

Architecture Vocabulary

Arcade: a succession of **arches** supported on columns. An arcade can be free-standing covered passage or attached to a wall, as seen on the right.

Arch: the curved support of a building or doorway. The tops of the arches can be curved, semicircular, pointed, etc.

Architrave: the lowest part of the **entablature** that sits directly on the capitals (tops) of the **columns**.

Capital: the top portion of a column. In classical architecture, the architectural **order** is usually identified by design of the capital (Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian).

Classical: of or pertaining to **Classicism**. See **Classicism**.

Classicism: a preference or regard for the principles of Greek and Roman art and architecture. Common classicizing architecture is a sense of balance, proportion, and “ideal” beauty.



Column: an upright post, usually square, round, or rectangular (an example can be seen on the left). It can be used as a support or attached to a wall for decoration. In classical architecture, columns are composed of a **capital**, shaft, and a base (except in the Doric order).

Cornice: the rectangular band above the **frieze**, below the **pediment**.

Dome: a half-sphere curvature constructed on a circular base, as seen on the right.



Entablature: the upper portion of an **order**, it includes the **architrave**, **frieze** and **cornice**.

Frieze: the wide rectangular section on the **entablature**, above the **architrave** and below the **cornice**. In the Doric order, the **frieze** is often decorated with triglyphs (altering tablets of vertical grooves) and the plain, rectangular bands spaced between the triglyphs (called metopes).

Order: an ancient style of architecture. The classical orders are Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian. An order consists of a **column**, with a distinctive **capital**, supporting the **entablature** and **pediment**.

Pediment: a **classical** element that forms a triangular shape above the **entablature**. The pediment is often decorated with statues and its sides can be curved or straight.

Pronaos (pro-NAY-us): the entrance hall of a temple.

Vault: an arched ceiling usually made of wood or stone, as seen on the right.

