

# Caring for your Historic Home



*Preserving L.A.'s Legacy*



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**While** many outsiders view Los Angeles as an imposing metropolis, it is truly a city of great neighborhoods. Just slightly off the beaten path, in communities throughout the city, are remarkably intact historic neighborhoods. The historic architecture of Los Angeles is one of its most important resources. This guide has been designed to educate property owners, contractors, and residents on how to best maintain and repair a historic property in order to ensure that it is preserved for future generations.

Rehabilitation (or “rehab”) is making the necessary changes to allow a building to be usable again, incorporating or recycling as much of the original and existing building material as possible.

Many people believe that old houses have too many problems and are difficult to maintain. But it doesn’t have to be this way if you keep up with maintenance to avoid problems. Quality home maintenance improves property values, promotes pride in the neighborhood, and saves time and money in the long run.

This guide includes the following twelve chapters: Wood Siding, Stucco & Masonry, Paint, Windows, Doors, Roofs & Chimneys, Porches & Balconies, Fences & Gates, Landscaping & Hardscape, Architectural Styles, Incentives, and

Historic Resources. The first nine chapters explain what is historically appropriate (Do) and what is inappropriate (Don’t), and offer basic tips on simple maintenance and repairs. The remaining chapters include general information about Los Angeles’ architectural history, commonly found styles, preservation incentives, and historic rehabilitation contacts and resources.

Although this guide was developed to help property owners, contractors, and residents living in the City’s Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ), where many kinds of rehab work require City approval, it may also be used by any property owner hoping to maintain or rehab a historic building.

This guide does not address every problem that comes up in home rehabilitation projects, but focuses on some of the most common problems.

If you have any other questions or need additional information, please visit our website at <http://www.preservation.lacity.org>



**Wood Siding**, its scale, texture, and finish are important to the look and character of your building. Most wood siding in Los Angeles is either weatherboard (lap siding) or shingle, and usually made of Douglas Fir or old growth Redwood. These woods are more resistant to termites. In some buildings, vertical siding may be used. Be sure to preserve wood siding first before adding new materials or replacing it.

## Do



*The decorative detail of the wood shingles has been preserved, and highlighted by change in color.*



*Some buildings like this one have two types of siding, lap siding on the bottom and shingles on top.*

- Clean wood siding regularly.
- Paint or stain exposed wood siding to protect it.
- Repair damaged siding by “piecing in” with materials that match the original.

## Don't



*The brick veneer alters the look of this clapboard sided home.*



*The siding added to the bottom of the window does not match the original shingle siding.*

- Don't cover wood siding or details with vinyl, stucco, or other materials.
- Don't replace wood siding with siding that doesn't look the same as the original.

## Basic Tips On Wood Siding

You may not have to replace your wood siding. Try cleaning it first. Mildew and many stains can be removed with 25% bleach in water and a small amount of detergent. A fresh coat of paint can protect your house and improve how it looks. Sometimes, minor damage can be fixed with epoxy or similar filler.

### MAINTAINING SIDING

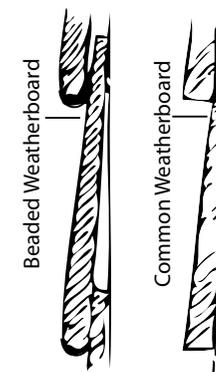
- Fix leaks around gutters, chimneys, roofs, and windows. Water leaks lead to wood damage and can attract pests like termites.
- Use caulking and paint to fill in holes, cracks, joints, and seams to seal out water and insects.
- Paint to protect wood siding. It can last a long time if cared for properly.
- Treat wood with pesticide to protect it from insects and fungus.

### REPAIRING/REPLACING SIDING

- Test for dry rot by pushing a nail into the siding by hand. If the nail goes in easily, it is dry rot. The wood will have to be replaced.
- Save wood that isn't rotten.
- Replace rotten wood siding by “piecing in” like materials.
- Check for wood siding at local lumberyards.
- Be sure that siding material is the same size, profile, detail, and finish as the original.

- Use a different type of wood only when the historic material is not available. The new material should look the same as the original.
- Use aluminum or stainless steel nails. They do not stain the siding or break as easily.

### COMMON TYPES OF WEATHERBOARD



### COMMON PROBLEMS WITH WOOD SIDING

**Drywood and subterranean termites.** Be sure to store any wood product 20 feet away from your home. Stop water from building up around the foundation. Seal all cracks and holes around the foundation. Maintain a one-inch gap between the soil and wood sections of your building.

**Dry Rot** is a fungus and is found where water doesn't drain well like window and door sills. Be sure to repair water leaks right away.

**Stucco** is plaster applied in two or three coats to brick, metal or wood lath. Because it is durable and less costly than stone, stucco became widely used beginning in the 1890s. In California, where Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival architecture became popular, stucco was one of the most commonly used building materials. Original stucco was never sprayed on, but applied by hand.

**Masonry** binds together individual units like stone, brick, or concrete block with mortar. This type of construction was less common in Los Angeles and usually saved for more important apartment and commercial buildings. A few popular styles like Tudor Revival and Craftsman were built with brick or stone. Los Angeles was also famous for using local river rock as a building material.

## Do



*The stucco of this home is subtly textured to add visual interest.*



*The stucco and brick work are key features of this Tudor Revival home.*

- Check stucco or masonry for water damage. Preventing water leaks can preserve stucco and masonry.
- Repair damaged stucco and masonry before replacing it.
- Only replace damaged stucco or masonry by patching in new materials that match the original.

## Don't



*The heavily textured stucco attracts dirt.*



*The river rock on the base of the columns should not be painted.*

- Don't cover original stucco with other building materials like wood, brick or stone veneer.
- Don't change the stucco texture and finish. Stucco was never heavily textured, but troweled by hand.
- Don't paint brick or stone that was originally unpainted.
- Don't sandblast brick or stone to remove dirt or paint.

## Basic Tips on Stucco

### MAINTAINING STUCCO/MASONRY

The best way to preserve historic stucco or masonry is to prevent water leaks. Check for leaks around the roof, chimney, windows, doors, and foundation. Water leaks cause wood framing to rot and stucco to loosen. They also causes mortar to weaken and bricks or stones to fall out. Be sure to repair water leaks and direct water runoff away from the building.

### REPAIRING STUCCO

Make sure the walls are strong and do not have structural problems. It may be best to hire a professional when you have large cracks. Bad stucco repair can cause more damage.

- Preserve as much of the historic stucco as possible.
- Don't use commercial caulk to patch cracks.
- Seal hairline cracks with a thin slurry coat (the finish coat of the stucco mixture).
- Only mix enough stucco that can be used in 1½ to 2 hours. Do not over-mix stucco mortar.
- Wet the underlying structure and lath.
- Keep wet stucco shaded or damp. If the stucco dries too fast it will crack.
- Don't overlap the new patch and the old stucco. It can lose its bond.

### REPAIRING MASONRY

Check the mortar between your brick or stones regularly. Mortar that has worn way from the brick or stone face to a depth of about ¼ inch or has many vertical cracks should probably be replaced. Removing damaged mortar and replacing it with compatible mortar is called re-pointing. You may need to hire a professional to do the work. The mortar mixture must be just right or it will damage the brick or stone. Only re-point the areas that need it. Never throw away stone or brick that isn't broken.

### CLEANING STUCCO

Mix two gallons of hot water, a squirt of dish soap, a cup of washing soda, and a cup of borax. Use a power washer with low-pressure to soak the house. A common garden hose with a pressure sprayer can work. Make sure to rinse well.

### CLEANING MASONRY

Only clean masonry when it is really dirty because cleaning can cause some damage. Use water in a low to medium pressure power washer to remove dirt without harming the brick or stone. For tougher stains ask for a non-ionic detergent at a hardware store. Add the detergent to water and use a gentle brush to clean, and then rinse.

**Exterior** paint was and still is used to protect wood siding, windows, and framing from water damage and to accent a building's architectural features. Original paint color was often a reflection of a particular period of time and architectural style. For example, most post-World War II American Colonial Revival buildings were painted white. Although many historic districts don't require the use of certain colors, your building will look better if you use colors that are compatible with its style.

**Do**



*Earth-tone colors complement this Craftsman's stained door, and limestone and brick masonry.*



*Using four paint colors and darker hues for the accent bring out the details of this Queen Anne.*

- Clean and maintain paint regularly.
- Paint in three colors for the body, trim, and window sashes and accents.
- Use quality paint because it will last longer.
- Stain unpainted wood.

**LEAD HAZARD  
REDUCTION PROGRAM**

The City's Housing Department offers money to re-paint older buildings that may contain lead paint.

**Call (213) 808-8935**

**Don't**



*High gloss, bright paint overpowers this small home.*



*The decorative details in this all-white house are not visible. Painting it in two or more colors will make the features stand out.*

- Don't use bright colors and high gloss paint for the body of the house.
- Don't paint over decorative details, plaster or unpainted brick or stone.
- Don't paint the entire building in one color.

**BUYING PAINT**

Buy the best quality paint you can afford; it covers better and lasts longer. Many paint companies, like Sherwin-Williams or Benjamin Moore, have catalogs with historic paint colors. Most paint or hardware stores can mix paint to match the colors in the catalog.

**Basic Tips on Painting**

Sometimes you do not need to re-paint. If the paint is dirty, try cleaning it first. Mildew stains may be cleaned with a common household cleaner. Remember, many buildings built before 1978 have lead paint. Removing lead paint can be dangerous and can damage woodwork. Consider hiring a professional painter.

**DOING IT YOURSELF**

**Peeling or cracking paint:**

- Read a pamphlet on lead-safe painting.
- Don't remove a lot of paint. Don't dry scrape or sand.
- Cover your entire body including hands, eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wet the paint first, and then gently hand scrape or sand.
- Remove the first layer only.
- Seal peeling and cracked paint by painting over it.

**Improving the look of your building:**

- Don't paint the entire house. Try cleaning the paint first and then just change the accent color and trim.

**HIRING A PAINTER**

A professional painter may save time and money. When a house is painted properly, the paint lasts a lot longer. Also, a professional painter should know how to safely remove lead paint. Hire a painter who is

- 1) licensed,
- 2) experienced with lead paint,
- 3) recommended by someone you trust.

**PAINT COLOR & BUILDING STYLE**

**Victorian Era (1880-1900)**

The use of paint is an important feature of a Victorian-era house. Victorians were typically painted in four or more colors with accent details that were darker or lighter versions of the trim or body color. Use at least three paint colors.

**Craftsman (1895-1925)**

Sometimes known as Arts & Crafts Bungalow, this style was meant to blend in with nature. Paint your Craftsman in neutral earth-tones, browns, red-browns, greens, and grays.

**Spanish Colonial Revival (1895-1940)**

A terra cotta tile roof and light colored stucco are important features of this style. Stucco should not be painted, but can be colored through the stucco mix. Consider staining window and doors or painting trim rust, brown or gray.

**American Colonial Revival (1880-present)**

Unlike earthy Craftsman colors, Colonial Revival buildings were typically painted in light colors like yellow, white, tan, pale blue or gray. Paint accents such as doors and shutters in dark colors to add contrast.

**Tudor Revival (1905 to 1940)**

Tudor buildings were designed with steeply pitched roofs, half-timbering, and a mix of unpainted stucco, brick, or stone. Because of the variety of materials used, Tudors should have a limited color range. Paint trim dark brown (almost black) and use lighter colors like tan or cream for the stucco body.

**Most historic windows** in Los Angeles are wood frame, true divided light windows with multiple panes of glass that are separated by wood dividers. Typically, these windows are double-hung, fixed, or casement. Both parts of a double-hung window slide up and down. Casement windows swing out or in from the wall. In some areas, metal frame casement windows or fixed divided light windows can be found. These windows can be simple one pane windows, have special shapes, or contain leaded or stained glass.

**Do**



*The trim and true-divided light double-hung windows are functional and decorative.*



*These wood casement windows have thin, delicate grids and are recessed in the openings.*

**Don't**



*The original arched opening has been filled in with an air conditioner and smaller windows.*



*The tinted projecting window is not compatible with the Spanish Colonial Revival style home.*

- Preserve historic windows including the window trim and hardware.
- Repair historic windows instead of replacing them. *It usually costs less to repair windows than to replace them.*
- Match replacement windows to the original in size, design, and material.
- Check salvage yards or building supply companies for a match. *You may have to custom make a replacement window.*

- Don't fill in or alter historic window openings.
- Don't add new windows to the building façade especially to the front.
- Don't put in a new window that looks different from the original.
- Don't put security bars on street facing windows.
- Don't place air conditioners in street facing windows.

**Basic Tips on Windows.** Unlike new windows, most historic windows can be easy to fix and maintain.

**MAINTAINING WOOD WINDOWS**

Wood windows are durable and easy to work with. Usually, wood windows stick because of dirt and excess paint. Clean your windows regularly. You can remove excess or peeling paint (see paint guidelines) and re-touch it with more paint. Always make sure your windows are painted or stained. Exposed wood is prone to water damage. Oil hinges, joints, and cranks (mechanism to open and close the window), and tighten screws on the hinges of casement windows.

**MAINTAINING AND REPAIRING LEADED, STAINED GLASS OR STEEL-FRAMED WINDOWS**

Simple cleaning can renew the look of leaded, stained, and steel-framed windows. Use water first before trying cleaners. If water doesn't work, try a non-ionic detergent. Check with your hardware store for this type of detergent. For stubborn stains, try mineral spirits or alcohol. Be sure to rinse these chemicals off with water.

Consult a professional before trying to repair leaded, stained glass or steel-framed windows. These windows are delicate and can break easily. Minor cracks and sagging are common and probably don't require repair. But

large cracks and major bulges (more than 1½ inches) may need to be fixed. While some minor repairs can be done in place, major repairs require the removal of the window.

**TYPES OF WINDOWS**



*Casement*



*Leaded Glass*



*True Divided Light*

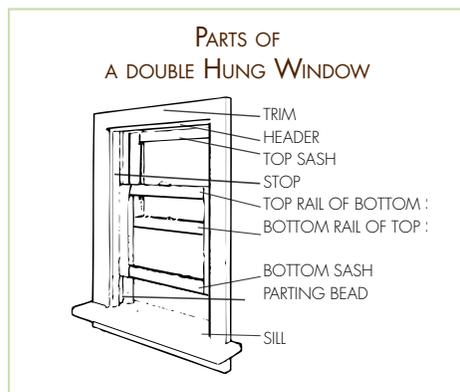


*Fanlight*

**ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

Many people replace their historic windows because they think they aren't energy efficient. Yet most air or heat escapes through the walls and roof. Adding insulation between walls and in the attic can save on energy costs. Weather stripping can be added or storm windows can be installed. Throwing out historic windows that will probably end up in a landfill is worse for the environment.

## REPAIRING WOOD WINDOWS

**Fixing Broken Glass**

Broken glass is one of the most common window problems. With a little patience, you could repair it yourself. Window glass is held in place by the sash (see diagram) push points (small metal fasteners spaced 6 to 8 inches apart), and putty.

**Step 1:** Remove the window from the opening. For a double hung window, remove the window stops from the bottom sash, and the parting bead from the top sash.

**Step 2:** Carefully loosen the putty against the wood with a paint scraper or putty knife. Remove the old putty.

**Step 3:** Wiggle the push points and remove them.

**Step 4:** Carefully remove the broken glass.

**Step 5:** Use sandpaper to remove any putty or paint residue. Paint exposed wood with a primer.

**Step 6:** After the primer is dry, add a thin line of putty about 1/8 inch into the groove between the sashes.

**Step 7:** Install the glass and press it firmly into the putty. Insert the push points starting a couple of inches from each corner, and add push points every 6 to 8 inches.

**Step 8:** Add finishing putty by drawing a straight line with a putty knife. Remove excess putty.

**Step 9:** Once the putty is dry, seal the seams between the glass and putty with paint.

**Fixing the Sash Cord of a Double-Hung Window**

The reason your double hung window may not open or shut properly is because the sash cord is broken. It takes more time than fixing broken glass, but you could repair it yourself.

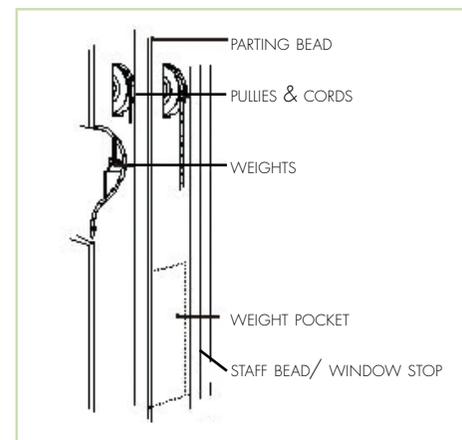
**Step 1:** Use a putty or utility knife to remove the window stop. Work from the bottom to the top.

**Step 2:** Remove the bottom sash from the frame.

**Step 3:** Look toward the bottom of the frame for a wood or metal panel called a pocket. Remove the panel to see the sash cord weights.

**Step 4:** If the top sash cord is broken, you must also remove the parting bead and take out the window. If the top sash cord is not broken, raise the window and prop it with a stick.

**Step 5:** Tie twine to a fishing weight and insert it on top of the pulley and into the window frame until the weight is visible in the pocket.



**Step 6:** Tie the end of the twine to the new sash cord and then pull the fishing weight until you can see the sash cord in the pocket.

**Step 7:** Tie the new sash cord around the weight. Pull the new sash cord until the weight is inside the frame and can't move any further.

**Step 8:** Place the window on the sill and cut the cord three inches beyond the hole in the sash. Tie a knot around the hole. (Repeat these steps as needed to repair both the bottom and top sash.)

**Step 9:** Put the window sashes back in place and check if the window moves up and down properly.

**Step 10:** Replace panels on pockets and all moldings around the window.

**WHAT IS TITLE 24?**

Title 24 requires that new windows meet certain energy efficiency standards. Although Title 24 does not require dual glazed windows, it is difficult to meet the standards without them. Buildings that are Historic - Cultural Monuments or located in a historic district may be able to use the California Historical Building Code to avoid Title 24. However, the best way to get out of Title 24 is to preserve your original windows.

**SECURITY BARS**

Before adding security bars, consider other ways to improve safety like installing a burglar alarm. If you decide to add security bars, place them on the sides or rear. This is the most likely location of a "break in." Fit the security bars to the shape of your windows and match the muntins and mullions (the grid pattern) on the windows. Paint the security bars in a dark color or match the color of the window trim.



The Front Door is one of a building's most important architectural features, typically highlighted by its central location and decorative surrounds, sidelights, or fanlights. Because it is difficult to find "off the shelf" doors that match historic doors, replacements must often be custom built. Maintaining historic doors makes good economic sense. Most problems, like draftiness and sticking, are easy to repair by applying weather stripping or sanding down the bottom of a door.

**Do**



*This wide door with square panes of glass & sidelights is typical of Craftsman architecture.*



*The narrow door with a transom window above is common in Victorian architecture.*

**Don't**



*This door opening has been altered to install double doors.*



*The central door opening has been filled-in & a new door has been placed off-center.*

- Preserve your existing historic door opening and original door.
- Match the new door to the original door and the style of your building.
- Keep the original hardware, including hinges, doorknockers, latches and locks.
- Match the new hardware to the original if you have to replace them.
- Don't fill in or alter the size of a historic door opening.
- Don't replace a historic door with an "off the shelf" door, especially in a different style.
- Don't install a metal security door that blocks your door from view.

**Basic Tips on Doors**

**MAINTAINING DOORS**

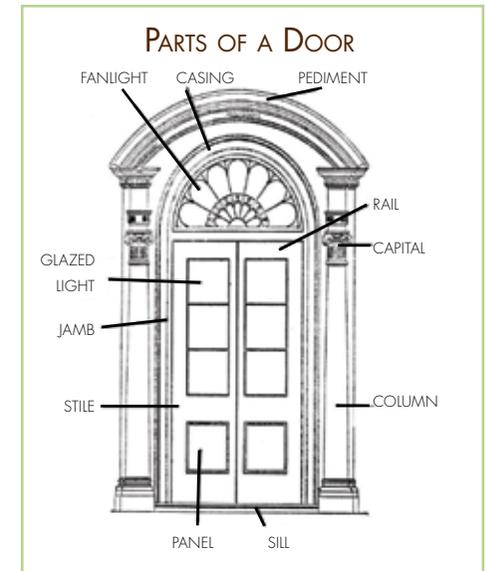
- Paint buildup will prevent doors from shutting. Remove extra paint with a heat gun, a scraper, or chemical remover. Be careful not to scratch wood surfaces.
- Loose screws can also cause a door to stick. Open the door part way, and then shake the door toward and away from the hinges to see if you have loose hinges. If the hinges move, they are loose. Tighten the screws against the hinges. Sometimes, the hinges are worn out or bent and should be replaced.

**REPAIRING DOORS**

- Open joints can widen your door so it won't shut. Doors are made of stiles (the vertical boards), rails (horizontal boards), and panels. Tenons are projecting pieces of wood that connect the rails and stiles. The tenons stay in place with glue. When the glue wears out, the tenons move. This causes a gap between stiles and rails. You can try to add wood glue to fix, but it may be best to hire a carpenter.
- Cutting your door should be a last resort. Trim your door from the bottom. Special equipment like a circular saw may be needed. Use fine sandpaper to clean up the cut edge of the door. Then, apply clear finish to the edge so water isn't absorbed.

**REPLACING DOORS**

It is always better to repair your door, rather than replace it. If you must replace your door, choose a door that matches the original in size, detail, and style. Painted wood doors should complement existing exterior paint color. Use high quality paint and primer so your door won't chip. Many doors were originally stained. This is true in many Craftsman residences. It is best not to paint a door that was originally stained.



**COMMON PROBLEMS WITH DOORS**

- Paint Buildup
- Open Joints
- Loose Screws
- Water Damage or Humidity
- Termites

**Roof form & material** are often identified with a particular architectural style. A clay tile roof is a key feature of a Spanish Colonial Revival style residence. A long, low gable is common in a Craftsman residence. A change in roof form can break up massing or highlight a building's style. Historic roof details may include dormers, vents, eaves, gutters, and downspouts.

Many chimneys in Los Angeles have been lost over the years, mainly due to earthquake damage. Although early chimneys were more about function, chimneys in popular styles like Tudor and English Revival were an important decorative feature. Whenever possible preserve your original chimney. If your chimney has to be re-built, be sure to match its original form and detail as closely as possible.

## Do



*The large gable roof with rafters and fascia detail distinguishes this home as a Craftsman.*



*The varying roof forms, including a turret (round tower), set this home apart.*

- Preserve the original roof form and roof details like eaves and gutters.
- Use roof replacement materials that match the original.
- Preserve the chimney first. If it must be re-built, match the original as closely as possible.

## Don't



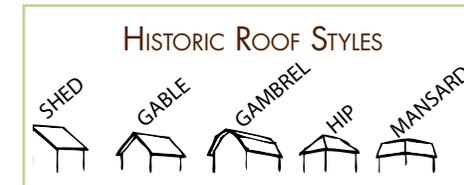
*Part of the original clay tile roof has been changed to asphalt shingle.*



*The altered chimney detracts from this charming Craftsman home.*

- Don't change the original roof form.
- Don't add or remove roof dormers to visible areas of the roof.
- Don't locate satellite dishes, antennas and skylights where they are visible from the street.
- Don't change the original roof material. For example, don't change from asphalt shingle to clay tile.

## Basic Tips on Roofing & Chimneys



### MAINTAINING THE ROOF

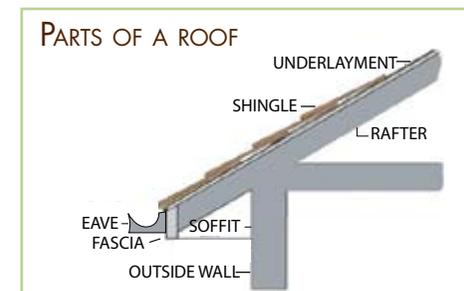
Check the roof at least twice a year. Gutters and downspouts need to be cleaned regularly so water doesn't back up and damage the roof. Remember to check the flashing for wear and tear.

### PREPARING TO RE-ROOF

Before starting work on the roof, take pictures of the area where work will be done. If anything must be removed to do the work, like gutters or fascia, the photos will help to put them back.

### CHOOSING ROOFING MATERIALS

Use high quality materials. They may cost more to install, but will cost less over time. The most commonly used roofing materials in Los Angeles are asphalt, composite shingle, and clay tile.



### THE CHIMNEY

Water can cause damage to stucco or the mortar between the chimney's bricks. To prevent this, repair water leaks, especially around the chimney flashing. Historic chimneys damaged in an earthquake can be braced. If the chimney has to be rebuilt, take a photo to show how it looked originally. Save the brick or stone on a masonry chimney. The original brick can be installed as a veneer. City regulations require that a spark arrestor be installed. Use a low profile spark arrestor with a powder black finish.

### HIRING A CONTRACTOR

It is important to contact a professional, licensed contractor who is familiar with historic roofs and chimneys. The contractor should check the condition of the roof to see if it can be repaired. Ask if historic materials such as clay tile can be reused. Get quotes from at least three people before hiring someone to do the work.

**Historic porch & balcony** design, scale, and detail vary with the architecture of its building. Victorian porches usually had a lot of decorative detail and a delicate and airy appearance. Craftsman porches were often less detailed, extending the entire length of the building and supported by large columns. In contrast, other styles such as Spanish Colonial and English Revival may not have a porch, but rather an overhang over the front door. Many Mediterranean or Monterey Revival buildings also did not have porches. Instead, front facade balconies or balconettes (decorative balconies that are too small to be used) were one of the main featured elements.

## Do



*This late Victorian/Queen Anne porch has interesting and intricate detail.*



*The balcony is unique to Monterey Revival homes.*

- Repair porches and balconies by reinforcing historic materials first.
- Replace damaged porch & balcony elements with new elements that match the original design and material.
- Match the size, scale, and style of the house when adding a missing porch or balcony.

## Don't



*The original Craftsman porch was inappropriately filled in.*



*The second story balcony was altered and filled with materials that are not compatible.*

- Don't fill in your porch or balcony with solid walls, especially in the front. *It may be appropriate to enclose a balcony or porch with windows that can be easily removed if the original details are preserved.*
- Don't remove decorative details of the porch or balcony including columns, railings, and brackets.

## Basic Tips on Porches & Balconies

### MAINTAINING AND REPAIRING PORCHES & BALCONIES

Porches & balconies should be maintained. Protect masonry, wood and metal porch or balcony elements by cleaning, removing dirt, rust and paint, and repainting as needed. When cleaning the porch or balcony, keep an eye out for termites, dry rot, or other porch or balcony damage. If you find porch or balcony decay, repair what you can. Only replace those parts if it is absolutely necessary. Replacement parts should match the original porch or balcony materials.

### REPLACING A MISSING PORCH OR BALCONY

If you think your building had a porch or balcony and you want to replace it:

- Look for old photos of your building.
- Look at other buildings in your neighborhood that are similar in style and size to your building. Use the porch or balcony of a similar building as an example of how your porch or balcony should look.
- Carefully remove paint where your porch or balcony used to be. Sometimes you can find the outline of where the porch or balcony was attached to the house. You can use that outline as a guide for the new porch or balcony.
- Use materials that were commonly used at the time the house was built.

## PORCH STYLES



*Craftsman*



*Victorian*



*Colonial Revival*

## PORCH BENEFITS

Porches were often designed to save energy, shading the south and west sides of the house. Keeping the porch may reduce energy bills. Porches also provide shelter and outdoor living space.

**Fences & Gates** were not usually placed in the front yard. If historic front yard fencing existed, it was used to define the perimeter of the yard and not for security. In Los Angeles neighborhoods with sloping yards, concrete or river rock retaining walls were often constructed. Today, most fences and gates are added to secure a property. Because adding a fence can damage the historic character of your property, other security options should be considered first.

**Do**



*The picket fence is appropriate for this late Victorian/ Queen Anne home.*



*With a plain simple fence, your building stands out, not the fence.*

**Don't**



*The stone and wrought iron fence is too decorative and modern for this Craftsman home.*



*This solid fence with a tall hedge blocks the view of the historic home behind it.*

- Try landscaping instead of a fence.
- Keep historic fences, paths, and stairs.
- Match the style of your fence with your building.
- Select new fences that are simple and made of see-through wrought iron.
- Paint wrought iron fencing dark green, dark brown or black.
- Don't add a fence in front of your building if you have never had one.
- Don't replace a historic fence with something that looks different.
- Don't build a fence that doesn't match your building.

**Basic Tips on Fencing**

Front yard fences are not appropriate for lots that were originally open. Use hedges, shrubs, and trees for more attractive screening. Instead of fencing the entire yard for privacy, screen a sitting or patio area. If a fence is added to the front yard, make sure it is see-through and does not block the view of the building.

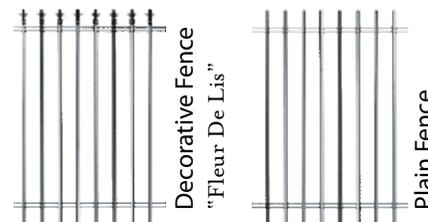
Some fence types should not be built in the front yard. These include natural wood basket weave, open concrete block walls, chain link, and split rail fences. Iron fences with brick or stone may not look good on small lots, but can be considered for larger lots.

**FENCE STYLES**

**Picket** – Wood picket fences were used with Colonial, Victorian or Craftsman styles.

**Wrought Iron** – Simple, dark colored wrought iron fences were used with Revival Period styles, Craftsman, and sometimes Victorian styles.

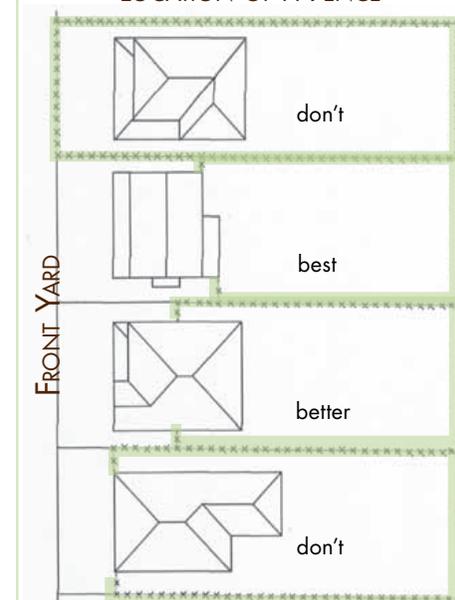
**TYPES OF WROUGHT IRON FENCES**



**ZONING CODE REQUIREMENTS**

Front yard fences must be less than 42 inches in height. If the fence is over this height, you will need to apply for a Fence Height Variance from the Department of City Planning in addition to any HPOZ review. For questions about fence height and the zoning code contact the Department of Building and Safety at (888) 524-2845.

**LOCATION OF A FENCE**



**PROBLEMS WITH FENCES**

Many people build fences for security. A fence can make you feel boxed in and make your yard feel small. Fences can cost a lot to build and maintain. A tall fence can cut out light and breezes to your house. If you feel you need a fence for safety reasons, consider securing the rear and side yards first.

**Hardscape** is the nonliving part of landscape, like concrete, brick or stone. The plants, trees, and grass make up the soft landscape. In Los Angeles the front yard typically had a lawn and a walkway that led from the sidewalk to the front door. The driveway ran alongside the residences to a rear detached garage. Maintaining landscape and hardscape is important to the historic character of buildings and neighborhoods.

## Do



*The built-in stairs at the corner provides a clear path to the door without visually competing with the home.*



*The generous setback and landscaping enhance the architectural quality of the home.*

## Don't



*The paving stone highlights the parked car instead of the home.*



*The concrete front yard with a tall fence gives this historic property a hard, unwelcoming look.*

- Retain mature trees and hedges or replace them with similar plants.
- Preserve the natural grade of the property.
- If your property has a front lawn, keep it or replace it with other landscaping like drought tolerant plants.
- Replace damaged historic pathways, walkways, or stairs with something that looks the same.

- Don't pave over your front yard.
- Don't widen existing walkways and driveways.
- Don't use colored materials for walkways and driveways. Use neutral concrete instead.

## Basic Tips on Landscape & Hardscape

### REDUCING PAVING

The City does not allow parking in the front yard. Remember, when you pave over your yard, you increase water runoff. This can lead to drainage problems and flooding. It also can add to storm water runoff and pollute water sources and the ocean. If you want to create parking in the rear, consider absorbent materials like gravel. Another option is grasscrete. Grasscrete can be driven on, but looks like a lawn. A "Hollywood" driveway can also reduce driveway paving and improve drainage.



*"Hollywood" Driveway*

### IMPROVING ACCESS

You can improve access to your property for the elderly or disabled. First, try to fix uneven pavement and add simple railings to stairs. Instead of paving over the entire front yard, add a walkway from the driveway to the front door. Temporary ramps can also be added. Temporary ramps cost less and are easy to remove when they are no longer needed.

### REDUCING YARD MAINTENANCE

Create a native plant garden to conserve water and reduce yard maintenance. Many garden supply stores sell California native plants. Be sure to select plants according to the soil, amount of sun, and how often you can water them. Sort the plants by size. Put the shorter plants in front and the taller plants in back. Common native plant groups include: Sages, Honeysuckles, Manzanitas, Lilacs, Ceanothus, Gooseberries, Currants, Oaks, and Buckwheats.



### PROBLEMS WITH PAVING OVER A FRONT YARD

Many people pave over the yard to reduce yard work or increase parking. This may cause drainage problems and flooding. Planting trees and natural vegetation reduces flooding. Trees also provide shade for your property. This can help reduce your energy bill. For information on free shade trees, contact DWP at (213) 367-0668.

**VICTORIAN ERA  
(1860 - 1910)**

Victorian architecture was introduced to Los Angeles by pattern books and experienced builders from the eastern United States. Popular styles included Italianate, Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, and Eastlake/Stick. Some surviving examples of Victorian homes can be found in Angelino Heights, University Park, Lincoln Heights, and Highland Park.



*Queen Anne*



*Folk Victorian*

**TURN OF THE CENTURY  
(1890 - 1920)**

Many Turn of the Century styles were built in Los Angeles' first streetcar suburbs. Popular styles included Shingle, early Colonial and Neoclassical Revival, Transitional Arts and Crafts, early Craftsman and Craftsman/Ultimate Bungalow, Foursquare, Mission and early Spanish Colonial Revival, Prairie, and Beaux Arts.



*Early Craftsman Bungalow*



*Mission Revival*



*Craftsman*

**PERIOD REVIVAL  
(1920-1940)**

Los Angeles is home to the largest collection of Period Styles in the country largely due to the building boom of this period. Popular styles included Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, French Eclectic, English and Tudor Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Neoclassical Revival, and Monterey. The Craftsman and Craftsman Bungalow styles continued to evolve through this period.



*Spanish Colonial Revival*



*English Revival*



*Colonial Revival*

**EARLY MODERN  
(1920-1945)**

The period between the World Wars produced architectural styles based on an aggressively modern aesthetic, with clean lines and geometric patterns. Popular styles included Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, Modern, and Minimal Traditional styles



*Art Deco*

**POST-WORLD WAR II  
(1945 - 1965)**

Development in this period simplified the architectural vocabulary of the pre-war years into styles more suitable for mass development. Popular post war styles included Minimal Traditional, Ranch, Post and Beam, and Contemporary commonly found in subdivision tracts in Westchester, West Los Angeles, and the San Fernando Valley.



*Contemporary*

TAX RELIEF

The Mills Act (also known as Historical Property Contracts) helps owners of qualified historic buildings offset costs for restoring, repairing, or maintaining their properties by providing property tax relief.

Los Angeles Department of City Planning,  
Office of Historic Resources  
Website: [www.preservation.lacity.org](http://www.preservation.lacity.org)  
Phone: (213) 978-1200

A Conservation Easement is a one-time income tax deduction for owners of historic properties on the National Register of Historic Places or in a National Register Historic District. The easement is usually entered into by a qualified nonprofit historic preservation organization such as the Los Angeles Conservancy and property owner. The easement remains on the property even if the owner changes.

Los Angeles Conservancy  
Website: [www.laconservancy.org](http://www.laconservancy.org)  
Phone: (213) 623-2489

The Federal Historic Tax Incentive Program provides a credit equal to 20% of substantial rehab costs on a certified historic structure listed in the National Registry of Historic Places. The 10% rehabilitation tax credit provides a credit equal to 10% of substantial rehab costs of a nonresidential, non-historic building that was constructed before 1936.

California State Office of Historic Preservation  
Website: [www.ohp.parks.ca.gov](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov)  
Phone: (916) 653-6624

REGULATORY RELIEF

The California Historical Building Code (CHBC) allows owners of a qualified historic property to use alternate construction materials or standards than would be required under the California Building Code.

Los Angeles Department of City Planning,  
Office of Historic Resources  
Website: [www.preservation.lacity.org](http://www.preservation.lacity.org)  
Phone: (213) 978-1200

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
LOANS AND GRANTS

Listed below are the programs available to low and moderate income property owners in a Los Angeles Redevelopment Project Area. There are 32 identified redevelopment project areas in the city.

Home Improvement Loans offer homeowners a grant of up to \$7,500 for small exterior improvements such as landscaping or fencing.

The Residential Facade Grant Program is developed specifically for property owners within the Pico Union 1 & 2 Redevelopment Project Areas and provides qualified residential property owners of 1 - 4 units with grants up to \$25,000 for exterior projects such as painting and window repair.

The Combined Purchase and Rehabilitation Loan Program assists home buyers with buying and rehabilitating some of the area's older and run down housing.

The Move On Program helps new homeowners relocate and restore architecturally significant homes that are in danger of being torn down.

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)  
Website: [www.crala.net](http://www.crala.net)  
Phone: (213) 977-1600

HOUSING DEPARTMENT LOANS AND  
GRANTS

Housing programs available citywide in order to "promote, develop, and preserve decent affordable housing."

The Comprehensive Single Family Rehabilitation Program provides 3%, no-payment (deferred) loans for low-income, owner-occupied, single-family homeowners who want to rehabilitate their homes. There is a grant of up to \$10,000 available for lead paint hazard removal and/or exterior improvements.

The Small Rental Rehabilitation Program provides 3% loans to owners of primarily low-income occupied rental properties up to 28 units to correct Systematic Code Enforcement Program (SCEP) citations and make other building improvements. Grants of up to \$5,000 per unit for lead paint hazard removal and/or visible exterior improvements are also available.

The Mom & Pop Program provides 3%, no-payment (deferred) loans for low-income, owner-occupied small rental buildings (2-4 units). A grant of up to \$10,000 per unit is also available for lead paint hazard removal and/or exterior improvements.

The Handyworker Program provides free minor repairs to low income senior homeowners or physically disabled homeowners.

The Lead Hazard Reduction Program provides lead hazard grants for owners of rental properties built before 1978. To qualify, a child under age 6 must live in or "substantially use" the property. Call (213) 808-8935 for more information.

Los Angeles Housing Department  
Website: [www.lacity.org/lahd](http://www.lacity.org/lahd)  
Phone: (866) 557-RENT or (866) 557-7368

*The City of Los Angeles makes no claims or endorsements of businesses offering any products or services listed below. The directory is not comprehensive and there may be other businesses just as qualified. Be sure to ask for and verify references, appropriate licenses, and insurance coverage.*

## CITY CONTACTS

### Department of City Planning

(213) 978-1200

[www.preservation.lacity.org](http://www.preservation.lacity.org)

### Community Redevelopment Agency

(213) 977-1600

[www.crala.org](http://www.crala.org)

### Department of Building & Safety

Single-Family Code Violations

(888) 524-2845

[www.ladbs.org](http://www.ladbs.org)

### Housing Department

#### Multi-Family Code Violations

(866) 557-7368

[www.cityofla.org/LAHD/](http://www.cityofla.org/LAHD/)

## FOR LISTS OF CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS

### Los Angeles Conservancy

[www.laconservancy.org](http://www.laconservancy.org)

(Under “Preservation Resources” link)

### West Adams Heritage Association

[www.westadamsheritage.com/resources.html](http://www.westadamsheritage.com/resources.html)

### Historic Echo Park

[www.historicechopark.org](http://www.historicechopark.org)

### American Bungalow

[www.ambungalow.com](http://www.ambungalow.com)

(Under “Useful Resources” link)

### Restoration Trades

[www.restorationtrades.com/artisans/zip9.shtml](http://www.restorationtrades.com/artisans/zip9.shtml)

### Salvage Yards

#### Pasadena Architectural Salvage

(626) 535-9655

[www.pasadenaarchitecturalsalvage.com](http://www.pasadenaarchitecturalsalvage.com)

#### Santa Fe Wrecking

(213) 623-3119

[www.santafewrecking.com](http://www.santafewrecking.com)

#### Silver Lake Salvage

(323) 667-2875

### New Products

#### Stock Window and Door

(818) 881-8738

[www.stockbuildingsupply.com](http://www.stockbuildingsupply.com)

### Taylor Brothers

#### Architectural Products

(323) 805-0200

[www.taybros.com](http://www.taybros.com)

### Landscaping

#### California Native Plants Society

(916) 447-2677

[www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)

### El Nativo Growers, Inc

(626) 969-8449

[www.elnativogrowers.com](http://www.elnativogrowers.com)

### Theodore Payne Foundation

(818) 768-1802

[www.theodorepayne.com](http://www.theodorepayne.com)

## FOR LISTS OF RESTORATION

## CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS

### Pest Control

#### National Pest Management Assn.

[www.pestworld.com](http://www.pestworld.com)

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & HISTORIC

## INFORMATION

### Preservation Directory

[www.Preservationdirectory.com](http://www.Preservationdirectory.com)

### California Preservation Foundation

[www.californiapreservation.org](http://www.californiapreservation.org)

### Historic Charleston Foundation

(843) 723-1623

[www.historiccharleston.org/preservation/tech.html](http://www.historiccharleston.org/preservation/tech.html)

### United States,

#### Department of The Interior

Secretary of The Interior Standards for Rehabilitation [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/tax/rhb/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/tax/rhb/) (under “Illustrated Guidelines”).

### Preservation Briefs

[www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/briefs/presbhom.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/briefs/presbhom.htm)

### This Old House

[www.thisoldhouse.com](http://www.thisoldhouse.com)

### Old House Web

[www.oldhouseweb.com](http://www.oldhouseweb.com)

### City of Riverside

[www.riversideca.gov/historic/pdf/rrrentire.pdf](http://www.riversideca.gov/historic/pdf/rrrentire.pdf)

### PreserveLA.Com

[www.PreserveLA.com](http://www.PreserveLA.com)

### The National Trust for Historic Preservation

[www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org)

### Detroit Historic District Commission Style and Color Guide Key

[www.ci.detroit.mi.us/historic/colorguide/color.htm](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/historic/colorguide/color.htm)

## FOR A LIST OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION INCENTIVES

### Getty Conservation Institute

[www.getty.edu/conservation/publications/pdf\\_publications/historic-homes.pdf](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications/pdf_publications/historic-homes.pdf)

### Los Angeles Conservancy

[www.laconservancy.org](http://www.laconservancy.org)

(Under “Preservation Resources”, Incentives for Preserving Historic Buildings link)

## HOME INSPECTIONS FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES

### American Society of Home Inspectors

(800) 743-ASHI

[www.ashi.org/find/](http://www.ashi.org/find/)

select “Historic Homes” under “By Additional Services Offered”

### California Real Estate Inspection Association (CREIA)

(800) 848-7342

<http://creia.findlocation.com>

Scroll down the page to “Inspector Services Directory,” and check “Historic Home Inspections” under “Specialty Condition Assessments.”

