



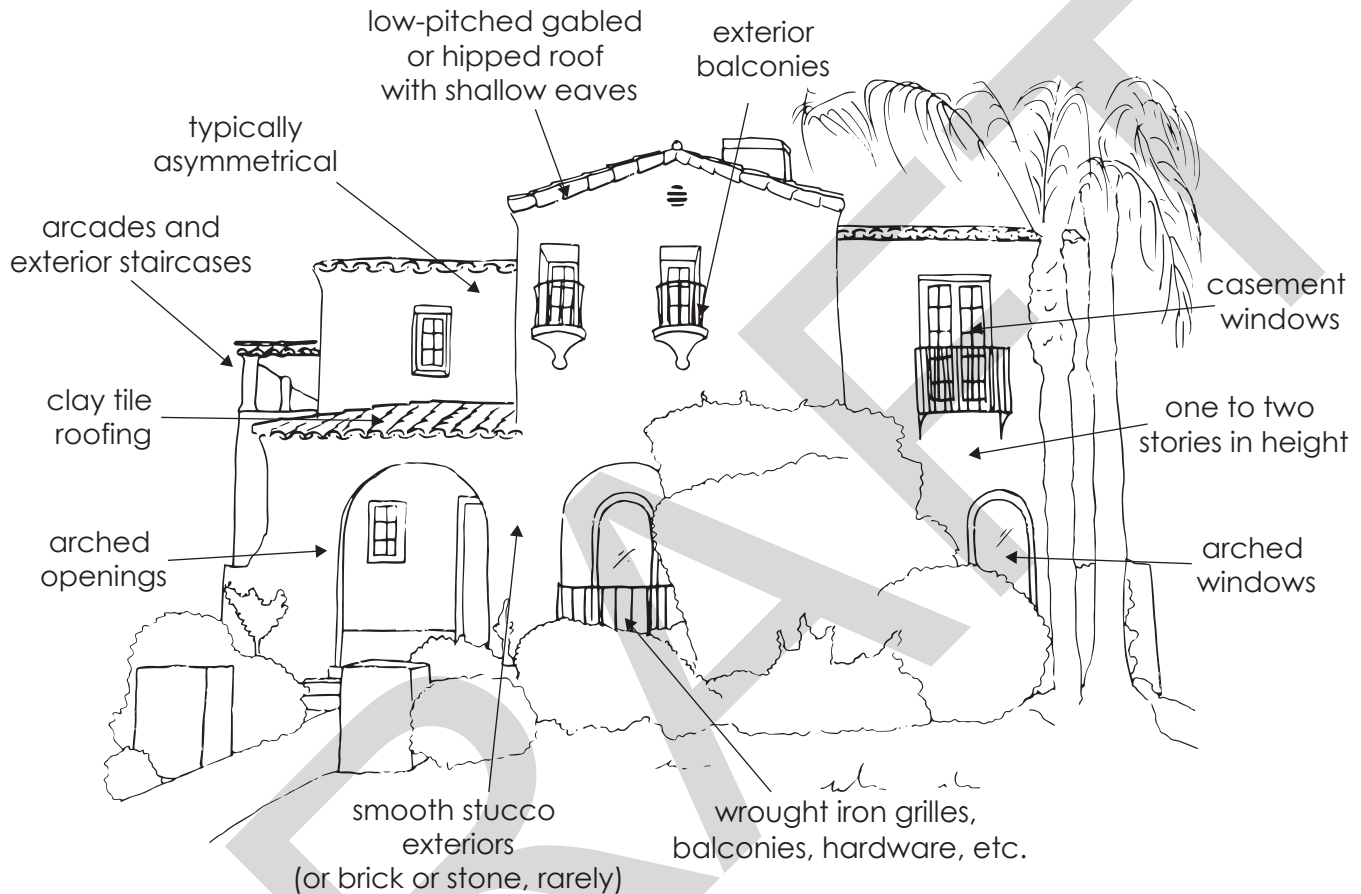
## Spanish Colonial Revival Style Guide



# Spanish Colonial Revival Style Guide

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## SPANISH COLONIAL REVIVAL (1915-1942)

The Spanish Colonial Style developed in the 19th century during a period of renewed interest in the California missions and the subsequent Mission Revival Style. Architects were working to develop an architectural identity for California that reflected its climate, lifestyle, and history. The fruits of this labor were on display at the 1915 Panama-California Exhibition in San Diego, and the style became hugely popular until the beginning of World War II. Spanish Colonial Revival takes inspiration from the rich background of Spanish architecture, not just the Spanish and Mexican era in California. Influences range from Moorish, Andalusian, Renaissance, and Baroque architecture, making for a rich and widely varied style.

Additional character-defining features of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style not pictured above include heavy doors, towers and cupolas, clay tile coping, and decorative elements such as window grilles, rejas, and glazed tiles.



## Additional Examples of the Style





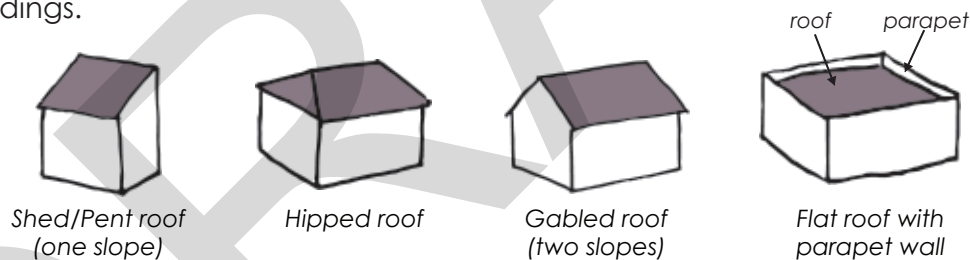
## Building Form and Massing

Spanish Colonial Revival style buildings may be one to two stories in height. Generally, Spanish Colonial Revival style buildings are asymmetrically arranged. Higher style examples often have complex massing made up of different geometrical volumes, roof shapes, and heights, especially when the building has features such as turrets and towers. Simpler, small-scale Spanish Colonial Revival style homes or multi-family properties may be blockier and more uniform in their massing.

Some Spanish Colonial revival homes will have prominent chimneys, porte-cochères, exterior patios or enclosed seating areas, and curved or arched wall extensions over side gates or drive-ways.

## Roof Shape and Materials

Spanish Colonial Revival houses may have a wide variety of roof forms, including gabled, conical, hipped, pent/shed, or flat; in some cases, multiple roof forms may be found on the same building. Regardless of form, roofs are always moderate to low-pitched. Spanish Colonial Revival roofs rarely have a steep pitch. Eaves on a Spanish Colonial Revival building are frequently flush with the sides of the building. Overhanging eaves, when they do exist, are very shallow and open with short exposed rafter tails. There are rarely, if ever, dormers on Spanish Colonial Revival buildings.



Clay tile laid in a single overlapping row along the top of a parapet wall, called "coping," provides decoration and protection.

Spanish Colonial Revival style houses almost always have red Spanish clay tile roofing material, whether it is applied as coping along a parapet wall on a flat roof or laid in alternating rows along the face of a gable, hip, or conical roof. Composition shingles should never be installed on a Spanish Colonial Revival style building.

The clay tile coping around a parapet is both decorative and protective, as it helps to deflect water away from the building. Coping should not be replaced with a material other than clay tile, such as metal flashing or composition shingles.

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## Roof Shape and Materials, Continued

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Flat roofs, when used, are generally covered with bituminous material such as rolled asphalt. "Flat" roofs are actually set at a slight angle, sloping toward a scupper or drainpipe to divert water away from the building. This type of system should not require additional, horizontal gutters along the edges of the roofline.

Spanish Colonial Revival style residences without a flat roof may be equipped with metal gutters or drainpipes. These gutters are simple in profile, and are typically installed just underneath the edge of the clay tile roofing. Compatible, visually unobtrusive gutters are often painted to match the building trim.



Clay tiles come in a wide variety of shades, ranging from reds to oranges to browns. Individual tiles are "C" or "S" shapes that are interlocked across the roof plane.

## Cladding

The majority of Spanish Colonial Revival style residences were historically clad in stucco. This stucco most often had a softly undulating hand-troweled texture or a light dash or float finish. Heavily textured, sprayed on or "lace" patterned stuccoes are not historically compatible with the Spanish Colonial Revival style. An overly smooth stucco finish is equally incompatible. A common decorative feature is a geometric screen punched into the stucco cladding itself.

Some examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival style have exterior masonry walls. The masonry units may be laid with gaps to create a similar effect to the punched stucco screens.



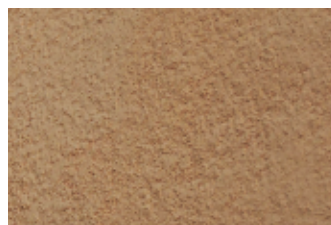
An example of a Spanish Colonial Revival style residence clad in masonry.



Hand-troweled



Hand-troweled



Float/Dash



Punched stucco screen



## Foundation

The foundation on a Spanish Colonial Revival style house is not a focal point of the building. Typically, they will consist of exposed concrete, or they may be clad in a coat of stucco.

## Chimneys

Chimneys on a Spanish Colonial Revival are often masonry, or are clad in the same stucco as the exterior. It is not unusual to see elaborate chimney caps that may incorporate clay tiles. On higher style examples, the chimney may be a very prominent feature, taking up a substantial portion of the primary elevation, or projecting much higher than the main roofline.

## Porches and Entryways

Spanish Colonial Revival style buildings rarely have traditional “porches” surrounded by a balustrade and supported by posts. More frequently, entry doors are simply recessed within the primary elevation and may be sheltered by a small, projecting pent roof. Other times, a feature such as an arcade or portico with its own roof may shelter the door. Porch enclosures on Spanish Colonial revival houses will often integrate arched openings within smooth stucco walls. Some residences may have patio areas incorporated near the front entry. These patios are often enclosed by a short stucco wall.





## Railings and Balusters

Railings and balusters are not seen on Spanish Colonial Revival residences as often as other styles. If a railing is included on a Spanish Colonial Revival residence, it is often surrounding a second-story balconette on a two-story, higher style example.

Railings and balusters should consist of wrought iron or wood balusters. Turned balusters should have a relatively thick, substantial profile, as opposed to something more delicate. Flat, carved wood balusters with a silhouette that emulates that of a turned post would also be an appropriate alternative.



Wrought Iron



Wrought Iron



Wrought Iron



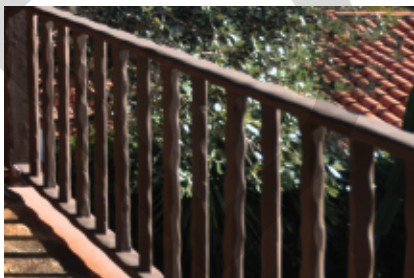
Flat/Carved



Flat/Carved



Flat/Carved



Turned



Turned



Turned



## Windows

Spanish Colonial Revival buildings have wood windows. Most often, these windows are multi-light wood casement windows, typically arranged in pairs. Other types of windows consist of larger, fixed multi-light windows with rectangular or arched openings. Smaller windows on secondary elevations may consist of tall, narrow multi-light windows, or single-light double-hung wood windows. When replacing non-original windows on a Spanish Colonial Revival residence, consider replacing them with something similar to the examples below, within their original openings.



*Single Casement*



*Multi-Light Paired Casement*



*Tripartite Window - Fixed Center, Side Casements*



*Multi-Light Fixed*



*Fixed Window with Geometric Muntins*



*Single-Light Double-Hung  
(One-Over-One)*



*Multi-Light Paired Casement*



*Tripartite Arched Window - Fixed Center,  
Side Casements*



*Fixed Window  
Catenary Arched Opening*



*Multi-light Casement  
Arched Opening*

## Awnings

Compatible awnings for Spanish Colonial Revival residence are typically spearhead awnings. The fabric may be a solid, dark, neutral color, or a simple striped pattern. The edge of the awning may be scalloped or straight. Heavy, metal awnings or commercial style awnings should be avoided, as they are generally not compatible with this style of residential architecture.



*"Spearhead" awnings made of cloth are the most compatible with the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Avoid visually heavy and rigid awnings, like this metal awning at right.*

## Doors

Spanish Colonial Revival buildings typically have battened or paneled wood doors, often with heavy iron hardware. Doors of this style are less likely to have large sections of glazing than other styles, but examples do exist. Often there will be a small, centered light, perhaps covered by an iron or turned wood grille. Sometimes, this glazing is a small window that swings inward. Many examples of the style have a rounded arched opening for the front door. Secondary doors, especially on the rear or within courtyards, often consist of paired, fully glazed "French-style" doors.



Wood  
Paneled

Wood  
Paneled

Battened  
(rectangular)

Battened  
(arched)

Wood  
Glazed

Wood  
Glazed

## Garage Doors

Like the primary entry doors, garage doors designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style are batted or have heavy, carved panels, and may have heavy iron hardware or exposed bolt heads. Carriage type doors are encouraged. There are garage doors available that mimic the appearance of a carriage style door while functioning like a contemporary and convenient roll-up door. The use of real wood garage doors is encouraged, but not required.



## Porte-Cochères

Porte-cochères on a Spanish Colonial Revival house often consist of an extended wall along the primary elevation that spans over the driveway. The opening is often arched, and may share the same roofline as the house.



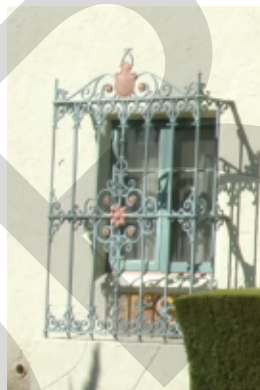


## Decorative Features

Decorative features on a Spanish Colonial Revival style building may include clay tile attic vents, tile work and niches. Other decorative features include shutters and awnings. High style examples may include carved bas relief ornamentation, especially around primary entrances. The primary elevation may include a wall that extends over a side gate, side entry or even over the driveway. Windows may also have decorative grilles and/or planter boxes incorporated into the window design. While all these features are compatible with the style, adding them where they did not historically exist is not recommended.

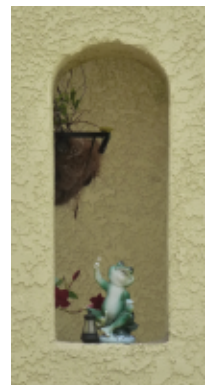


Clay tile attic vents may be circular or semi-circular. When multiple vents are used, they are often arranged in a triangle shape, but may also be aligned in vertical or horizontal rows. Other types of decorative vents may be "punched" through the stucco wall, or consist of a louvered vent.



Window grilles are another common decorative feature on a Spanish Colonial Revival. They are typically cast iron and can be very elaborate. The photo on the left also shows an example of bas relief ornamentation.

Recessed niches and cutouts often have arched openings, and may be further elaborated with a metal grille, sill, or both.





## Lighting

When choosing a light fixture for a Spanish Colonial Revival house, consider a dark metal or wrought iron fixture. The fixtures can be fairly elaborate, with filigree, curving brackets, and chains.



## Paint Colors

Spanish Colonial Revival style buildings do not have complex color schemes, and are often painted with just two colors. Historically, Spanish Colonial Revival buildings were light in color, as they took inspiration from the whitewash, stucco, and adobe buildings of the Spanish Colonial era. When selecting a color for your Spanish Colonial Revival residence, choose a light, natural, neutral color for the exterior stucco, such as white, cream, beige, or tan. Wood elements such as doors and rafter tails should be painted a darker and/or contrasting color that also complements the reddish-orange of the clay tiles, such as a dark brown, brown, dark red, or even green or teal.

