The purpose of this guide is to provide REALTORS® with a common frame of reference in identifying housing architecture. In compiling the guide, we used the following sources: A Field Guide to American Houses, by Virginia and Lee McAlester; Houses by Henry S. Harrison; and the Walking Tour Guide to Historic Housing published by the Madison Landmarks Commission and the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation. We would also like to thank Katherine Rankin, the city of Madison’s preservation planner, and James Draeger from the State Historical Society for their valuable suggestions. This guide, brief as it must be, only includes those housing architecture most commonly listed in our MLS system. If you are unable to identify a given house using this guide, reference to the above sources may be of help. One should also keep in mind that American housing architecture, like many things in the "great melting pot," tend to be more eclectic than purist. That is to say, a given house will often reflect a conglomeration of architectural styles. In such cases, please select all architecture options that apply. The classification "other" should be selected for houses that fall outside the parameters of any of the housing architecture shown in this guide. Finally, it should be noted that some of the architectural styles in this guide are, more accurately, housing types (e.g. raised ranch). In this guide, however, we have followed the local custom of identifying them as housing architecture.
**Ranch:**
This style originated in the mid-1930s. By the 1950s the ranch style home became a dominant housing choice. It is a one story shape generally with a low-pitched roof.

![Ranch Style Homes](image)

**Bungalow:**
A popular style at the turn-of-the-century and especially in California, bungalows most often have a dormer and are 1 – 1 1/2 stories. They frequently show strong “Prairie/Craftsman” influence.

![Bungalow Homes](image)

**Cape Cod:**
A colonial revival house. Generally, a relatively small symmetrical 1-1/2 story house with a central entrance. The roof is steep and generally side-gabled. The attic may or may not be finished living space.

![Cape Cod Homes](image)
**Bi-level:**
One of several split level type houses, a bi-level has two levels of living area. The entrance is a few stairs above the lower level and a few stairs below the upper level.

![Bi-level houses](image1.png)

**Tri-level:**
As another split level type house, the tri-level has three levels of living area. The entrance is generally on the kitchen and living room level.

![Tri-level houses](image2.png)

**Contemporary:**
Also called modernistic or international, the contemporary comes in many shapes and designs ranging from Shed to Art Deco. The Contemporary is the evolutionary outcome of Frank Lloyd Wright's housing revolution. This style reflects a desire for functionality, openness and light.

![Contemporary houses](image3.png)
Tudor:
With a steeply pitched roof, the Tudor is usually side-gabled. There is a decorative half timber frequently present along with stucco or masonry veneer exterior walls on the upper portion of the house and brick on the lower portion. In addition, the Tudor frequently has tall narrow multi-pane windows.

Colonial:
Few styles have as many variations as the Colonial house. South Central Wisconsin has practically every variation, from the Dutch to the Salt Box, in its housing stock. The Colonial is generally box-shaped with two or three stories.

Victorian:
Like the Colonial, the Victorian has innumerable variations ranging from the renowned Queen Anne to the Folk Victorian (often associated with the farm house). Generally, Victorian refers to the style of home that was popular during the long reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901). Most show elaborate detailing and complex shapes. Strong asymmetrical facades and steeply pitched roofs are also common features. Victorian styles tend to be a mix of Greek, Gothic and Italianate forms.
**Raised Ranch:**
Like the bi-levels and tri-levels, this type became popular in the 1950s as a modification of the dominant ranch house. It is essentially a ranch that is “raised” to create more living space and often includes a garage on the basement level. The entrance is usually on ground level, however, it may be on the upper main level.

**National Folk/Farm House:**
This style was predominate in the late 19th Century. Though built primarily for functionality and shelter, the Folk house does show stylistic influences from a number of other housing styles ranging from Greek Revival type front gables to the frequent Victorian detailing. In addition to the common gable-front roofs, they often have a family wing.

**Prairie/Craftsman:**
While Frank Lloyd Wright is the acknowledged master of the Prairie House, the Craftsman was inspired by the work of two California brothers. Both styles have low pitched roofs, generally gabled and unenclosed with exposed roof rafters in the Craftsman, and occasionally hipped with enclosed overhanging eaves in the Prairie.
**Manufactured:**

Although not considered an Architecture, but rather a Type, our MLS follows local custom in distinguishing between sectional-type manufactured homes assembled on site versus manufactured homes often referred to as mobile homes or trailers.

**Manufactured (Sectional)**

A manufactured home for which the sections (one or more) are built in a factory and transported to the building site for assembly. Each section is marked with a red metal label which is attached to the rear exterior siding. A steel chassis can be found under each section. This steel chassis may be exposed or may be embedded inside a truss system. Most often placed either on a crawl space or full basement. When manufactured, a data plate is affixed inside the home on or near the main electrical breaker box and is printed on paper or foil stock. This document will include the manufacturer’s name, trade/model name, year of manufacture, serial number, HUD construction code label, and HUD construction zone. Unfortunately, when dealing with resale you may find that this document has been removed.

**Manufactured (Mobile)**

A manufactured home that is often referred to as a mobile home or trailer. Completely built and assembled within a factory rather than on site. Is driven to a site on its own wheels, which may or may not be removed. Most often “parked” such that space exists between the ground and the bottom of the structure.

If there is no land being included with the sale of a Manufactured (Mobile) home, this would be considered a personal property sale. Our MLS does allow manufactured (mobile) homes with no land to be entered, but requires the following statement be included in the Broker-to-Broker remarks: *Personal property sale-No approved forms – See www.scwmls.com/pdf/mh.pdf.*
Ranch:
One floor of above grade living space with no other condo units located above or below.

Townhouse:
A row or cluster of condos with common side walls. Traditional townhouses are 2 or more stories and are usually arranged in a row pattern common in older cities. Townhouses are usually constructed as duplexes, fourplexes and sixplexes.

Garden:
A group of condos without individual private basements that resemble an apartment building and most likely have a common hall and entrance.
**Stand Alone:**
Single detached condo unit that resembles a single family home. Stand alone condos often share common ground with other units.

**Conversion:**
Condos that have been converted from apartments.
Many thanks to the 1994 and 1995 South Central Wisconsin MLS Committees, especially Tim Kruse, without whom this guide could not have been possible. An additional thank you to the 1998 MLS Committee for their addition of the Condominium section. Special thanks to appraisers Steve Tadevich and Paul Schmidt for their guidance in outlining the square footage guidelines.