

4.0 DOORS

Policy:

The character-defining features of a historic door and its distinct materials and placement should be preserved. In addition, a new door should be in character with the historic building. This is especially important on primary facades.

Background

Doors, which are often important character-defining features of historic structures, give scale to buildings and provide visual interest to the composition of individual building facades. Some doors are associated with specific architectural styles. For example, glass paneled doors with stained glass are used in a variety of period designs. Many historic doors are noted for their materials, placement and finishes. Because an inappropriate door can severely affect the character of a historic house, one should be careful to avoid radical alteration to an old door and to choose a new door that is appropriate to the design of the house.

Door Features

Important features include the door and its frame, the sill, head, jamb and any flanking windows or transoms.

Door Types

Door types found on historic structures in Salt Lake City include:

Doorway with transom and sidelights--Typically a wooden door flanked by sidelights and topped with a rectangular transom.

Double doors--Comprised of two slender doors that swing out; these doors usually have sashes.

Craftsman door--This type of door is distinctive for its thick wood plank design, often with upper glass sashes divided by heavy muntins. Some craftsman doors have a wood shelf bracket under the sashes.

Glass paneled door--This type of door has a wide sash of glass in the upper portion of the door. Many Victorian era houses have glass paneled doors that are embellished with turned wood details and etched or stained glass.

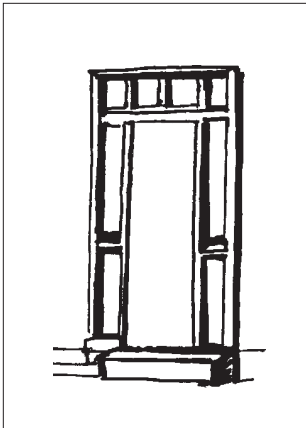
Paneled door--Wooden door with raised panels



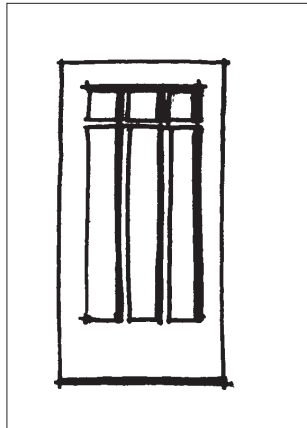
Ornamental trim on historic doors should be preserved.

Typical door types for historic buildings in Salt Lake City

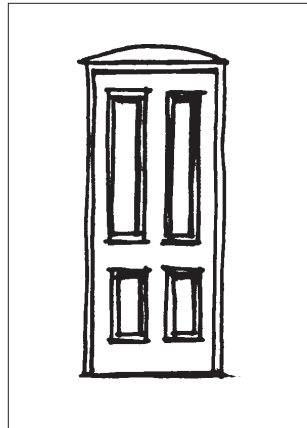
APPROPRIATE FRONT DOORS



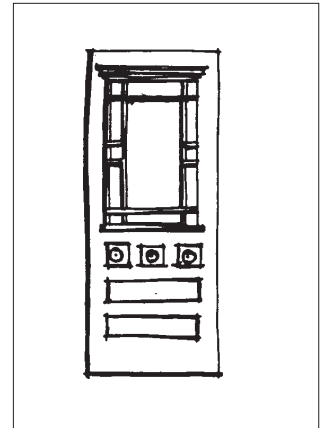
**Door with transom/
sidelight**



Craftsman door

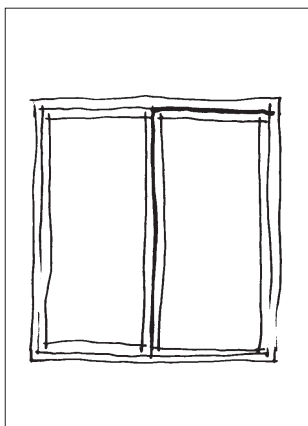


Paneled door

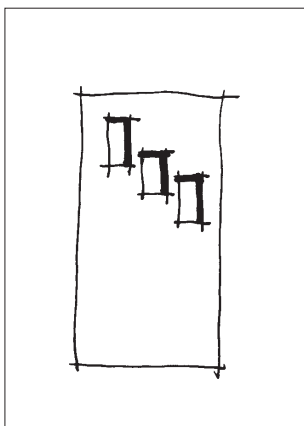


Glass paneled door

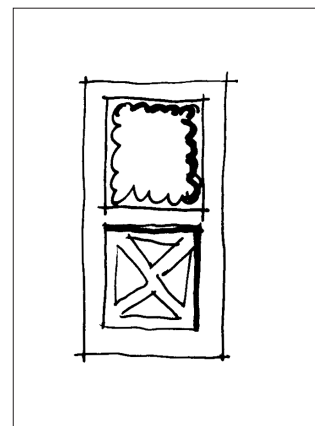
INAPPROPRIATE FRONT DOORS



**Sliding aluminum
patio door**



**Flush face door with
small lights**



Imitation "Dutch" door

DOORS, continued...

Maintenance Issues of Historic Doors

Because a historic door is typically constructed of a thick plank of wood and is often sheltered by a porch, it tends to be long-lasting. However, most problems that occur result from a lack of maintenance and from swelling and warping due to climatic changes. A door also may be worn and sagging as a result of weathering and constant use. As a result, some historic doors do not properly fit their openings and allow moisture and air into the house.

Water damage and the assault of sunlight are major concerns. Condensation during winter months also can cause problems with glass panels and sashes on doors. Damage occurs when the painted or finished layer is cracked or peeling. Decay may make operation of the door difficult and, if left untreated, can result in significant deterioration of door components. In most cases, doors are not susceptible to damage if a good coat of paint or varnish is maintained.

Repair of Historic Doors

In many cases a historic door merely needs to be rehung. This treatment is preferred rather than replacing the door altogether. Often repairing a historic door is necessary, in which case, repairing it rather than replacing it is suggested. In most cases it is in fact easier, and more economical, to repair an existing door rather than to replace it. This is preferred by the HLC because the original materials contribute to the historic character of the building. Even when replaced with an exact duplicate door, a portion of the historic building fabric is lost. Such treatment should be avoided. When deciding whether to repair or replace a historic door, consider the following:

First, determine the door's architectural significance. Is it a key character-defining element of the building? Is the front door in a position on the primary facade such that it is visible? Is the design of the historic door indicative of the architectural style or type of the house? If the answer to one or more of these questions is "yes," then preservation is the best approach. A door in an obscure location, or on the rear of a structure may not be considered a prominent feature of the house. Thus, greater flexibility in the treatment or replacement of such doors may be considered.

Second, inspect the door to determine its condition. Is the door hanging wrong or does it lack proper hardware and framing components that make it functional? If so, replacing these elements is appropriate. Check the door to see that it opens and closes smoothly and that it fits in its jamb. Some problems may be superficial ones, such as peeling paint, deteriorated detailing or broken sashes. These are issues that can be remedied without altering the historic character.



The original materials and details of a door contribute to the overall historic character of a building and should be preserved.

DOORS, continued..

Third, determine the appropriate treatment for the door. In many cases the door may not fit the door jamb or threshold as it should. In this case the hinges and the threshold of the door should be tightened or refit to allow smooth opening and closing of the door. Shaving or undercutting the door to fit the door frame is not recommended as a solution.

Surfaces may require cleaning and patching. Some components may be deteriorated beyond repair. Patching and splicing in new material for only those portions that are decayed should be considered in such a case, rather than replacing the entire door. If the entire door must be replaced, the new one should match the original in its general appearance and should be in character with the building style. When rehabilitating a historic door it is important to maintain original doors, jambs, transoms, window panes and hardware where feasible.

Energy Conservation

In some cases, owners may be concerned that an older door is less efficient in terms of energy conservation. In winter, for example, heat loss associated with an older door may make a room uncomfortable and increase heating costs. In fact, most heat loss is associated with air *leakage* though the space below the door and through glass panes in the door, if it has any.

The most cost-effective energy conservation measures for a typical historic door is to install weather stripping along the door frame, to fit the door to the jamb and threshold and to caulk any window panes. These measures will dramatically reduce heat loss while preserving historic features.

If additional energy savings are a concern, consider installing a storm door. This may be applied to the exterior of the door. It should be designed such that the exterior appearance of the original door is not obscured.

Replacement Doors

While replacing an entire door assembly is discouraged, it may be necessary in some cases. When a door is to be replaced, the new one should match the appearance of the original. In replacing a door, one should be careful to retain the original door opening location, door size and door shape. In addition, one should consider the design of the door, choosing a replacement that is compatible with the style and type of the house.

A frequent concern is the material of the replacement door. In general, using the same material as the original is preferred. If the historic door was wood, then using a wood replacement is the best approach. A metal door, if seen from the street, will detract from the character of the historic house and generally is not allowed.



When a door is to be replaced, the new one should match the appearance of the original.

DESIGN STANDARDS FOR DOORS

Finally, when replacing a historic door, it is important to preserve the original door frame when feasible. This is important in keeping the size and configuration of the original door.

4.1 Preserve the functional, proportional and decorative features of a primary entrance.

Maintain features important to the character of a historic doorway. These may include: the door, door frame, screen door, threshold, glass panes, paneling, hardware, detailing, transoms and flanking sidelights. Avoid changing the position and function of original front doors and primary entrances. If necessary, use replacement doors with designs and finishes similar to historic doors.

4.2 When a historic door is damaged, repair it and maintain its general historic appearance.

4.3 When replacing a door, use materials that appear similar to that of the original.

A metal door, if seen from the street, is inappropriate where the original was wood.

4.4 When replacing a door, use a design that has an appearance similar to the original door or a door associated with the style of the house.



When a historic door or its components are damaged, repair them and maintain their general historic appearance.

