

A Contrast in Style

Prairie and Victorian Architecture

Frank Lloyd Wright Trust



Wright's Prairie Style

At the turn of the last century, many of today's everyday features were strange curiosities. The country was becoming urbanized, industrialized, motorized, and electrified. Frank Lloyd Wright, designing in his studio in Oak Park, Illinois, was making revolutionary changes in American architecture.

He rebelled against the elaborate exuberance of the Victorian style, with its historic ties to Europe. He set about to create a new, truly American style. He designed buildings that reflected their Midwestern landscape and called them Prairie style houses. They were homes that used humble materials in a natural way—homes with strong horizontal lines; bands of art glass windows; wide, protective eaves; and welcoming, centrally-located fireplaces.

By opening up narrow doorways, space literally flowed from room to room without interruption. Wright's open floor plan broke the "boxes" of the Victorian style. His interiors featured innovative built-in furniture and indirect lighting, and he designed carpets, lamps and other decorative elements that enhanced his architectural designs.



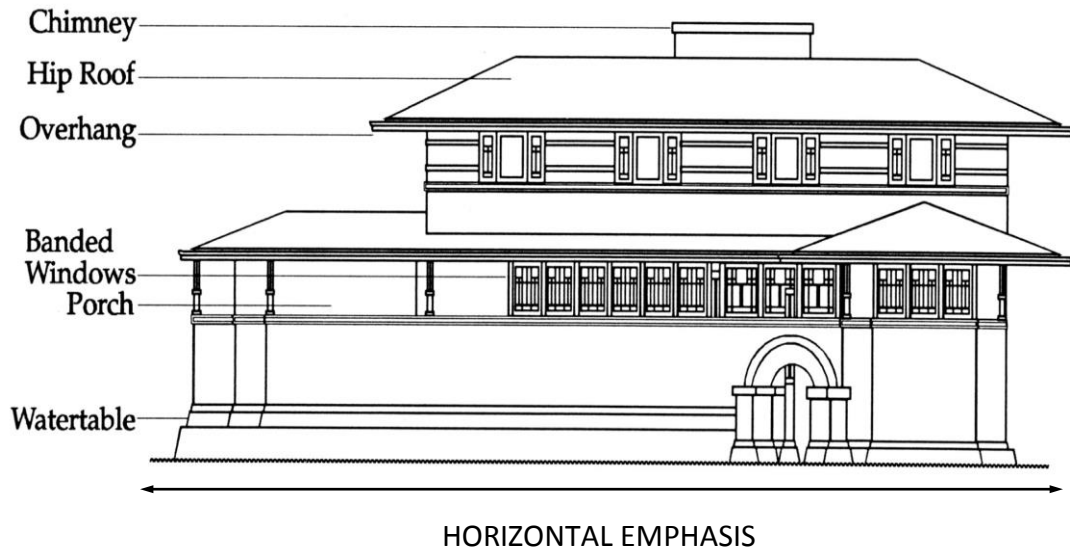
This is the logo Frank Lloyd Wright designed for his own architectural studio.

Victorian 1880-1900

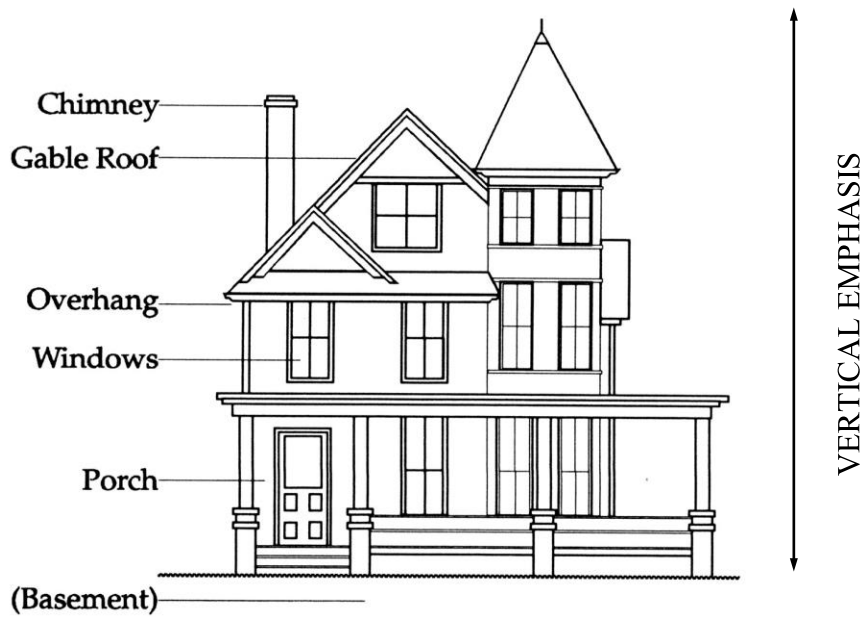
- Vertical emphasis
- No relationship to site
- Random windows
- Tall, steep-pitched roofs
- Tall narrow chimney
- Direct, formal entrance
- Fanciful, ornate materials and decorations
- "Box" rooms form the interior spaces
- Basement and attics
- "Attached" porch

Prairie 1900-1925

- Horizontal emphasis
- Integration with site
- Banded windows
- Low-pitched, often hipped roofs
- Low, broad chimney
- Obscure entrance for privacy
- Simple materials used naturally, honestly
- Open plan—spacious interior
- Various shapes and ceiling heights
- Open terraces



Prairie Style House



Victorian Style House