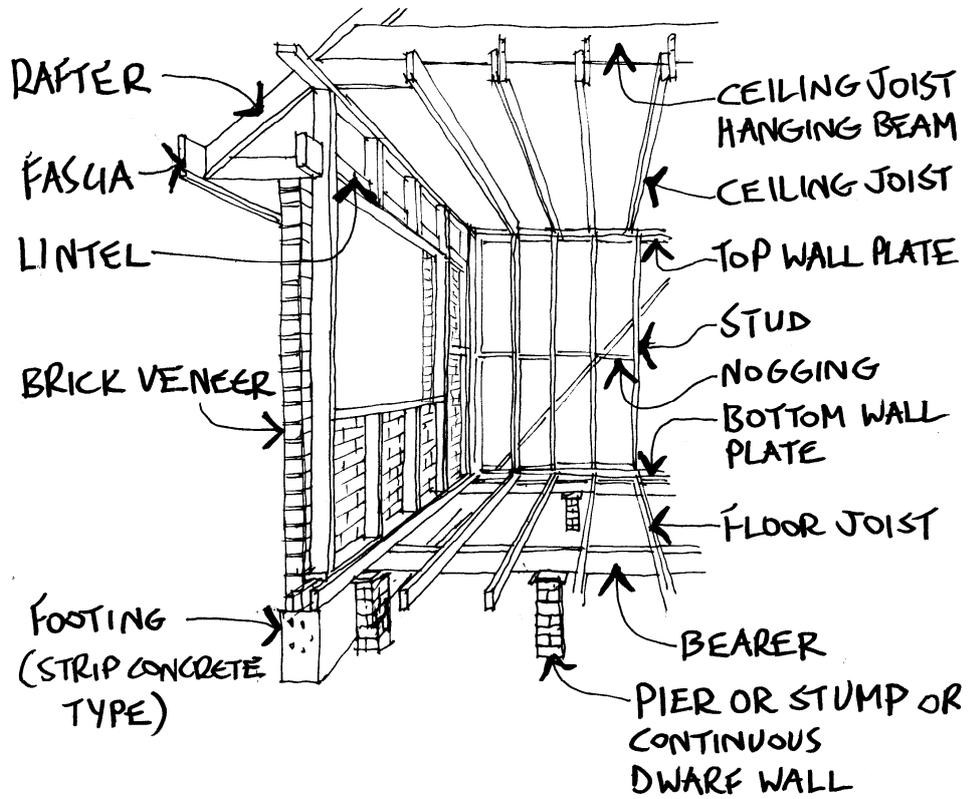
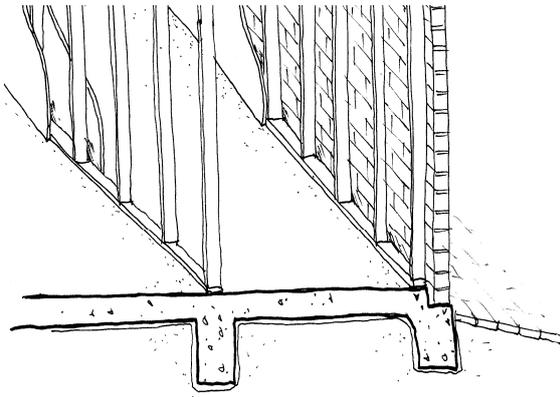
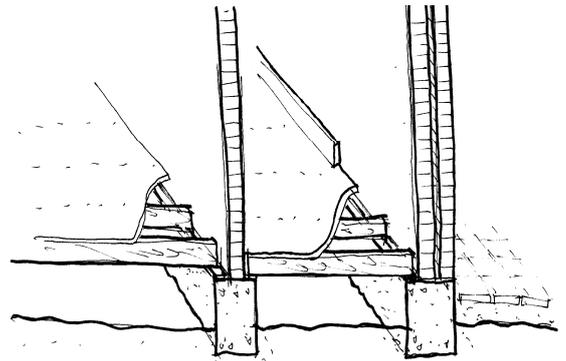


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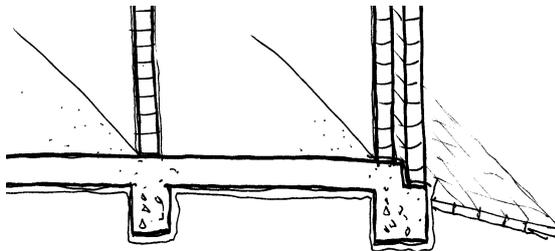




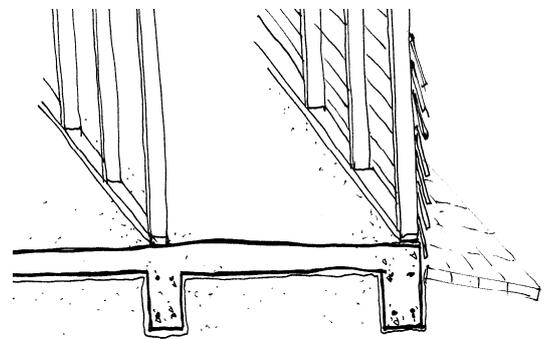
BRICK VENEER ON RAFT SLAB



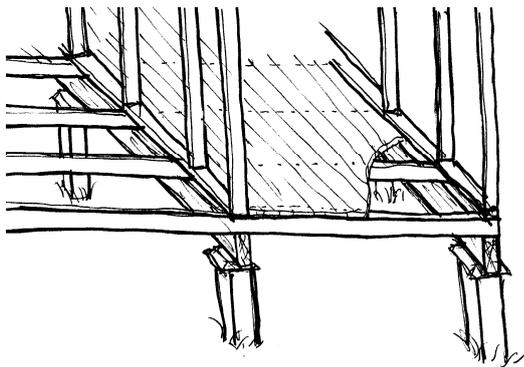
CAVITY BRICK ON STRIP CONCRETE FOOTING



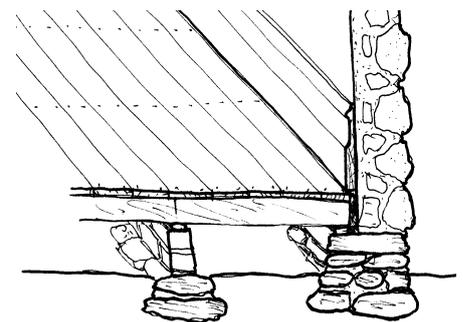
CAVITY BRICK ON RAFT SLAB



STUD FRAMED ON RAFT SLAB



TIMBER-FRAMED ON STUMPS



STONE ON STONE FOOTING
(pre 1900)

These definitions are in the context of local housing construction in SA and may not apply elsewhere. See the preceding diagrams for more definitions.

ag pipe – agricultural pipe

Perforated or slotted flexible or rigid pipe usually installed in a rock-filled trench for sub-surface drainage

ant cap

A barrier to termites made from sheet metal and installed between building components, usually in sub-floor spaces. Ant caps are not effective at stopping termites' progress – the cap merely forces them to leave the timber and build their mud workings around the cap, making their presence visible.

architrave

Timber moulding around door frames and windows covering their junction with the wall.

baluster

The repeated vertical element of a balustrade, such as around a balcony or along the open side of a stair. Balustrades required by the BCA must have gaps between them no greater than 125mm.

barge board

Timber board used at the sloping edge of a roof partly to seal the roof edge and partly for aesthetics. Exposed to weather, they are susceptible to fungal decay especially at the ends.

batten

A small-section timber member, usually rectangular and no larger than 70x20mm and used to fix roof tiles, claddings and linings to the structural frame of a building.

beam

A horizontal load-bearing structural member supported at two points or more.

box gutter

A type of gutter which receives water from both sides or all sides (like a box). Before about 1900, larger homes often had a central box gutter hidden from view and accessible only by climbing onto the roof and over the ridge. They are notorious for blocking up or deteriorating then leaking into the centre of the home.

brick veneer

A common type of construction where a building is steel or timber-framed and a single leaf (layer) of brickwork forms the outer skin, by being fixed to the outside of the wall frame. Except for the top plates of the framed walls, the wall frame of a completed house is almost fully concealed from inspection.

cantilever

A structural member with one end extending beyond its point of support, such as a balcony floor joist.

cladding

The weatherproof external 'skin' of the walls. Typically brick, weatherboard, corrugated steel or cement sheet. (see also 'lining')

compressed fibre cement sheet (abbr. CFC)

A high-density water-resistant sheeting used in framed construction for lining walls and floors of wet areas and balcony floors. Various thicknesses from about 5mm to 20mm. Made from cement and cellulose fibre and formerly, asbestos fibre.

conduit

Protective piping for electrical cables, used underground and in some exposed situations.

control joint

Usually appearing as a gap (5-25mm wide) between two parts of a building to allow for small movements of those parts in different directions. Control joints are usually filled with flexible sealant. Earlier buildings without control joints usually suffered cracking instead.

cornice

A covering moulding at the junction of the interior wall and ceiling, usually made from paper-faced gypsum, same as plasterboard.

damp-proof course (abbr. DPC)

Continuous layer of a waterproof material, usually purpose-made black embossed plastic, installed during construction near ground level to stop moisture moving from the ground or footing higher into the building structure. Earlier materials used for DPC include waterproof additives for mortar, aluminium sheet, and thin slate. Most homes older than 50 years have no effective DPC.

damp-proof membrane (abbr. DPM)

Continuous layer of purpose-made waterproof material. These are two examples used during construction: 1- Sheet plastic installed under a concrete floor slab in contact with the ground. 2- Continuous sheet or liquid membrane installed behind tilework in wet areas to waterproof the walls.

deck – roof decking

A type of steel sheet roofing with a deeply ribbed profile to give greater stiffness than plain corrugated and therefore longer span between supports. Usually installed at a low pitch, less than five degrees from horizontal.

door frame

The frame attached to the wall in the opening of a doorway, consisting of jambs (the two verticals) and the 'head' which is the top part of the frame. Each has doorstops (thin beadings) attached, against which the door should close tightly.

downpipe

A tube to carry water from the roof gutter, usually to ground level where it either connects to stormwater pipework or discharges onto the ground. It is important that the water be carried away from the building so it does not cause dampness that could lead to cracking or termite infestation.

drip - drip groove

A weather proofing device. A groove in an underside exterior surface, usually a window sill, which blocks the flow of water clinging to the surface by causing it to drop off and run safely away.

dwarf wall

Support for suspended floors, usually the timber floors of older buildings. A low wall built from ground level up to the subfloor framing. Dwarf walls are usually located at about every 2.4 metre spacings across a room and are sometimes topped with an ant cap. (see also ant cap)

eaves

The part of the roof that overhangs the exterior wall to protect it from weather and shade the windows. Fashionably absent in many newer homes.

eaves gutter

A metal or plastic channel fixed to the outer edge of the roof to collect rainwater. Leaks and overflows can cause water to enter the building.

eaves lining (also called soffit lining)

Cladding of boards or sheeting attached to the eaves underside.

end grain

The open tubular cell structure at the ends of a piece of timber, which is where timber is most susceptible to moisture absorption and fungal decay. Usually kept well-sealed and protected by paint.

expansion joint

See 'control joint'

fascia

At the outer edge of the roof, traditionally a timber board fixed on edge and running horizontally, usually with a gutter attached to it. In new housing, fascias are often steel which eliminates the ongoing risk of fungal decay at the ends of the boards.

fire wall

Internal wall that divides a building to prevent the spread of fire. Usually between adjoining Torrens-titled units and townhouses.

first fix

A stage in a tradesperson's work during the construction process when part of their work is done before waiting for another trade to do theirs. Only then can the first one finish. For example, the plumber's first fix includes installing pipework, but until the wall linings are installed, the second fix can't be done, which will include installing taps and fixtures (basins etc). (Also see 'second fix')

flashing

Specially-formed impervious sheet material for excluding water. Example internally: to direct water entering a wall cavity away from framing and out again. Externally: Weatherproofing of the junction between different parts of a building eg roof to wall, chimney to roof, using sheeting of folded steel or of malleable zinc, lead or modern composite material. Roof leaks most commonly occur at flashings.

floor framing (also called subfloor framing)

Structural members, usually timber (sometimes steel) which support the flooring.

floor plate

A horizontal timber member onto which the floor framing is secured. Usually about 75x25mm and laid flat onto the footing or dwarf wall.

formwork

A container to hold wet concrete in place until it hardens. Most formwork is then removed, but being usually of timber, if some is left in place, it can become a path for termite entry.

frass

The fine dust or pellets left by borers attacking timber.

gable

A vertical wall or panel forming a triangular shape – an upside-down 'V' - at the end of a pitched roof.

Galvanic corrosion

Corrosion caused to metal when water runs onto it from a metal more 'noble' on the Galvanic scale (eg from lead onto zincalume) or when dissimilar metals are in contact with each other and moisture is present (eg copper and zincalume – the copper corrodes the steel).

galvanised, galvanising

A process of plating steel with zinc to protect it from rusting.

green timber

Timber which has not yet been dried or seasoned and which still contains a high level of moisture. Oregon building timber is often used 'green'. Some species of timber (eg pinus radiata) are best used seasoned because they would be likely to distort excessively if they dried before, during and after installation.

gutter

'spouting' in eastern states. See eaves gutters.

hardwood

Timber from trees classified as angiosperms and characterised by a cellular structure different from softwoods. Hardwoods are not necessarily hard: exceptions include balsa and traditional cedar which are soft and light in weight. See also 'softwood'.

head

The top section of the frame of a door or window.

hip – hip roof

The external junction of two planes of a pitched roof and covered by special ridge capping (metal roofs) or ridge tiles (tiled roofs).

jamb

A vertical member of a window or door opening, attached to the wall and usually made from timber with architraves attached.

joinery

Exposed timberwork such as cabinets, windows, doors and windows where finish is very important, as opposed to carpentry which is more structural work and generally not visible in the finished building.

joist

Structural member of timber or steel supporting flooring material or ceiling lining. Joists are usually installed parallel and spaced 450-600mm apart.

lining

Generally the internal 'skin' of a building of framed construction. Almost always plasterboard but other materials include wood panelling, ply and straw panels (ceilings only). (see also 'cladding')

lintel

Horizontal structural member spanning an opening, usually at each door and window, to support the wall or roof loads over the opening. Steel lintels are used in brickwork and unless well painted or galvanised, will rust when exposed to weather.

masonry

Bricks, blocks or stone usually laid with mortar between them to build walls and other structures.

MDF – medium density fibreboard

Smooth-faced sheet timber product resembling compressed cardboard used mainly for cabinets, skirtings and architraves. Various thicknesses 4mm – 30mm. Has replaced particleboard and solid timber in many applications. It is dimensionally stable and machines very well.

mortar

The glue used to hold together, or more correctly, to hold apart masonry units such as bricks. Usually a mix of sand, cement and lime but may contain other additives.

mullion

A vertical member dividing a window or door into two or more sections.

newel post

the post at the end of a handrail or balustrade which supports the end of the handrail or a column around which a stair spirals

nogging

Timber framing member fixed horizontally between studs to prevent them twisting or to provide a fixing point for linings, plumbing, cabinets, etc.

parapet

The part of a wall that rises above a roof, traditionally to prevent the spread of fire from the flammable roofing of one dwelling to an adjoining dwelling. Rarely seen in conventional single-storey building post-1900 except as an aesthetic device. Parapet gutters and flashings are common locations for roof leaks.

particle board

A smooth-faced board made from compressed timber chips and glue and mostly used to build cabinets. Various densities, thickness and moisture resistance ratings. Has largely been replaced by MDF (medium density fibreboard).

penetrations

Typically wherever there is a hole in a roof, wall or floor for something (like a pipe or column) to pass through. The careful making and sealing of penetrations can be important for many reasons: Examples - in concrete slabs penetrations must allow for movement whilst preventing termite entry. In roofs they must remain waterproof and prevent galvanic corrosion.

perpend – brickwork

The vertical joints between bricks. Open perpend are used for weepholes to allow escape of water from the wall cavity that may have entered due to a fault. They are an obvious entry point for termites.

pinus – pinus radiata

A species of fast-growing softwood, plantation-grown in SA and providing nearly all locally-used building timber. Widely used in other states also. Susceptible to termite attack. Now available chemically pre-treated to resist termites.

plasterboard

Rigid lining board made from gypsum with paper outer faces. Some types have special fire, acoustic or structural properties. Various sheet sizes and thicknesses 10mm – 15mm.

plinth

The bottom courses of stones or bricks supporting a wall. Often wider than the wall above.

plywood

Board made from sliced sheets of timber glued together in layers, so that the grain of each layer lies at 90 deg to the next. Layers are odd-numbered: 3 ply, 5, 7, 9 or more. Typical thicknesses 4mm – 25mm.

pointing

The finishing of mortar joints between bricks or blocks, using a weather-resistant mortar and in a consistent shape with a tool or the trowel. Older brickwork is often laid using weak lime mortar then pointed with a harder cement mortar.

render

The coating, (or the application of) applied to a surface, usually a wall, using a hand trowel or float. Traditionally a mix of sand, cement and lime, modern render mixes are more sophisticated blends containing additives to make their application easier and to improve bonding and flexibility.

reo

Abbreviation for 'reinforcement'. Most structural concrete contains steel because concrete by itself has poor tensile strength (the tendency to pull apart) compared with its compressing strength (resistance to crushing). The addition of steel, correctly placed, greatly improves the tensile strength of the concrete.

retaining wall

Wall built at a change of ground level to hold back the soil at the higher level. Walls built from hardwood sleepers can harbour termites and be destroyed by them. Preferred alternatives are treated pine sleepers or concrete sleepers.

reveal

The lined sides of an opening, usually a window, where the jamb is narrower than the thickness of the wall.

ridge – roof ridge

The horizontal line of intersection of two planes of a pitched roof, usually the highest part of the roof.

rising damp

The vertical movement of moisture up a wall, usually to a height less than 1 metre. Effects include staining and damage to paint and finishes and fungal decay of nearby timber like doorframes and skirtings. Caused by the failure or absence of a damp proof course (also see damp proof course - DPC). Treatment: remove the moisture source, make the wall impervious by chemical treatment, or seal the passage of moisture such as by installing a DPC. Presence of salt and evaporation can change rising damp into salt damp (also called salt attack).

roof trusses

Structural frames of timber or steel usually designed to support roof and ceiling simultaneously. Usually installed parallel and spaced 1200mm apart and supported only on the outer walls, without intermediate support from any internal walls.

rot

Common name for fungal decay affecting timber with a high moisture content. In Victoria, 'rot' specifically means 'dry rot', which is a different timber pest and uncommon in SA.

sarking

Thin membrane of paper or insulating foil fixed under roofing for added weather proofing. Tiled roofs which are low-pitched and readily admit rain may depend upon sarking to be weatherproof. This is the 'Achilles heel' of an otherwise very durable roofing.

sash

The movable frame of a window which holds the glass.

seasoned timber

Timber which has been dried in a controlled manner to give it added strength and dimensional stability.

second fix

also called 'fixing out', 'fixing off'. See 'first fix'

skillion roof

A roof of a single plane, without a ridge and usually with only a slight slope. Typically at the rear of a house over a small extension.

skirting

Timber board fixed to the bottom of an internal wall to protect the lining and cover the gap where it meets the floor.

slab on ground

A common type of combined footing and floor where both are formed in a single concrete pour, reinforced with steel rods and laid onto prepared ground and a waterproof plastic membrane (DPM).

socket outlet

Technical term for a power point

soffit

See eaves

softwood

Timber from trees classified as 'gymnosperms' (typically pines and trees with needle-like leaves, not trees with broad leaves) and characterised by a cellular structure different from hardwoods. Softwoods are not necessarily soft, for example native cypress pine is hard and heavy. *Pinus radiata*, the common building timber, is a softwood. See also 'hardwood'.

soldier

A vertical unit amongst a bunch of horizontals. Examples: Timberwork - short vertical timbers connecting two horizontal timbers. Brickwork – a soldier course – a row of bricks side-by-side along the edge of a path or wall.

span

The horizontal distance between two points of support of a load-bearing structural member.

spouting
see 'gutter'

stormwater

water from rain which falls on buildings and surrounds and can cause damage unless controlled and directed by a stormwater system of gutters, pipes, drains, sumps etc.

sump (stormwater)

a box-shaped hole at ground level covered with a grate that allows surface water and the litter it carries to enter. A drainage pipe enters the sump some distance above its bottom, so that material which might block the pipe falls to the bottom instead, where it is retained for later removal. For draining outdoor paved areas around houses, small grates are often used, but sumps are better because they are not so easily blocked by leaves.

suspended floor

a floor which is not on the ground (or on fill), but has space beneath it. Compare with slab on ground.

stretcher

The most common pattern of laying bricks, where units are laid end-to-end and each overlaps those below by half a length.

striker

The part of a lock fixed to the frame, in the case of a door it is usually simply a slotted steel plate on the door jamb.

truss

See roof truss as an example. A truss is a structure comprising one or more triangles made from straight slender members. A truss is composed of triangles because of the structural stability of that shape. A triangle is the simplest geometric figure that will not change shape even when its sides are loosely connected. The simplest form of a truss is one single triangle. This type of truss is seen in a framed roof consisting of rafters and a ceiling joist. Trusses have the advantage of reduced weight, greater size and less material than a single solid piece of material. They are engineer-designed and can be built up of triangles into almost any shape imaginable.

weep holes

Holes purposely left in the outer masonry wall to allow escape of water if it enters the wall cavity due to a fault. Usually weep holes are made simply by leaving the mortar out of some vertical joints between bricks. Usually seen low in the wall and above or below openings. Also see 'flashing'.

zincalume

Protective coating of zinc and aluminium applied to steel to prevent rust. Similar to galvanising but with advantages including lower cost and a thinner layer.

