



STYLES IN SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN

updated 2005

The purpose of this guide is to provide REALTORS® with a common frame of reference in identifying housing styles. 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 styles 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 styles, 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, one should attempt to identify the house's dominant style and classify it as such. The classification "other" should be selected for houses that fall outside the parameters of any of the housing styles shown in this guide. Finally, it should be noted that some of the 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 styles.

Provided by the South Central Wisconsin MLS



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.



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



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.



B **i-level:** One of several split level type houses, a bi-level has two levels of living area. Generally, the entrance is a few stairs above the lower level and a few stairs below the upper level.



T **ri-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.



C **ontemporary:** 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.



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 windows with multi-pane glazing.



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.



Colonial



Salt Box Colonial



Dutch Colonial

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.



Transitional: This style originated in the 1990s. The transitional is a blend of styles used in both traditional and contemporary homes. The outside is patterned after the colonial style home, while the inside reflects the functionality, openness and light of a contemporary home.



CONDOMINIUMS

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 usually arranged in a row pattern common in older cities. Townhouses are usually constructed as duplexes, fourplexes and sixplexes.



Garden: A group of condos 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.



FINISHED SQUARE FOOTAGE

It is important that REALTORS® be consistent in measuring the finished square footage of homes. Therefore, the following guidelines are provided to aid you in completing the square footage questions on the property profile sheets.

It is important that these guidelines be adhered to as the data you provide is used by other REALTORS® and Appraisers who need and expect correct and consistent information.

A FINISHED ABOVE GRADE SQUARE FOOTAGE *[See area A in attached Sketch]*

Include the finished area, which is on those levels, which are completely (100%) above grade. A level is considered to be above grade ONLY IF THE ENTIRE LEVEL IS ABOVE GRADE. (Note: For MLS purposes, grade and ground level are the same.) A walk-out basement or lower level with one or more sides partially below grade (or ground) cannot be counted as above grade finished area even if one or more walls are 100% above the ground.

- **Note: When measuring the upper level or second floor of a 1 & 1/2 story or Cape Cod type house, do not include floor area under ceilings or beyond walls, which are less than five feet in height.**
- **On upper levels of multi-level property, do not include square footage for vaulted ceiling areas.**

B FINISHED EXPOSED BELOW OR PARTIALLY BELOW GRADE SQUARE FOOTAGE *[See area B in attached Sketch]*

This pertains to bi-levels, tri-levels, multi-levels, or ranches and two-story houses with partial basement exposure. Include the area of only those finished rooms with window(s) that contain an area of, at least, 8% of the total square footage of that room. Remember, a room is below grade if any part of the level it is on is below grade (ground). Walkouts and exposed basements should be included as FINISHED EXPOSED BELOW OR PARTIALLY BELOW GRADE SQUARE FOOTAGE

- **Note: To be considered finished square footage within a lower level, the space must be heated, have finished walls, have a finished ceiling (no exposed floor joists), and have a finished floor (painted concrete does not count). If one of these four components is missing, the space can still be counted as finished, but disclosure of the missing component must be included in MLS remarks.**
- **Caution: For a room in the lower level to be a legal bedroom, in addition to the 8% window space requirement, it must comply with other local building codes.**

C FINISHED NON-EXPOSED SQUARE FOOTAGE *[See area C in attached Sketch]*

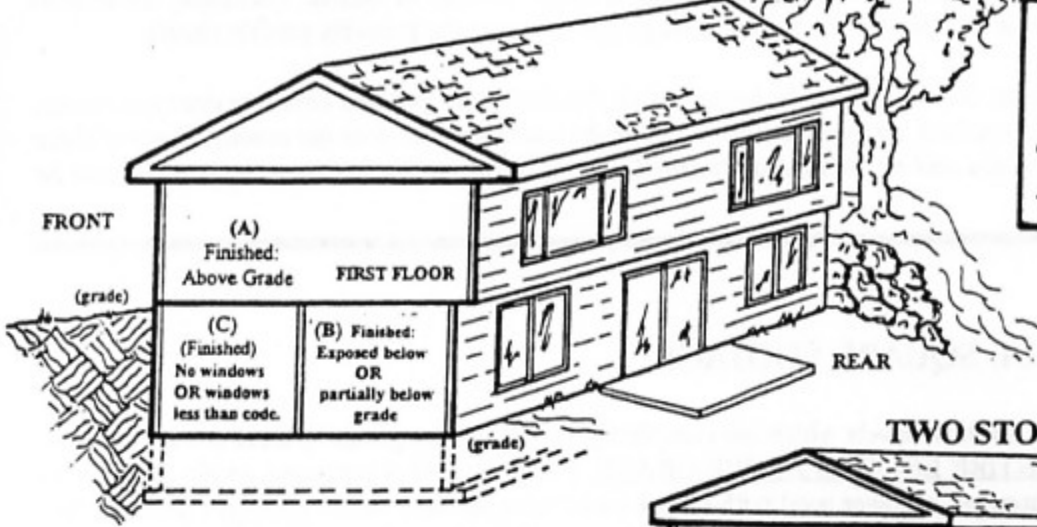
Include the area of finished rooms with no windows or windows with an area of less than 8% (Local codes may vary) of the total square footage of that room. It is possible and acceptable that some rooms (with little or no window area) which are on the same level as the rooms discussed in the previous paragraph will be included in this total. Finished rooms in traditional basements would be included as FINISHED NON-EXPOSED SQUARE FOOTAGE.

D FINISHED TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE

Finished total square footage should equal the total of the above three areas.

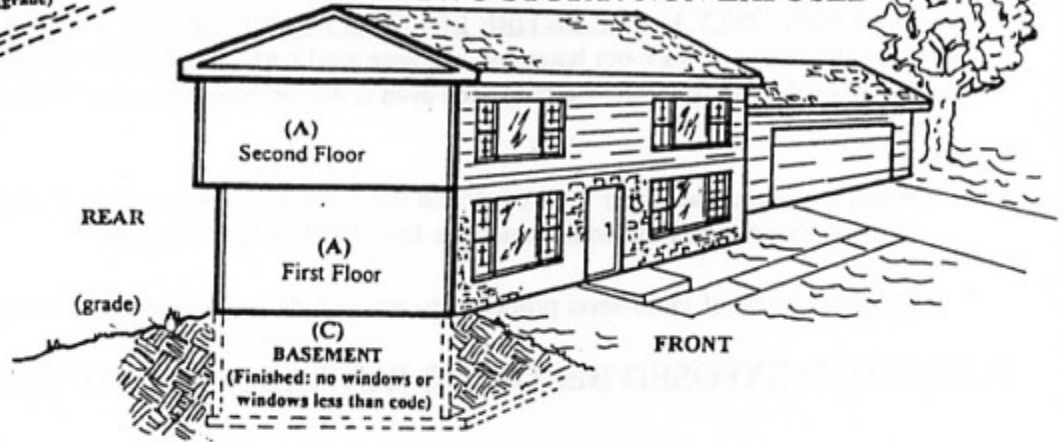
FINISHED SQUARE FOOTAGE CALCULATIONS

RANCH: WALKOUT LOWER LEVEL (exposed)

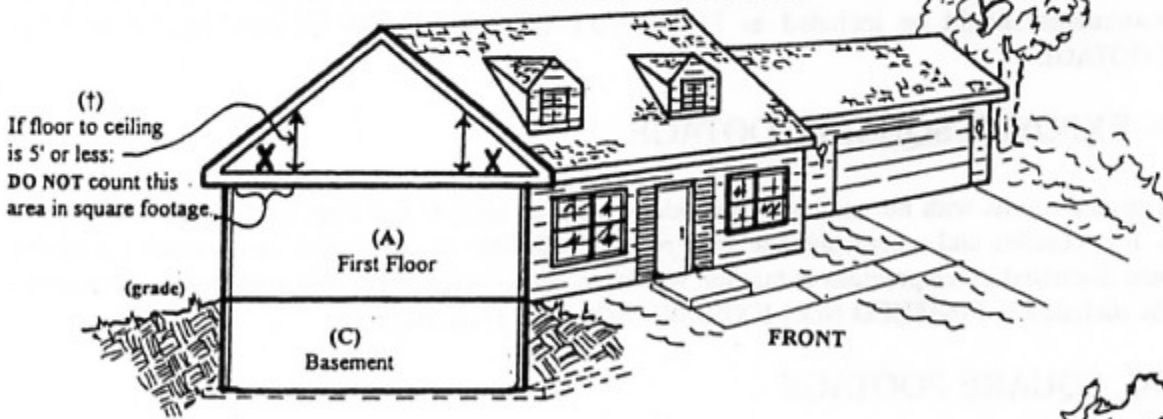


- A = FINISHED ABOVE GRADE SQUARE FOOTAGE
- B = FINISHED EXPOSED BELOW OR PARTIALLY BELOW GRADE SQUARE FOOTAGE
- C = FINISHED NON-EXPOSED SQUARE FOOTAGE
- † = FLOOR AREA NOT INCLUDED IN SQ. FOOTAGE

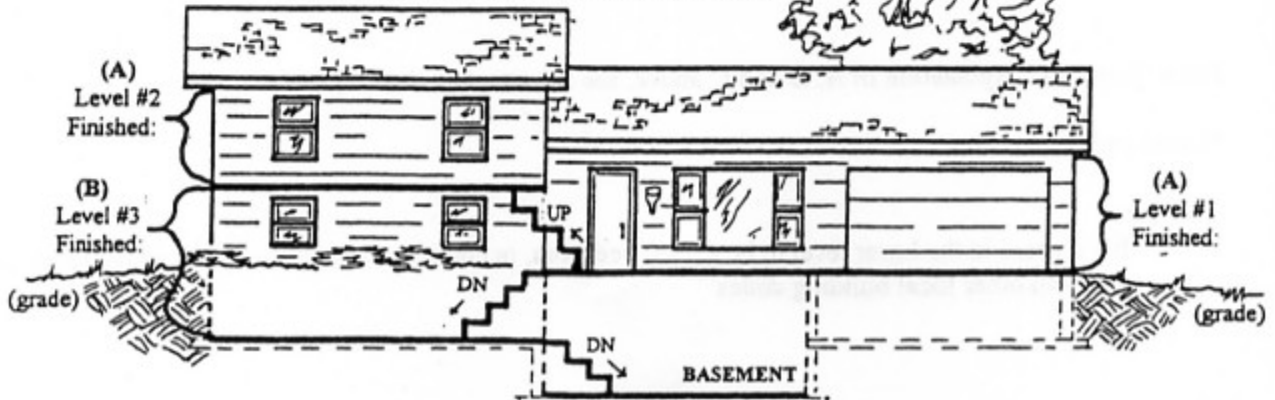
TWO STORY: NON-EXPOSED



1 1/2 STORY / CAPE COD



MULTI-LEVEL OR TRI-LEVEL

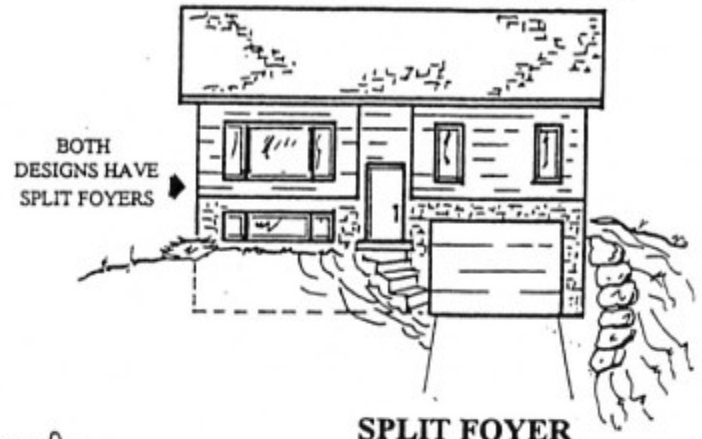


FINISHED SQUARE FOOTAGE CALCULATIONS

BI-LEVEL (GARAGE ON SIDE)

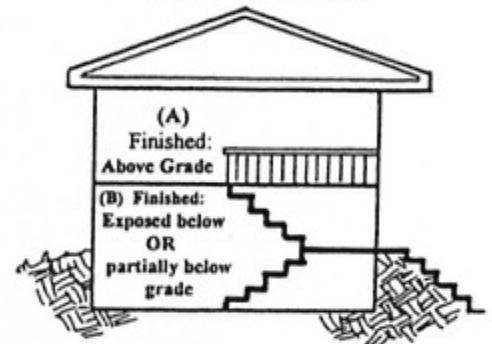


BI-LEVEL (GARAGE BELOW)

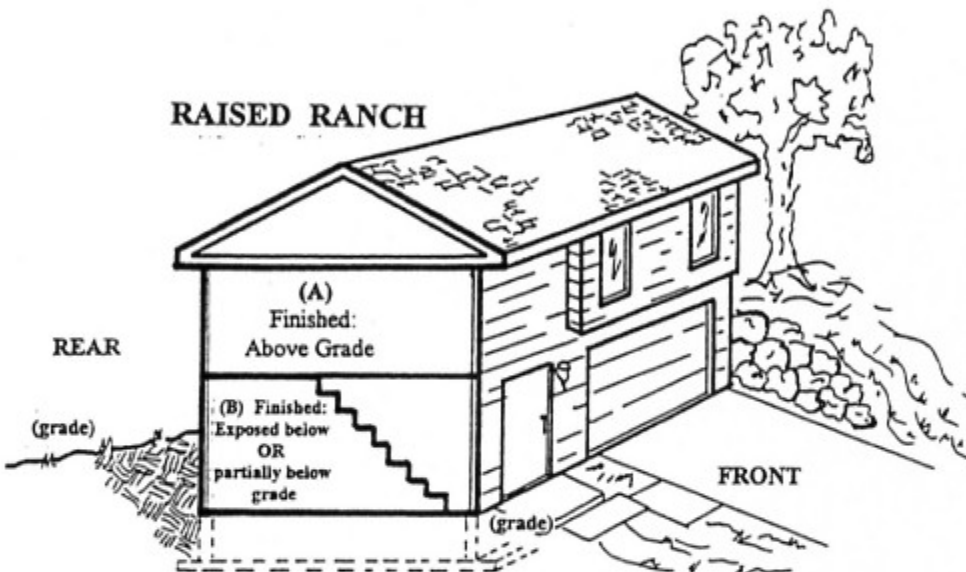


BOTH
DESIGNS HAVE
SPLIT FOYERS

SPLIT FOYER



RAISED RANCH



REAR

FRONT

A = FINISHED ABOVE GRADE SQUARE FOOTAGE

B = FINISHED EXPOSED BELOW OR PARTIALLY
BELOW GRADE SQUARE FOOTAGE

C = FINISHED NON-EXPOSED SQUARE FOOTAGE

† = FLOOR AREA NOT INCLUDED IN SQUARE FOOTAGE

HOW TO CALCULATE 8% WINDOW AREA VS FLOOR AREA:

1. Measure the GLASS size (NOT wood frame) of window. (ie) 24"x32"
2. Measure the floor area of the room in question. (ie) 130 square feet.
3. If window is measured in inches, as the example, multiply 24"x32" = 768 square inches.
4. To convert 768 square inches into feet divide by 144. 768 divided by 144 = 5.3 sq. ft.
5. Divide the window glass size by the floor area of the room and multiply by 100.
5.3 divided by 130 = .0407 X 100 = 4.07%.
6. In this example the window size does not meet the 8% code. This room would be finished non-exposed square footage.

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.