



UK OAK DOORS

The Big Guide to

DIY Jargon

Jump to...

A B C D E

F G H I J K

L M N O P

Q R S T U

V W X Y Z

A is for...

Aerate/Aeration:

to supply with air - often used to describe digging into soil to loosen it and allow air to enter.

Airlock:

a blockage in a water pipe, resulting from a trapped air bubble. This will reduce or can even stop the flow of water.

Allen keys:

small L-shape pieces of metal used for loosening and tightening certain nuts.

Amps:

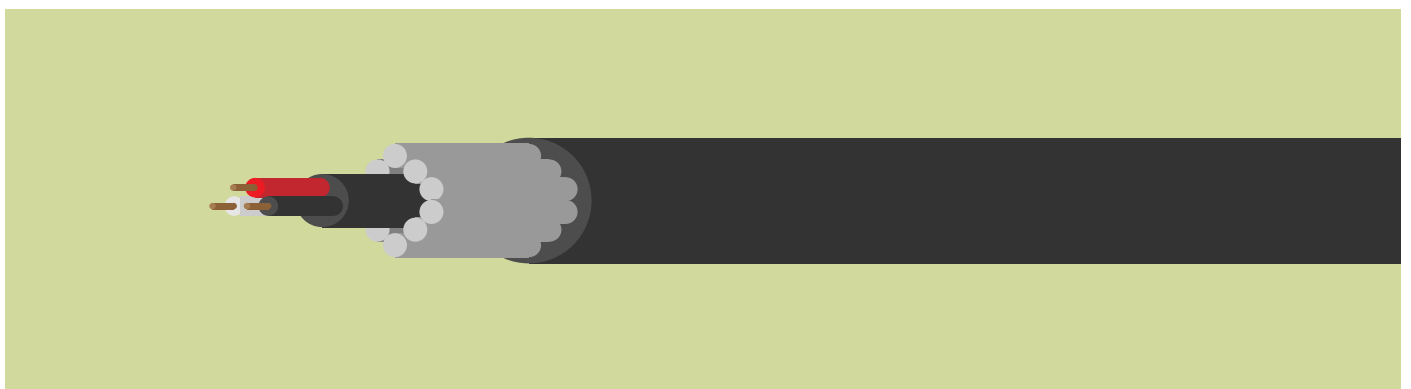
short for 'amperage'; a measure for the for the amount of electricity being used.

Anodizing:

a process that increases resistance to corrosion and wear in metals.

Armoured cable:

electrical cable protected by a layer of aluminium or steel armour. Used outdoors and in underground systems.



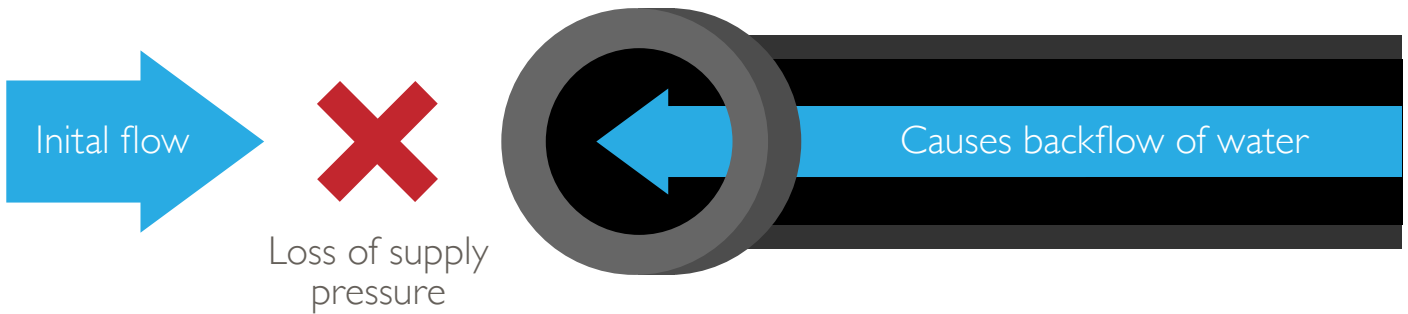
Auger bit:

a drill bit that includes a helical shaped screw blade; designed to remove material from the hole being drilled.

B is for...

Back siphonage:

a fault that occurs when negative pressure causes water to be drawn back into the water supply.

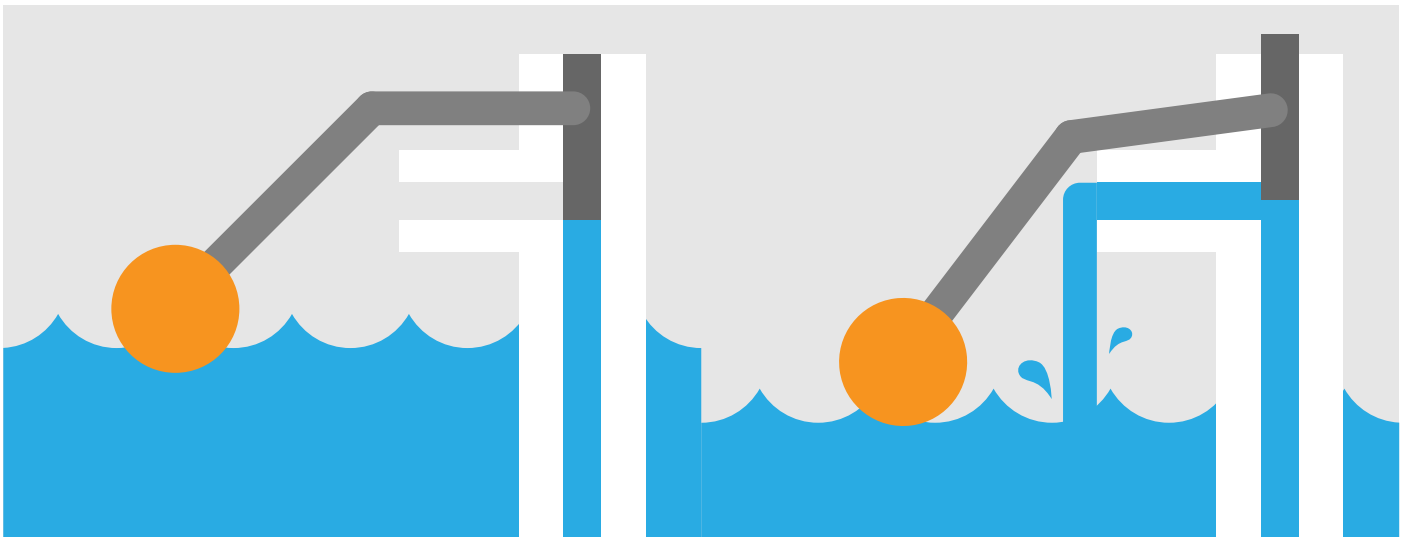


Ballast:

a type of fine, coarse aggregate used in the production of concrete.

Ballcock:

also known as a balltap or fill valve, this is used to fill water tanks (usually in toilets), and to prevent them from overflowing.



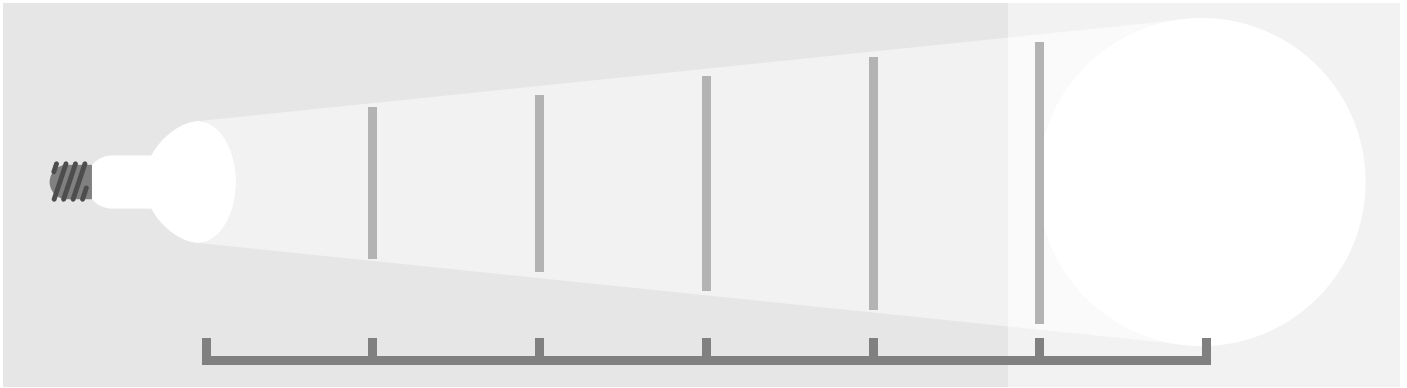
Bar:

metric unit of pressure.

B continued...

Beam spread:

a measure for the spread of light from reflector lamps.



Bevelled edges:

angled edges on structures such as tiles or skirting.

Bitumen:

also known as asphalt; used primarily in road construction.

Bitumen emulsion:

bitumen in liquid form.

Bleed valve:

used to release air that builds up inside a radiator and prevents it from functioning properly.

Boiler flue:

the device that releases used gases from the boiler into the outside air.

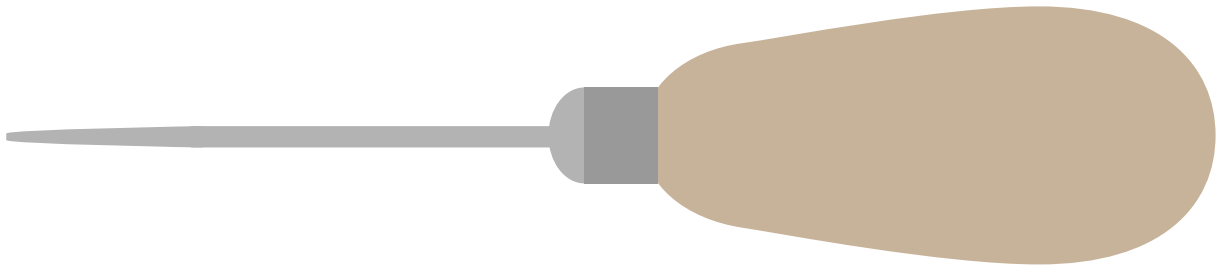
Bolster chisel:

a steel chisel with a wide blade. Combined with a club hammer it can be used to cut bricks.

B continued...

Bradawl:

a tool with a thin, flat end, designed to create an indentation to help the insertion of a nail or screw.

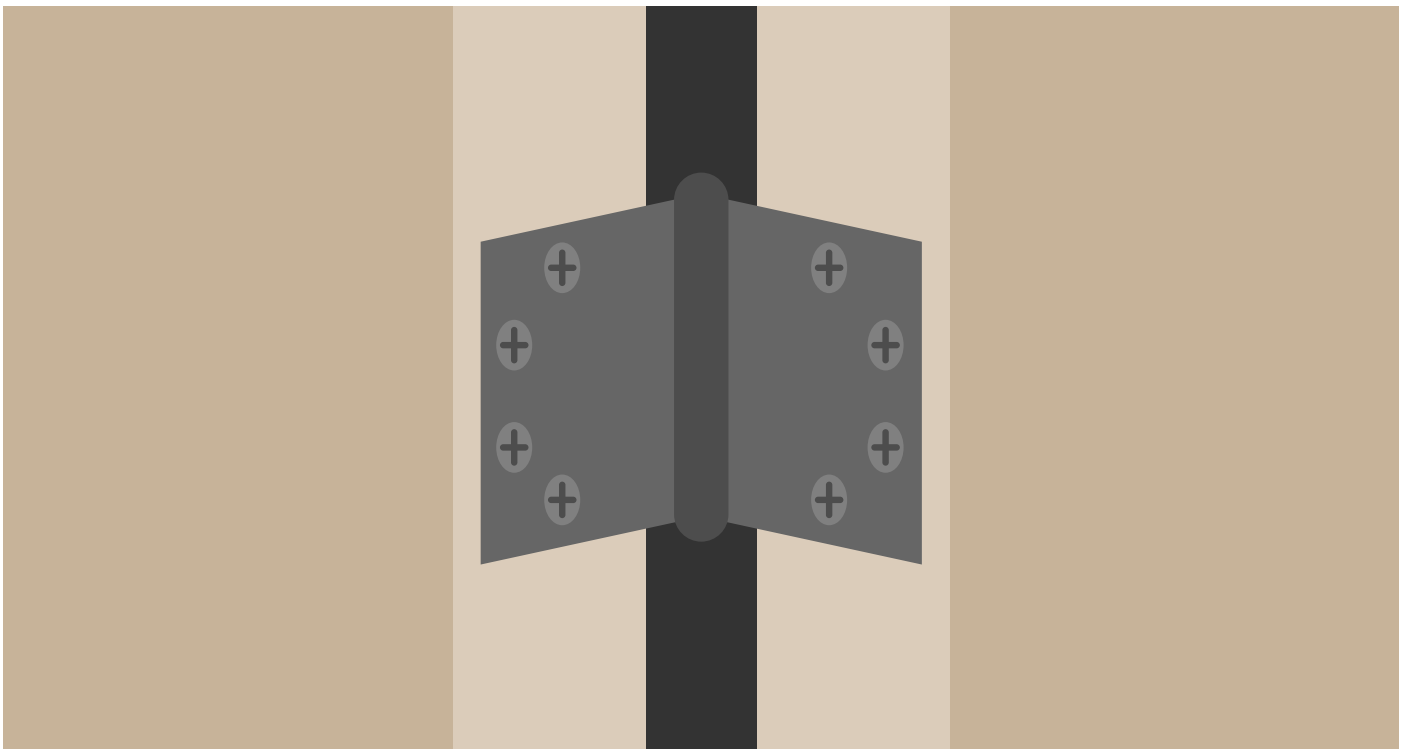


Burr:

the raised, rough edge that often remains after processes such as drilling and engraving.

Butt hinge:

the hinge that connects a door to its frame.



C is for...

Cam fastener:

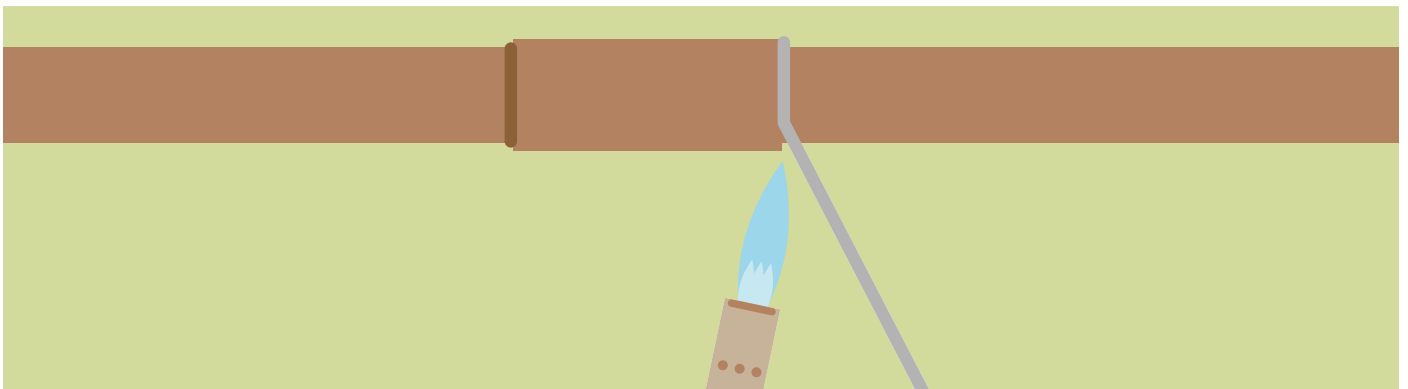
the fitting that locks two sash windows together.

Candela:

the SI (International System) unit of luminous intensity; a standard candle emits roughly one candela of luminous intensity.

Capillary joint:

joint made by connecting two pipes with a fitting and using molten solder to fill the gap.



Casement stay:

a metal bar that is used to hold casement windows open or closed.

Castor cups:

small, round devices designed to stop the legs of furniture damaging floors or carpets.

Caulking tool:

a tool used to press filler materials into small gaps.

Cellulose filler:

a low adhesion filler for repairing small cracks and gaps.

Centre beam candlepower:

the intensity of the light as measured at the centre of the beam of a reflector lamp.

C continued...

Check valve:

a valve that allows fluid to flow through it in only one direction.



Chamfer:

when edges are cut away to create a symmetrical, sloping edge.

Chelated iron compounds:

an iron complex that boosts the health of ericaceous (lime-hating) plants.

Chinagraph pencil:

also known as a grease pencil, wax pencil, or china marker. Made from hardened wax for marking glossy surfaces such as porcelain, glass, plastic, and ceramics.

Circuit breaker:

an automatic electrical switch that protects electrical circuits from damage caused by overload or short circuit.

Circuit pressure:

the pressure at which a central heating system is operating. Some systems have a point at which they operate most efficiently, and they may stop working if the pressure goes too high or too low.

Cistern:

a tank for storing water, generally used to flush toilets.

C continued...

Closing stile:

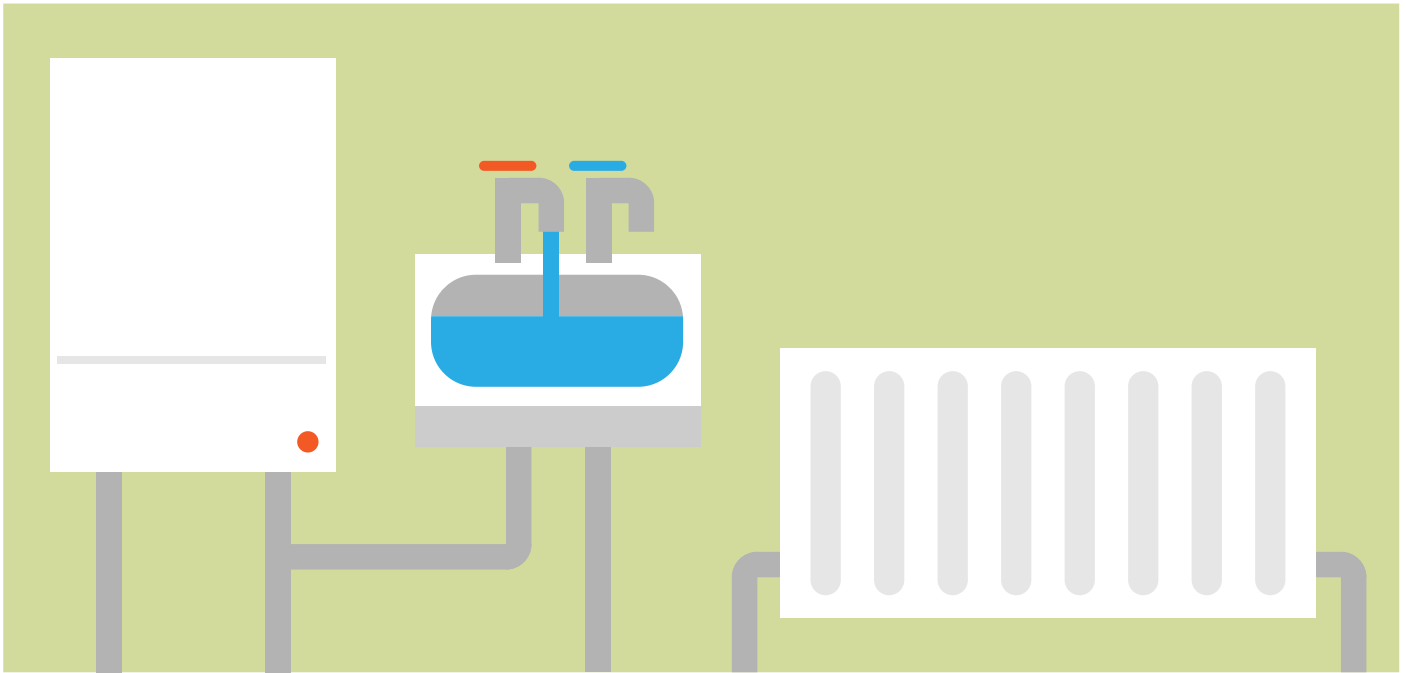
the vertical side of a door that meets the frame when the door is closed.

Colour rendering index:

a measure of how artificial light sources reveal the colours of objects, compared to natural light sources.

Combination boiler:

a boiler that simultaneously heats water and provides central heating (e.g. heats radiators).



Combustion chamber:

the part of the boiler where fuel is burnt.

Combustion gases:

the gases that are produced when fuel is burnt; primarily consisting of CO₂ and water vapour.

C continued...

Compression fittings:

leak-tight fittings designed to connect two pipes of different materials.

Conduit gland:

a fitting used to secure outdoor cables in a mounting box.

Consumer unit:

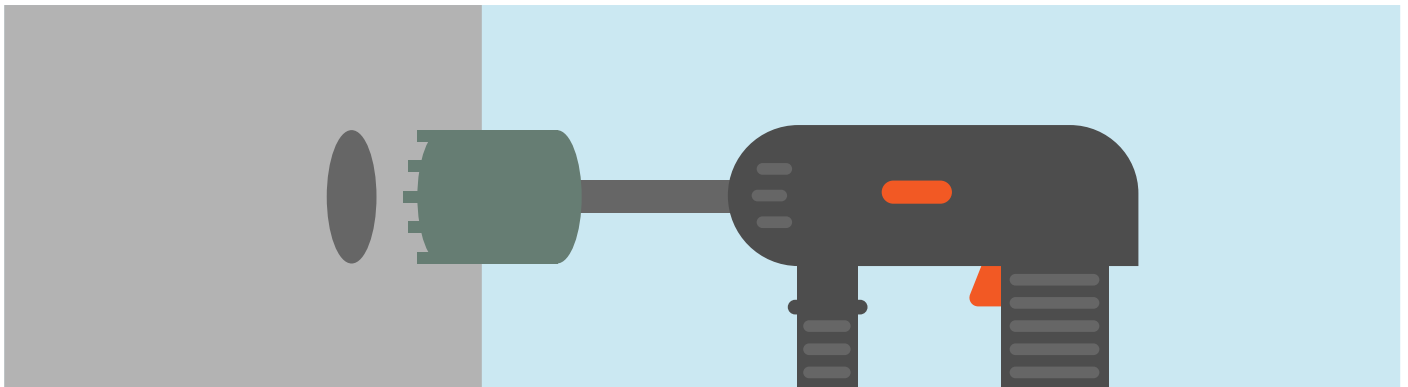
a centralised unit for enabling or disabling electricity in the home.

Continuity tester:

electrical testing equipment used to establish whether an electrical circuit can be created.

Core bit:

used with a power drill to create large holes in concrete.



Corrosion inhibitor:

a chemical compound that is added to a liquid or gas to limit the corrosion of a material.

Cranked hinge:

a hinge that allows a door to be opened 180 degrees.

Cranked spanner:

a spanner with bent jaws; used to reach tricky places.

C continued...

Cranked swivel tails:

tap tails that enable you to connect pipes to tap-holes in non-standard sizes.

Craquelure:

the pattern that forms when old materials such as paint or ceramics crack on the surface. Sometimes recreated intentionally in furniture decoration.

Cross rail joint:

a middle rail joint designed for use on hand rails and similar structures.

Cylinder lock:

the most common type of external door lock.

D is for...

Deadlocking:

when a door is locked so that it will only open with a key (from the inside).

Deep seal trap:

the U-bend found beneath sinks and baths, which acts as a barrier from the sewage waste system.

Dimmable:

a device that allows you to vary the output of a bulb.

Diplexer:

a device that enables ports of different frequencies to coexist without interfering with each other.

Direct cylinder:

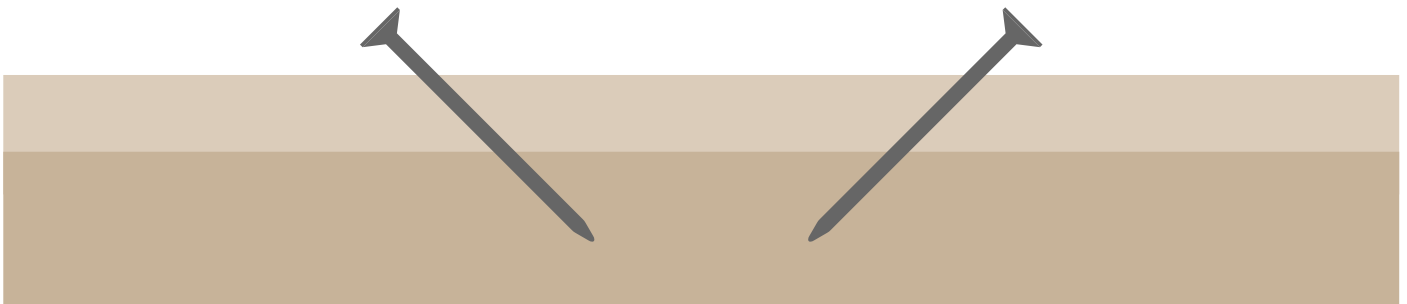
a hot water storage cylinder that provides hot water to water outlets (e.g. taps and showers).

Double check valve:

a valve that prevents backflow in order to protect water supplies from contamination.

Dovetail nailing:

a system by which you improve stability by hammering two nails at an angle (towards each other).



D continued...

Dowel:

a cylindrical rod with grooves. Made from wood, plastic, or metal, they have a variety of uses including shelf support and as movable pieces in a toy.

Downpipe shoe:

an angled pipe designed for directing water into a drain.

DPC (Damp Proof Course):

A process designed to prevent damp from penetrating the inside walls of a building.

Drilling jig:

a tool for controlling the movement of a drill and ensuring accuracy.

Drip loop:

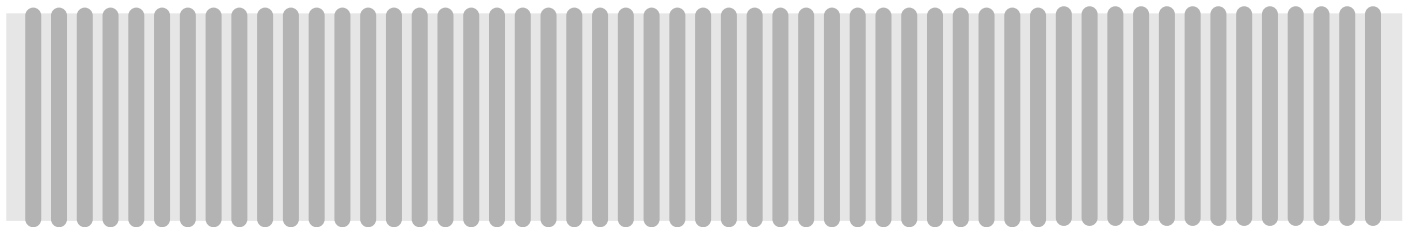
when external electrical wires are formed into a loop. Used to prevent rain water from running into electrical equipment.

Dry lining:

a plasterboard or similar material that can be used to line a wall in place of a hard plaster. Dry lining needs less water than hard plaster, and usually, less skill to apply.

Ducting:

the hose or pipe like part of a ventilation system.



E is for...

Earth clamps:

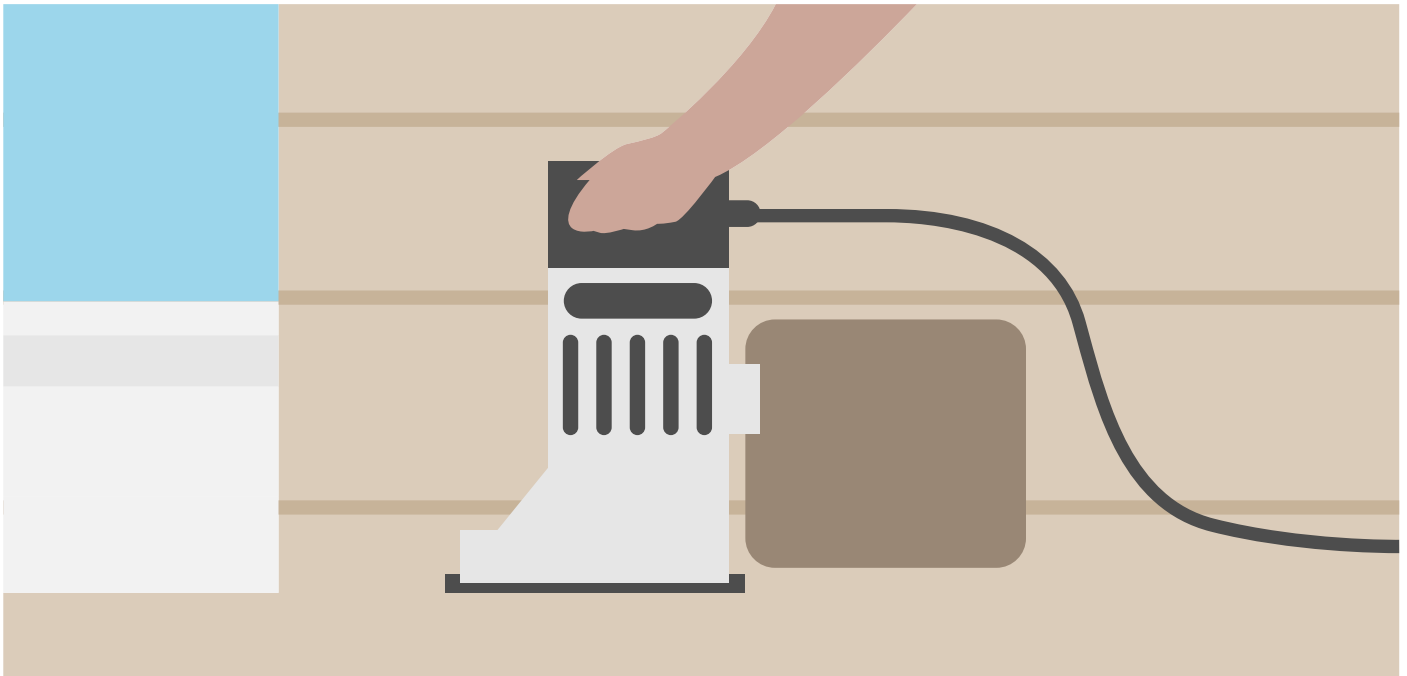
clamps used to connect pipes to insulated earthing cables.

Eaves:

the edges of a roof; usually forming an overhang to keep water clear from the walls.

Edging sander:

a small sanding tool used specifically for sanding the floors on the edge of a room.



Efflorescence:

a white deposit that forms on masonry when high humidity draws salts to the surface of the material.

EPDM seals:

a type of draft excluder.

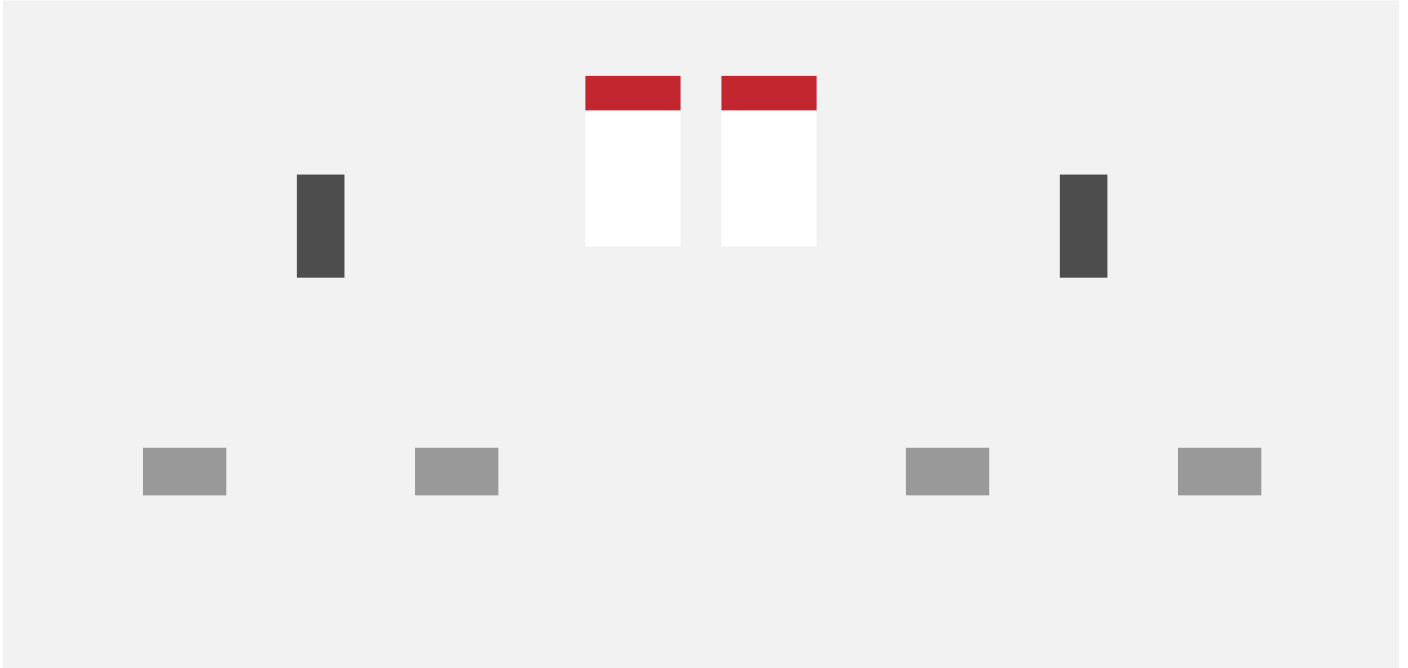
Expansion tank:

part of a central heating system that's used to protect it from excessive pressure.

F is for...

Faceplate:

the exterior of a plug socket or light switch.



Fascia:

the board that's situated vertically under a roof edge (running horizontally across the roof). Often used for attaching guttering.

Feather-edge boards:

tapered, wooden boards; usually used for fencing.

Filament:

the very thin wire which when heated by electricity produces the light in incandescent lamps.

Filling loop:

a flexible hose with valves at either end that is used to introduce water to a sealed heating system (i.e. a boiler).

F continued...

Fitch fastener:

window furniture used to secure wooden sliding sash windows.

Flashing tape:

thin pieces of material that are used to prevent joints from letting water into a structure.

Flexible drain auger:

a long, flexible device used to clear blockages in drains.

Flexible filler:

a type of crack-resistant filler used in areas where small movement may occur.

Float valve:

a valve that opens or closes when water levels change. Usually used in toilet cisterns.

Floating floor:

a floor that doesn't need to be nailed or glued to the floor; synonymous with laminate flooring.

Flue:

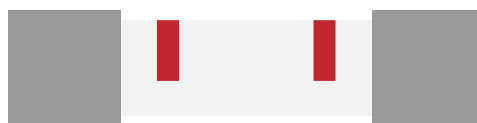
the channel that removes exhaust gases from fireplaces, water heaters, and boilers.

Flue liner:

a liner that can be added to a flue to prevent corrosion of the original flue lining.

Fuse:

used to protect electrical circuits and appliances from excessive current flow.



G is for...

Galvanised:

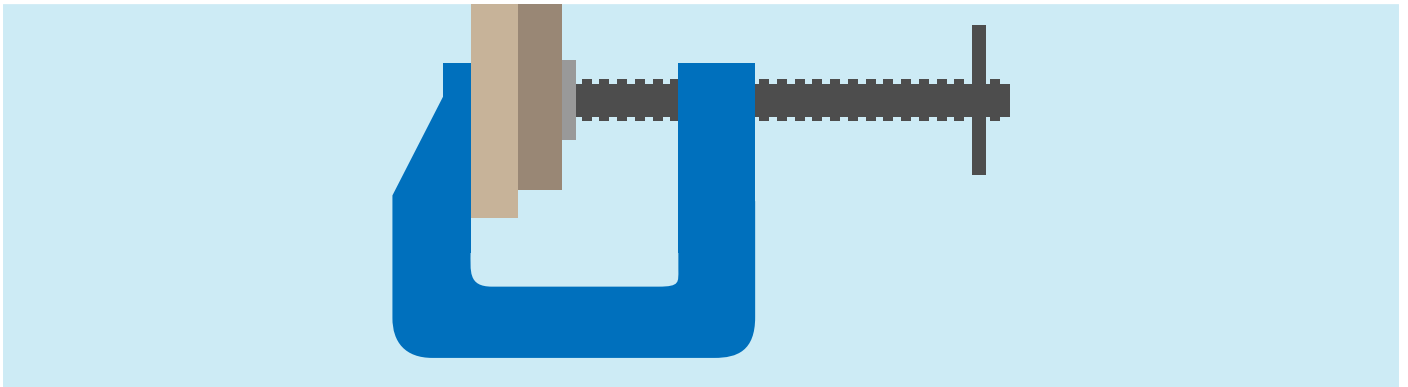
when metal is coated with zinc in order to prevent rust from forming.

Gauge:

a device to locate the exact center of any circular object.

G clamps:

g shaped devices that are used for clamping objects into place.



Gimlet:

a small hand tool used to create small, smooth holes in wood.

Gland nut:

the part of a tap connection that you will need to tighten.

Glazing bars:

structural bars into which glass is fitted.

H is for...

Halogen light bulb:

lasts twice as long and produces twice as much light as an incandescent bulb of equivalent wattage.

Hasp:

a slotted metal plate that's secured as part of a padlock.

Hexagon bush:

a coupling used to join flexible supply hoses together – such as in a washing machine.

Hinge bolts:

used on the hinge side of a door to prevent the door from being removed from its hinges.

Hopper head:

positioned at the top of a downpipe into which wastepipes drain.



I is for...

Illuminance:

a measure of how much light is illuminating a surface.

Indirect cylinder:

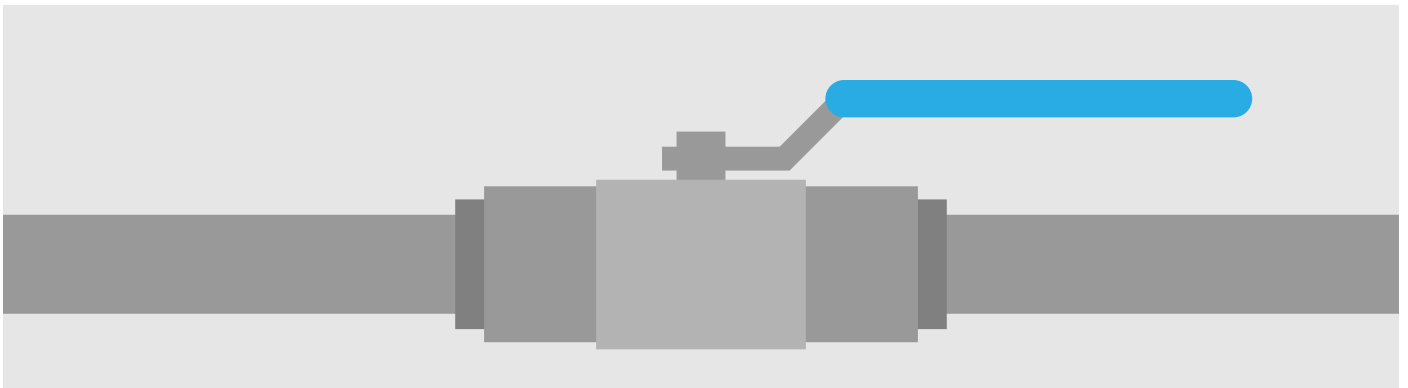
hot water cylinder used to separate water used for central heating and domestic purposes.

Initial lumens:

the light output of a lamp, based on its performance after 100 hours of use.

Isolation valve:

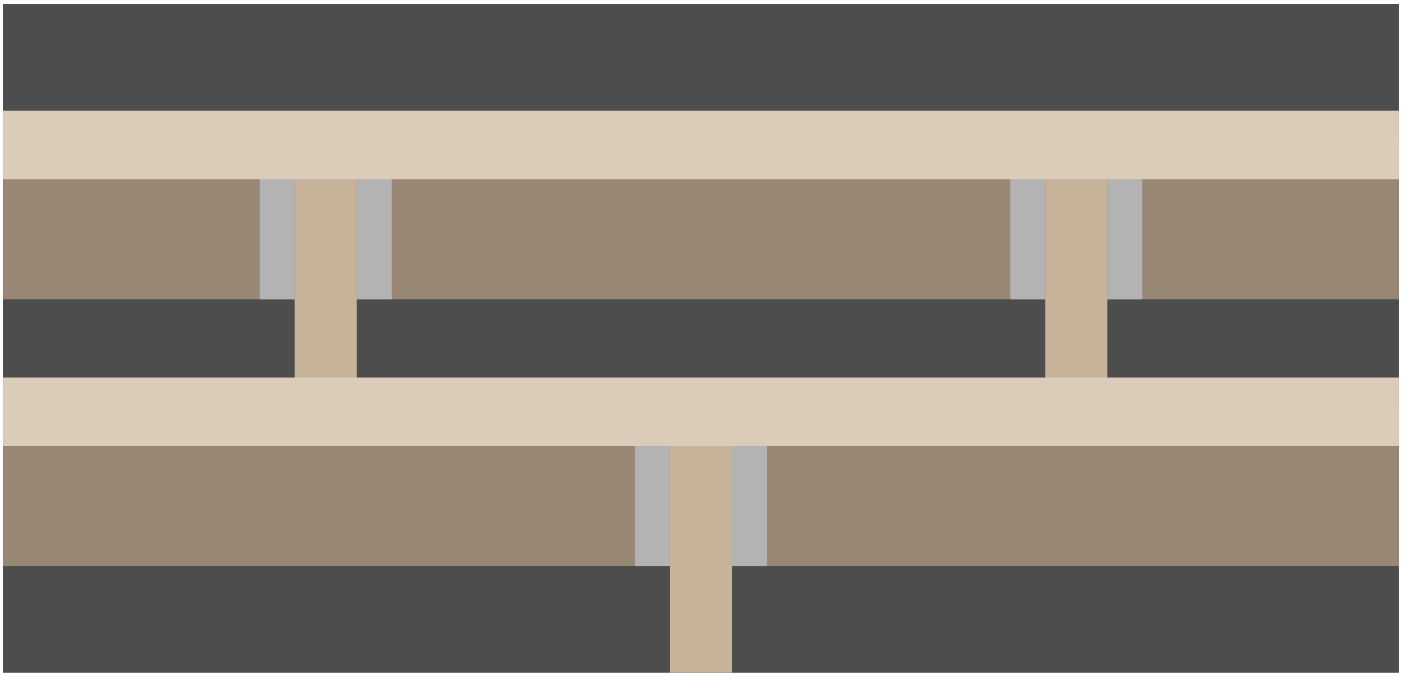
the main valve that stops the flow of a compound (i.e. gas or water). Used generally when maintenance work is carried out.



J is for...

Joists:

the supports for foundations and walls; also serve as the beams to support ceilings or floors.



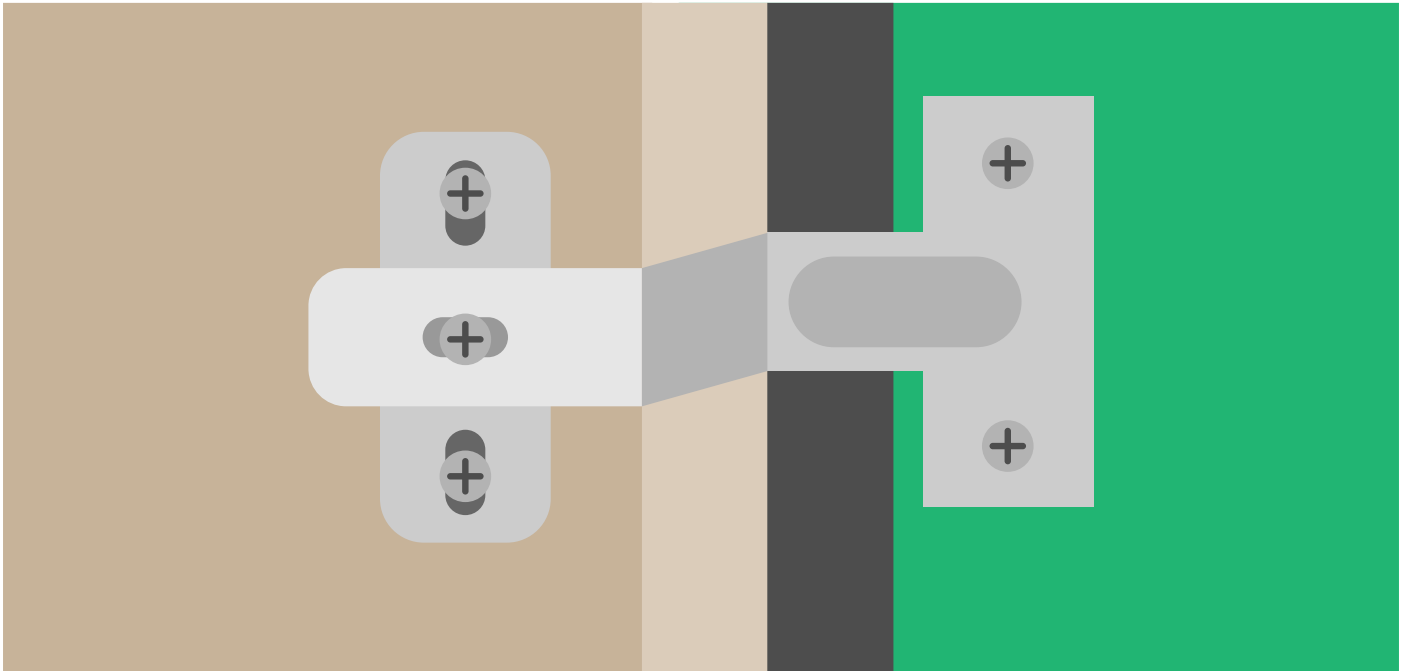
Jubilee clip:

a small grip that needs a screw to tighten. Frequently used on hoses.

K is for...

Keyhole angle plates:

a metal plate with holes for inserting screws. Used to lock an item in place.



Kilowatt (kW):

a unit of power equal to 1000 watts.

Kilowatt Hour (kWh):

the measure of energy by which energy is sold. In an hour, a 1000 watt heater will use one kilowatt-hour.

Knotting solution:

a shellac-based liquid applied to wood before the application of paints, waxes, or polishes, to prevent knots in the wood from leaking resin.

L is for...

Lamp:

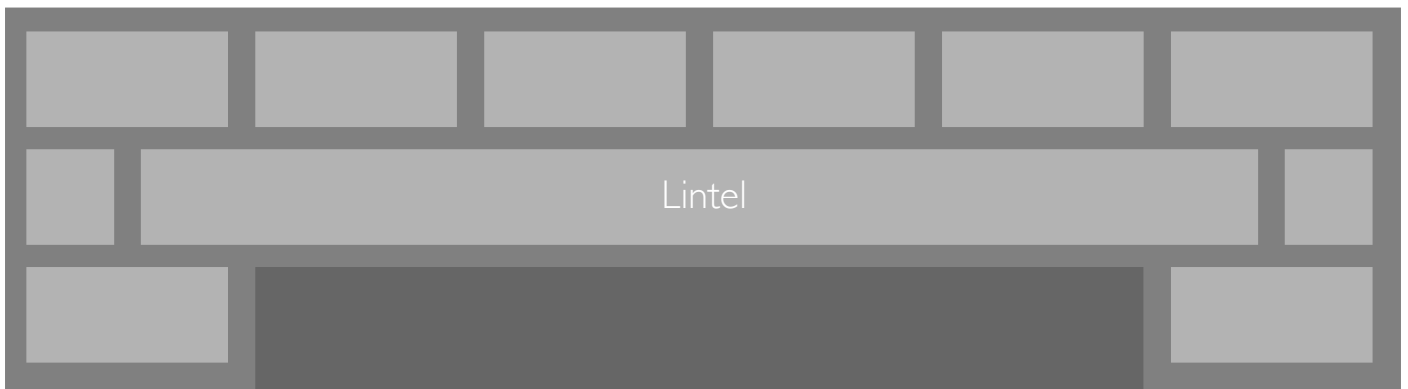
as well as meaning a lamp fixture, this is the technical word for a light bulb or tube.

Lamp properties:

an umbrella term for the words that describe the functionality of a lamp; i.e. its wattage, volts, and colour rendering index.

Lintel:

a support used above a door or window, that's designed to bear the weight of what's above it.



Live knots:

knots in timber that are leaking resin.

Load bearing:

a structure that is supporting weight; often used in reference to a supporting wall.

Low voltage:

applies to lamps with a voltage of less than 50.

Lugs:

built in projections used to secure an appliance to a wall.

Luminaire:

the term to describe a lighting unit in its entirety.

M is for...

Magnetic contact transmitter:

a device designed to activate when it is disturbed; usually fitted to doors and windows.

Masonry bit:

a type of drill bit with a tungsten carbide tip. Used for drilling into bricks and blocks.

Masonry nails:

very strong nails, designed for use in bricks and blocks.

Masonry paint:

paint formulated for use on rendered exterior walls.

Masonry stud anchors:

an expandable bolt used to attach timber to masonry.

Mastic:

a flexible sealant.

Melamine:

a type of plastic. Generally used for the surface of worktops.

Mini trunking:

used to keep wires tidy and safe.



M continued...

Mitred:

when a surface is cut at an angle, for example in the corner of a skirting board, or on a picture frame.

Mortice lock:

a type of lock that is controlled by a key moving a bolt into the striking plate in a door frame.

Mouldings:

strips of wood used for decorative purposes.

Muntin:

the strip (or strips) of wood or metal that divide panes of glass in a window.

N is for...

Non-ferrous:

metals with no iron content – this includes copper and aluminium.

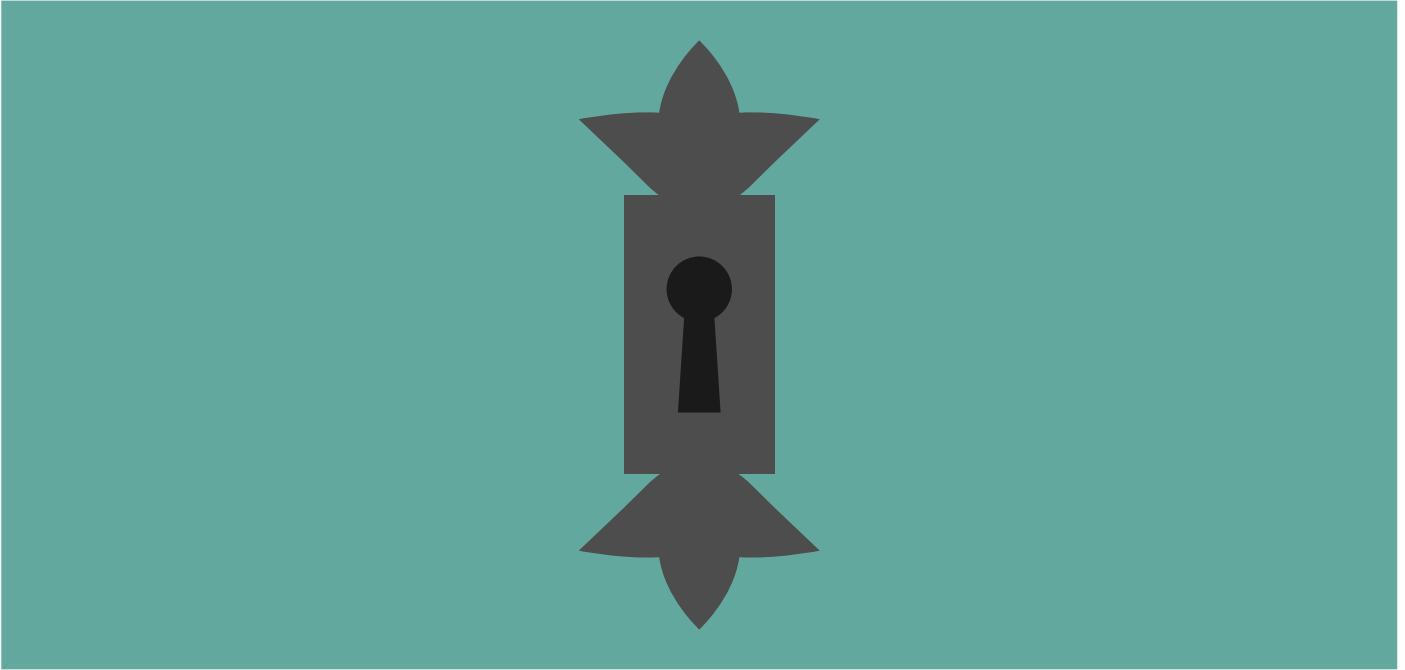
Non-load bearing:

a surface which is not supporting any weight; i.e. a partition wall.

O is for...

Ornate escutcheon:

a decorative cover for a keyhole.



P is for...

Parquet:

a type of flooring formed from small blocks of wood.



Particle board:

boards made from bonded wood chips, i.e. chipboard.

Pent roof:

when a roof only slopes in one direction.

Phosphor:

the coating on the inside surface of fluorescent lamp bulbs, which transforms ultraviolet energy into light.

Pilot hole:

the initial small hole that's drilled into a material in order to guide and simplify the job of the larger drill.

Pilot light:

a small gas flame, most often found in water heaters and central heating systems, that stays permanently alight in order to quickly ignite a more powerful gas burner.

Pitched roof:

a roof formed of two or more slopes which are steeper than 10 degrees at the point at which they meet.

P continued...

Plinth panel:

the panel that sits alongside the bottom a unit.

Plumb line:

a line with a weight suspended on the end, used to determine whether something is a true vertical.

Pointing:

using mortar to finish the joints between bricks in a wall.

Porous:

when a material is able to absorb liquids.

Power factor (PF):

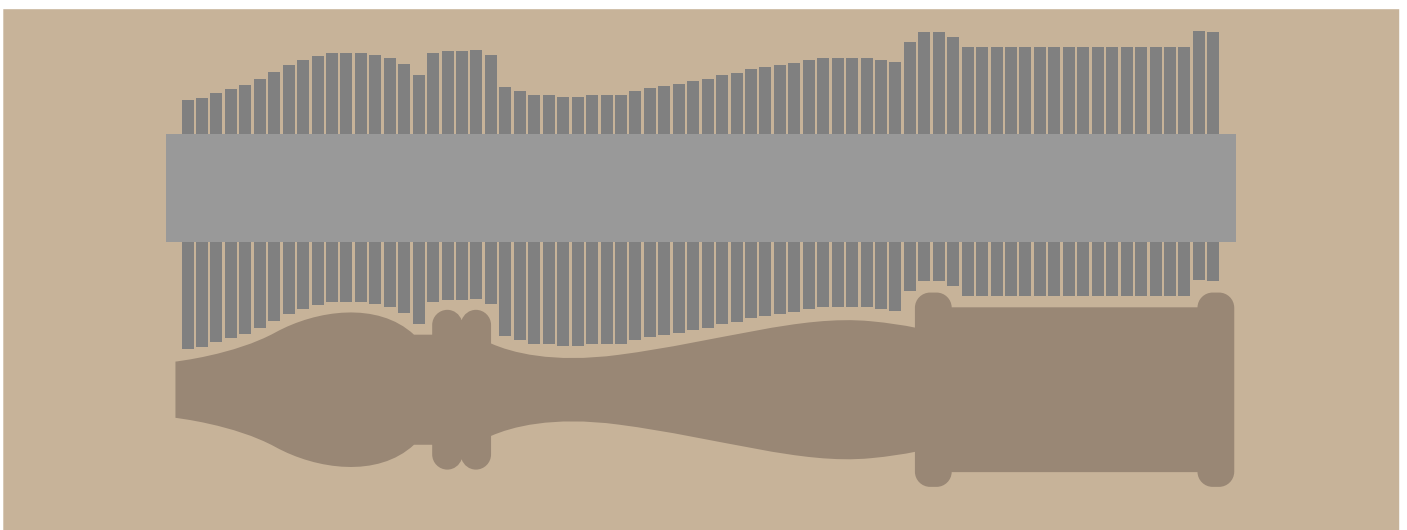
a measure for how efficient a device is at using power.

Pressure gauge:

a gadget that shows the pressure of water within pipe work.

Profile gauge:

a device formed of many tiny needles which can be pressed into a surface and fixed in place, in order to replicate a shape.



P continued...

PTFE tape:

a polytetrafluoroethylene film used to seal pipe threads. Also called 'plumber's tape'.

Push-fit joints:

joints which automatically lock when pressed together.

Q is for...

Quadrant moulding:

a thin piece of timber, often used to cover gaps in between window frames and cills.

Queen closer:

a brick of half the normal width; generally used to complete a course of bricks or to space regular bricks.

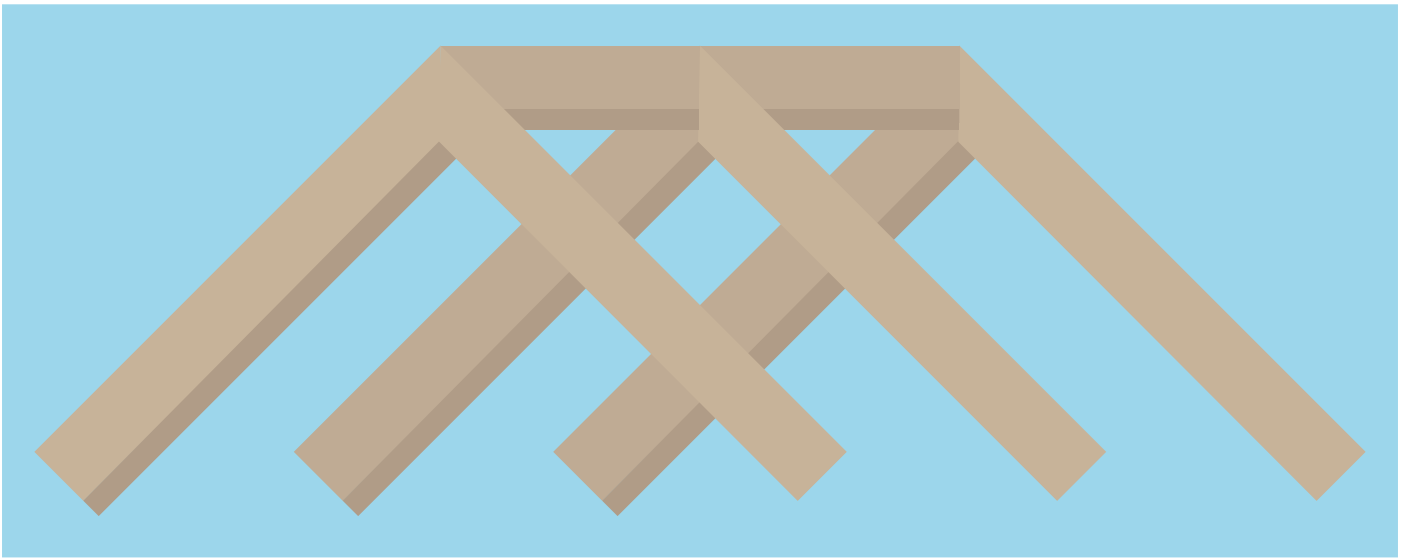
R is for...

Radiator valves:

used to control the flow of water to a radiator and turn the heat it emits up, down, or off.

Rafter:

a type of sloped beam that supports the roof of a building.



RCD:

acronym for 'Residual Current Device'; an electrical wiring device that cuts off a power supply if it detects a fault in the circuit.

Rendering:

coating an external wall with cement.

Re-point:

replacing cement mortar (between bricks) that may be missing or damaged.

Ring circuit:

when cables are run around rooms and connected to electrical sockets.

S is for...

Safety valve:

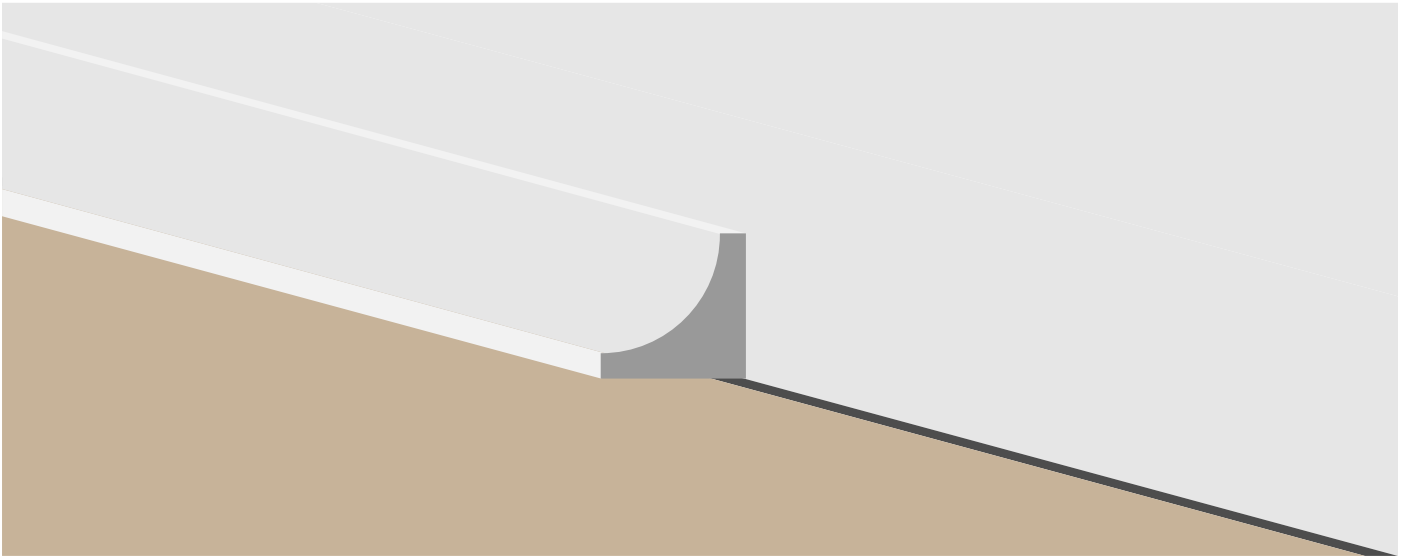
used to prevent excessive pressure; i.e. in a boiler.

Scale:

the substance that forms due to hard water. Can be treated with a descaler.

Scotia beading:

decorative mouldings that sit alongside the bottom of skirting boards.



Screed:

usually a mix of concrete and sharp sand. Used to create smooth, level flooring.

Screw eye:

a screw with a loop at the head

Sealant:

a filler used to seal gaps between two surfaces; often used around baths, and showers, or between a sink and the wall.

Shavehook:

a metal tool used to remove paint and other types of coverings.

S continued...

Shiplap cladding:

timber boards designed to overlap each other so that they become weather-tight.

Skew nailing:

when nails are driven in at a slanted angle (between 20 and 30 degrees) to increase the strength of the join.

Sludge:

dirt that forms on the inside of a radiator due to corrosion.

Soffit board:

a board used to cover the space beneath a fascia.

Soil stack:

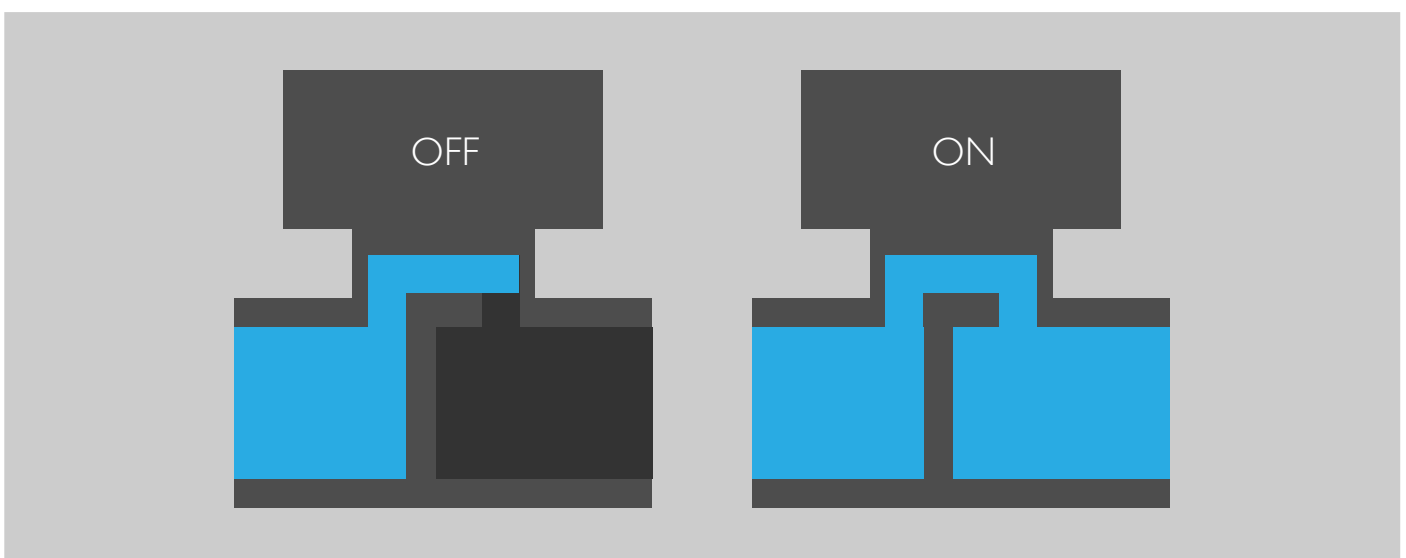
a vertical drain pipe which carries soil waste from sanitary units; usually toilets.

Sole plates:

a timber base to which vertical timbers are nailed.

Solenoid valve:

an electrically operated valve used to control the distribution of fluids. Often found in appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers.



S continued...

Solvent-welded joints:

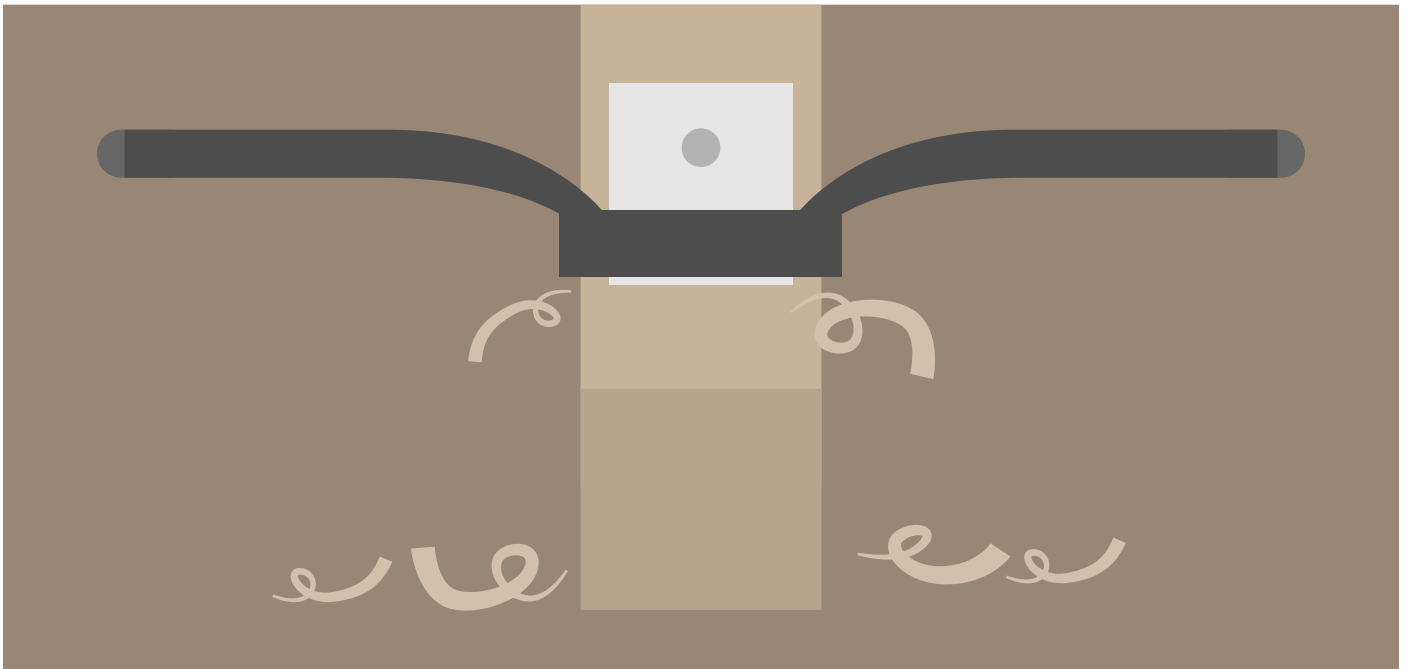
sealing joints together with the use of an adhesive.

Spacers:

cross shaped pieces of plastic used to create small gaps between tiles.

Spokeshave:

a small tool designed to shape and smooth thin, curved sections of timber.



Stabilising primer:

prepares and seals porous or powdery walls before painting.

Staple:

part of a padlock; used with a hasp.

Stopcock:

a tap which can be used to stop the water supply to a home.

S continued...

Stopend:

used at the end of a lintel to stop moisture entering the inside wall.

Stress crack:

damage that occurs when a fitting is over tightened or subjected to too much pressure.

Strike plate:

part of a door – a metal plate, with holes in, which the door's bolts enter as the door is closed.

Striplight:

a thin, tube shaped lightbulb. Often used in bathroom mirrors and picture lights.

Stud partition:

a temporary wall formed of timber and plasterboard.

Surface-mounted socket:

a type of socket that sits on the outside of a wall, rather than being inset.

Surform:

a type of tool with a perforated, cheese grater like base; used for shaping.

Swarf:

the shavings that are produced when drilling into metal.

Swivel tap:

a tap where the spout can be moved around.

T is for...

Tamping:

compressing building materials with the use of a large, flat surface.

Tap spindle:

the part of a tap that joins the handle to the body.

Thermal resistance:

a measurement of how long an object or material is able to resist heat flow.

Thermostat:

used to stop or start a boiler in order to attain a chosen temperature.

Thermostatic valve:

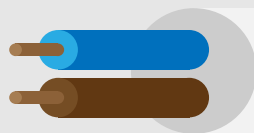
a valve which can be used to control the heat-output of an individual radiator.

Torque:

the amount of force that is applied when a spanner is used for tightening or loosening.

Two-core flex:

a type of flexible cable which has just live and neutral conductors; used with double insulated appliances.



U is for...

Union clips:

used to link two sections of plastic guttering.

V is for...

Vapour barrier:

material used for damp proofing – generally a plastic or foil sheet.

Volt:

the unit for electrical potential.

W is for...

Waterproofer:

used to prevent water entering into masonry; should still allow the wall to 'breathe' (let moisture escape).

Z is for...

Zone valve:

used to control the flow of water or steam within a hydronic heating system.