

POST-FRAME TERMINOLOGY - MORE THAN JUST WORDS



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The post-frame construction industry uses many terms to describe the fabrication and construction work being done. Some terms are recognized nationally and understood by almost everyone involved in the construction industry. Other terms are more regional or only referenced by specific trades. These terms are not so widely understood and can create confusion. For post-frame construction many of the universal terms were covered in the NFBA Post-Frame Building Design Manual published in 2015. Chapter 1 of that manual identified many of the common terms, along with drawings and pictures, used in post-frame construction.

Having been in circulation for almost 10 years, the Post-Frame Building Design Manual has been an excellent resource. However, many of the more specific and/or regional terms are not called out in that manual. Because of this, the National Frame Building Association developed the Post-Frame Architectural Term Glossary which can be found in the public domain area of the NFBA website. (www.nfba.org)

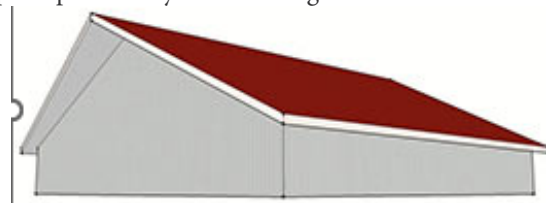
An example of this might be: The vertical member at

the center of a heavy timber truss is referenced as:

- A) Queen post
- B) King post
- C) Joker post
- D) Tie beam

The answer as defined in the Architectural Term Glossary is B) King post.

Or perhaps: Identify the following architectural feature:



This is properly identified as a Flying Gable Overhang.

It's not always about putting a definition to a term.

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Sometimes it is simply about use of the terms. Take the incorrect use of the term “girt” when really referencing a roof purlin or “plate” when describing a structural timber beam (or eave beam). Or even understanding terms such as an engineer talking about a “concrete collar” when the builder might know that element as “concrete backfill”.

The glossary contains terms commonly used, but maybe not commonly understood by both the design community and the construction crews. The glossary also identifies other names by which these terms are known. An example of this would be the bird’s beak overhang which is also known as a Widow’s Peak or Turkey Tail.

BIRD’S BEAK OVERHANG



An extension of roof overhang extending at an angle to a peak beyond the normal overhang profile.

The glossary is provided as a PDF file which allows word searching using the “Find” function.

The glossary does contain more than just architectural terms. Additional definitions include: Diaphragm Structural Framing; Frost Protected Shallow Foundation; Galvanic Corrosion; King Post; Queen Post; and Tie Beam in addition to other useful industry terms.

This glossary is a living document which will be modified and updated as additional, potentially confusing, terms are identified. The glossary will grow from questions and terms submitted from NFBA members and the general public. Terms, definitions, and explanatory photos or drawings should be submitted to info@nfba.org for consideration to be added to glossary. Just in the development of this article, terms including structural timber beam and concrete collar are prime candidates to be added.

This glossary was developed through the efforts of the NFBA Technical and Research Committee and the specific efforts of Elvin Engel ([Engel Architects & Engineers](#) – Lancaster, PA) and Caynen Klessig ([Walters Buildings](#))

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