

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING

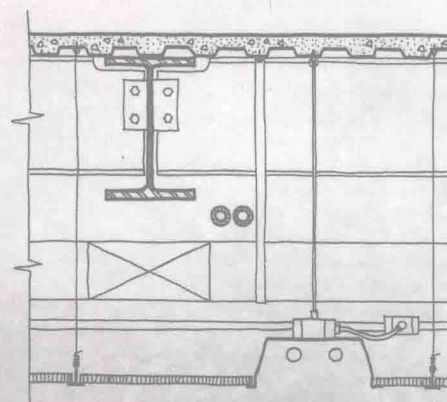
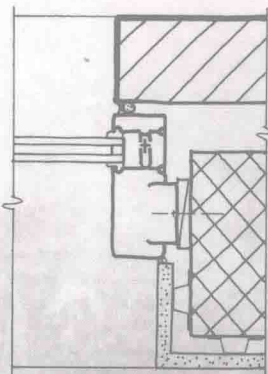
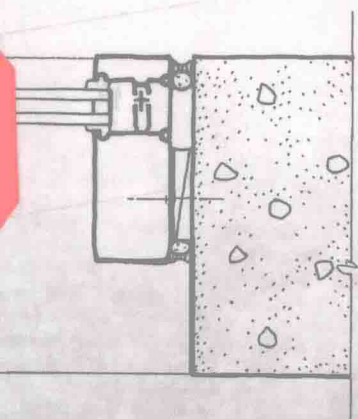
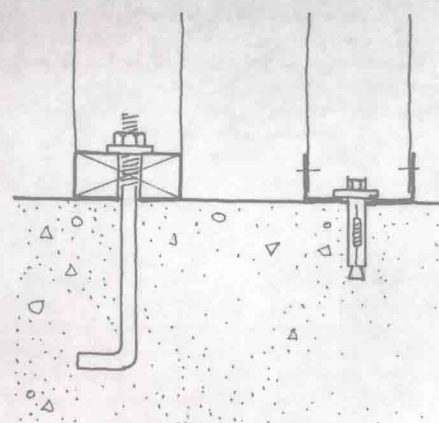
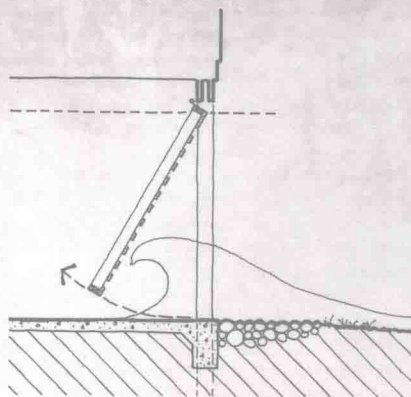
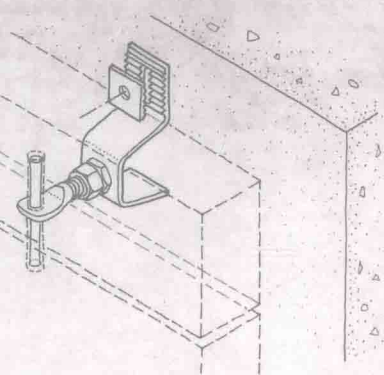
FUNCTION

CONSTRUCTIBILITY

AESTHETICS

EDWARD ALLEN · PATRICK RAND

THIRD EDITION



WILEY

Architectural Detailing

Function • Constructibility • Aesthetics

Third Edition

Edward Allen and Patrick Rand

WILEY

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Architectural Detailing

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EDWARD ALLEN
South Natick, MA

Patrick Rand thanks Edward Allen, generous mentor to a generation of architectural educators, for this opportunity to collaborate again. Ed shows us all how to make the most important aspects of our craft vivid and accessible, empowering countless young designers to make architecture that is functional, constructible, and aesthetically pleasing.

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PATRICK RAND
Raleigh, NC

INTRODUCTION

The transition from architectural idea to built reality is composed of countless decisions that are made amid a landscape of ever-changing circumstances. Architects design and draw for each building a set of details that show how it will be put together. Architects have primary responsibility for the detailing in buildings, a fact that architectural curricula often underappreciate. Detailing should be at least as prominent in architecture curricula as structures and mechanical systems: two areas in which consulting engineers often have primary responsibility. This book is intended to help students and young professionals become proficient with architectural detailing.

How does the architect know if these details will achieve the desired result? Will the building that they represent go together easily and economically? Will it shed water? Will it be easy to heat and cool? Will the details look good with one another and with the overall form and space of the building? Will the building grow old gracefully, and will it last for the requisite period of time? There are many more questions of similar importance.

The experienced architect does not leave the answers to chance. Each detail, no matter how special or unprecedented, is designed in conformance with universal, timeless patterns that, given competent execution on the construction site, virtually guarantee satisfactory building performance. These detail patterns are the subject of this book.

Detail patterns are elemental principles that are present in all successful building details. They represent an accumulation of centuries of wisdom about what works in building construction and what does not. Many of the patterns are firmly grounded in scientific fact. Others are based just as solidly on common sense and the realities of human performance. The experienced architect employs all these patterns automatically, as if by instinct, when designing details.

Good detailing is an opportunity to advance the concepts and aesthetic themes of the basic design. The detail patterns can be used to edit the schematic design, celebrating its strengths and eliminating features that are not contributing to the central ideas.

The patterns clarify the issues relevant to a particular detail but avoid stating what the solution should be. They are meant to provoke the designer to discover many possible solutions and to provide a clear process through which each can be assessed.

Details are rarely designed from scratch, as a pure response to a situation, as if it had never existed before. More often, we build upon precedents. The architect uses the detail patterns as a reliable means of analyzing and understanding existing details. They are helpful in reviewing one's own work, in checking the work of other detailers in the office, in judging the quality of manufactured

building components, and in diagnosing problems in existing buildings. The absence of attention to a particular detail pattern, or the presence of a feature that contradicts a pattern, usually indicates a problem or a potential problem that should be corrected.

The detail patterns are straightforward and easy to learn. There are slightly more than 100 of them. Each is irreducibly simple.

The first portion of this book introduces each of the patterns in turn, explains it, and illustrates several instances of its use. Each pattern is given a simple descriptive name and a graphical icon to assist in the memorization of it.

The patterns are arranged in three main groups: Function, Constructibility, and Aesthetics, corresponding to the three major concerns of the detailer. The order of presentation of these groups is not intended to imply their hierarchy or their sequence in the design process. Under each of these groupings, the patterns are further categorized by similarity of intent. The first category of patterns under Function, for example, is Controlling Water Leakage, comprising 13 detail patterns that offer a complete strategy for accomplishing this important task.

The second portion of the book demonstrates the use of the detail patterns during the process of designing the details of three different hypothetical buildings: one in wood, one in architectural concrete, and one in brick veneer over a reinforced concrete frame.

The book closes with an annotated listing of publications recommended for the detailer's own reference shelf and a list of websites of particular interest. Exercises for self-study or classroom use are also provided.

The almost 500 original sketches and drawings by the authors are intended to be illustrative of the building elements and natural phenomena being addressed. They are not working drawings. Almost all are freehand sketches, because this remains the primary means that designers use to begin creating details. Some information has been intentionally deleted or added to make the drawings effective instructional tools. For instance, anchors securing a masonry veneer to the backup are drawn in these sections, whereas they might be identified only in specifications or in a large-scale detail in a set of working drawings produced in an office. By including them in the sketches, readers will engage the visual reality in more complete terms.

It is assumed that the reader has a general background in the materials and methods of building construction and is familiar with the conventions of architectural drawing. In the detail drawings throughout the book, outdoors is always to the left or top of the drawing.

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PART

I

DETAIL PATTERNS



SECTION

1

FUNCTION

For a building to function well, its details must function well. When designing details for a building, the detailer has countless choices to make and no prescribed path toward the best solution. This portion of the book guides the detailer along this path by describing factors that affect the functional performance of details.

In architecture, function certainly includes the technical performance of the details that contribute to making a building safe and secure for its occupants. But function also includes features that affect the *qualities* of the forms, surfaces, and spaces that compose the building. A space that is firm and dry but that has an aggravating echo or glaring light does not function as well as it could.

The detailer is challenged to address the function needs of the building when it is new, but also long into the future and sometimes beyond the lifetime of those who designed or constructed it. Buildings constantly change in response to natural forces, such as the daily cycles of temperature and light, as well as in response to seasonal changes. A basic grasp of physics and of biological and chemical processes is part of the detailing process. Other functions concern the people who engage with the building every day, altering it internally and externally through countless actions.

The detail patterns that relate to function address the breadth of these topics. They are organized into thematic groups to focus the detailer's attention on each topic individually. Each pattern builds awareness of the issue and includes directions toward possible solutions. The patterns describe the natural processes involved, as well as the codes, standards, and conventional practices that are relevant to discovering appropriate detailing solutions.

INTRODUCTION

Water must be controlled in order to prevent **leakage**, which is the penetration of water through a building assembly. For water to penetrate through a building assembly, three conditions must all occur at the same time:

1. There must be an opening through the assembly.
2. There must be water present at the opening.
3. There must be a force to move the water through the opening.

If any one of these three conditions is not met, water will not penetrate the assembly. In designing any exterior detail, therefore, we can pursue one or more of three strategies:

1. We can try to eliminate openings in building assemblies.
2. We can try to keep water away from openings in building assemblies.
3. We can try to neutralize forces that move water through openings in building assemblies.

Complete success in any one of these three strategies will result in the complete elimination of water leaks, but sometimes in detailing we pursue two of these strategies or even all three of them at the same time. This approach gives added security in case one of the strategies fails as a result of poor workmanship or building deterioration. Let us consider each of these strategies briefly and list the detail patterns that relate to each. All of the patterns listed will be further explained later in this chapter.

1. Eliminating openings in building assemblies

Every building is full of openings. A shingled roof has an opening under each shingle. A wall has cracks around windows and doors, and around joints between the units of material from which the wall is made. Additional cracks and holes may form as the building ages and deteriorates. We can attempt to eliminate all these openings by using preformed gaskets and sealants. As the sole strategy, this is unreliable, however. Gaskets may not seal securely if they are the wrong size or resiliency, or if the surfaces they touch are rough or unclean. Sealants may fail to adhere properly if the materials to which they are applied are not scrupulously clean and properly primed, or if the installer does not compress the sealant fully into the seam. Both sealants and gaskets can deteriorate from weathering and from the flexing and stretching they may undergo as the building ages. A building skin that relies on sealants and gaskets alone for watertightness will leak sooner or later. Furthermore, even a small defect in a sealant or gasket that is exposed to

the weather can leak very large amounts of water, just as a small hole in a bathtub can create a very large puddle.

Sealants and preformed gaskets are extremely useful, however, as components of an overall strategy for making a building skin watertight. Therefore, it is important to know how to detail sealant joints and gasket joints correctly and how to incorporate them into more complex schemes for controlling water penetration. The detail pattern that relates to eliminating openings in building assemblies is:

Sealant Joints and Gaskets (p. 36)

2. Keeping water away from openings in building assemblies

There are a number of effective ways to keep water away from openings. Often it is useful to keep most water away from an opening simply to reduce the volume of water that must be dealt with at the opening itself. In many cases we can easily and securely keep all water away from an opening.

The detail patterns that relate to keeping water away from openings in building assemblies are the following:

Wash (p. 7)

Overlap (p. 12)

Overhang and Drip (p. 15)

Drain and Weep (p. 19)

Ventilated Cold Roof (p. 22)

Foundation Drainage (p. 24)

3. Neutralizing forces that move water through openings in building assemblies

There are five forces that can move water through an opening in a wall or a roof: (1) gravity, (2) surface tension, (3) capillary action, (4) momentum, and (5) air pressure differentials. In most cases, it is surprisingly easy to detail a building assembly so that all five of these forces are neutralized, and the most secure strategies for keeping water out of a building are based on this approach.

We have already encountered the detail patterns for neutralizing two of these forces, because these same patterns are useful in keeping water away from openings in buildings. The force of gravity is neutralized by the following:

Wash (p. 7)

Overlap (p. 12)

Surface tension, a force that causes water to cling to the underside of a surface where it can run into an opening, is neutralized by:

Overhang and Drip (p. 15)

The patterns for neutralizing the other three forces are the following:

Moisture Break (p. 25)

Capillary Break (p. 26)

Labyrinth (p. 28)

Rainscreen Assembly and Pressure

Equalization (p. 29)

Upstand (p. 34)

The capillary break neutralizes capillary action. The labyrinth neutralizes momentum, and the rainscreen assembly and the upstand neutralize air pressure differentials. By combining these seven patterns in each exterior joint of a building, we can make a building entirely waterproof.

When conceived as a well-coordinated group, these features combine to form the water control layer of the building envelope. The designer should be able to draw an uninterrupted line in plan and section representing the water control layer. A building with a continuous water control layer is entirely waterproof.