

Resources to get you started!

1. If your house looks like this ...



it is probably **Greek Revival style (1825-1860)**.

Prominent features are:

1. Small entry porch, sometimes missing,
2. Gabled roof of low pitch. In our town, the long side of the house faces the street, but in many examples, the house is turned sideways with the gable facing the street supposedly resembling the front of a Greek temple.
3. The trim board under the eaves is wide and often has small, horizontal windows.
4. Fake(pilasters) or real columns surrounding the door, supporting the roof of the entry porch, and at the corners of the house.

<http://www.historichouseblog.com/2009/11/19/historic-style-spotlight-the-greek-revival/>

Much more information can be found in [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) by Virginia and Lee McAlester. Their chapter on Greek Revival has a full description and many pictures to help give you a sense of this wonderful style.

2. If your house looks like this ...



It is probably **Gothic Revival (1840-1880)** or **“Carpenter Gothic”**.

Prominent features include:

1. Steeply pitched roof with centrally-placed gable or multiple, centrally-placed gables,
2. In the V’s of the gables and extending down their sides, decorative gingerbread, “vergeboard”, trim (not shown on this house).
3. Windows are tall and thin, one or more with ached top,
4. Board and batten siding (vertical siding as opposed to usual clapboard siding).
5. 80% of Gothic Revival houses have full length porches (more gingerbread!), emphasizing the link to nature since this style was supposed to be “rural” in nature.

More information can be found in [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) by Virginia and Lee McAlester though authors don’t identify carpenter gothic as a style. Check out [Storybook Cottages](#) by Gladys Montgomery, a charming book with lots of color pictures. Also John Maass’ [The Gingerbread Age](#). Mr. Maass loves this style.

3. If your house looks like this ...



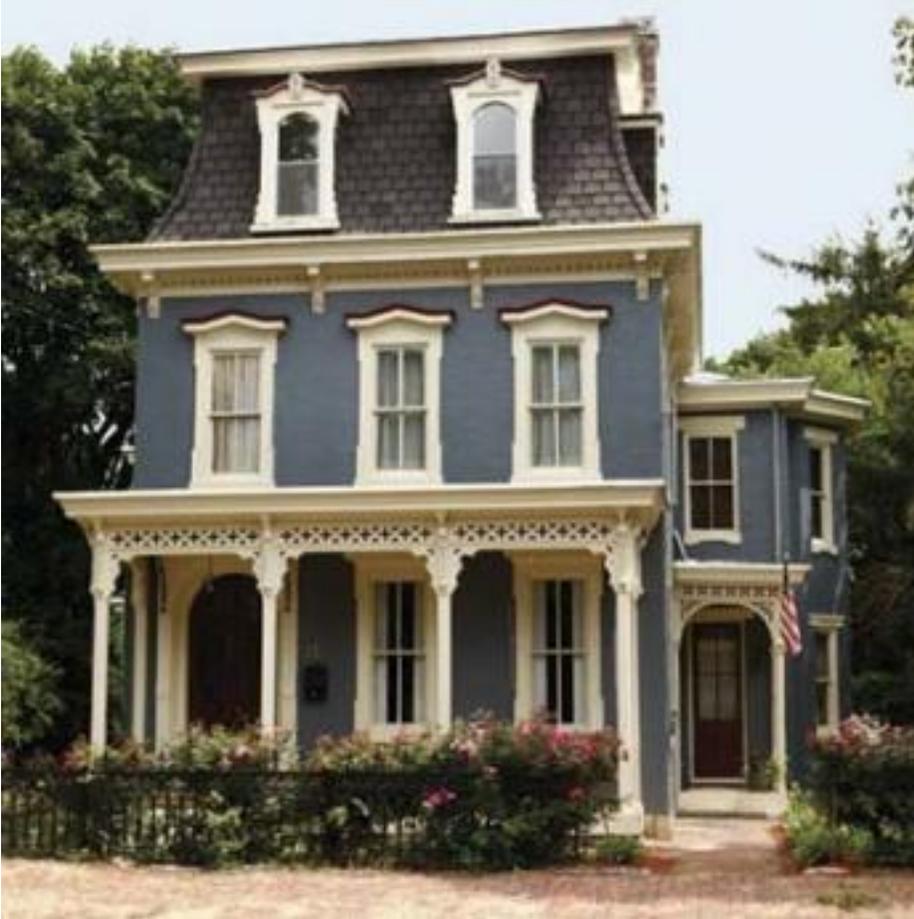
It is probably **Italianate (1840-1885)**.

Prominent features include:

1. Low-pitched hipped roof, usually the structure is square-shaped or boxy.
2. Overhanging eaves with hard-to-miss ornamental brackets
3. Tall, narrow windows have rounded tops or crowns (as opposed to pointed or arched in Gothic Revival)
4. Often a square-shaped cupola at the center of the roof. These houses are supposed to evoke Italian villas.

More information can be found in [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) by Virginia and Lee McAlester, who lavish attention on this style. [The Gingerbread Age](#) has a chapter on the Italianate too, but since it lacks gingerbread there is less for Mr. Maass to discuss.

4. If your house looks like this ...



It is probably **Second Empire (1855-1885)**.

Prominent features include:

1. Curvy, hipped roof (Mansard roof) on top of a square structure below
2. Dormers protrude from the mansard roof
3. Brackets under the eaves below the Mansard roof
4. Sometimes a tower also with a mansard roof. It is evocative of French, classical buildings.

More information can be found in [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) by Virginia and Lee McAlester and [The Gingerbread Age](#). More common in urban settings and town houses. The roof was considered functional as well as elegant.

5. If your house looks like this ...



It is probably **Queen Anne (1880-1910)**.

Prominent features include:

1. Steeply pitched, irregular roof with cross gables or irregularly spaced gables,
2. Round tower
3. Patterned shingles (several patterns on the same façade) and cutaway bay windows to avoid surface monotony,
4. Full length porch, usually enveloping two sides of the house.

More information can be found in [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) by Virginia and Lee McAlester. Anything but symmetry or regularity seems to be the hallmark of this style.

6. If your house looks like this ...



It is probably **Prairie style (1900-1920)**, made popular by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Prominent features include:

1. Low-pitched, hipped roofs with overhanging eaves,
2. Casement windows,
3. Porches and sometimes wings, all to produce a horizontal effect. No surprise that the style was most popular in the flat, horizontal landscape of the Midwest.

The most informative source as always is [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) by Virginia and Lee McAlester.

7.If your house looks like this ...



It is probably **Craftsman (1905-1930)**.

Prominent features include:

1. Low-pitched gables with beams extended beyond roof line,
2. Exposed roof rafters,
3. Porches with prominent column piers (clinker brick), column usually square-shaped.

Craftsman houses are also often called bungalows. The term is adopted from one story houses built in Bengal, India by the British in the nineteenth century, which have open interior plans, verandas, and low roofs with overhanging eaves. This design was intended to maximize comfort in the hot humid climate of the Bengal.

In addition to [A Field Guide to American Houses](#), there are lots of sources for this style, based on the ideas of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which prized intrinsic beauty of the material over what was considered the frivolous decoration of Victorian styles. Charles L. Eastlake and Gustav Stickley were the theorists of this style though neither was an architect. Their books, [Hints on Household Taste](#) by Eastlake, and [Craftsman Homes](#) by Stickley are both in our library. A general and informative book on this movement, with state by state illustrations and commentary, [Arts and Crafts Design in America](#) by James Massey and Shirley Maxwell is also on file. The book contains no photographs of houses in our village, unfortunately.