

# SpecGuy's

## Glossary of Construction Specifications Terms

*Below are common specifications terms, linked to website resources where possible. We hope this helps you navigate the world of construction specifications. Your suggestions for improvement are always welcome:*

[Glossary Suggestion](#)

**4Specs** – Product manufacturer information site. 12,000 bookmarks. [www.4specs.com](http://www.4specs.com)

**ANSI** – The American National Standards Institute. ANSI is an umbrella organization that administers and coordinates the national voluntary consensus standards system. [www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org)

**ARCOM** – Architectural Computer Services, Inc. Publishers of MASTERSPEC under license from the American Institute of Architects. Publishers of MASTERWORKS specification editing software. [www.arcomnet.com](http://www.arcomnet.com)

**ASTM International** – Formerly the American Society for Testing Materials. They develop and publish testing standards for materials and specifications used by industry. [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)

**BSD SpecLink®** – Subscription master guide specification library with database editing software. Complies with CSI MasterFormat. [www.bssoftlink.com](http://www.bssoftlink.com)

**CCB** – Construction Criteria Base. An electronic library of federal construction guide specifications, manuals, standards and other criteria documents, published by the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS). [www.ccb.org](http://www.ccb.org)

**CSI** – Construction Specifications Institute. Membership organization of design professionals, construction professionals, product manufacturers, and building owners. Develops and promotes industry communication standards and certification programs. [www.csinet.org](http://www.csinet.org).

**FMG** – Factory Mutual Global. Insurance industry consortium whose loss prevention engineering standards serve as defacto construction industry standards for roofing and other construction assemblies. [www.fmglobal.com](http://www.fmglobal.com)

**General Conditions** – (When used by contractors) Construction project activities and their associated costs that are not usually assignable to a specific material installation or subcontract. Example: temporary electrical power.

**General Conditions** – (When used by everyone else) The contract document (often a standard form) that spells out the relationships between the parties to the contract. Example: the AIA Document A201.

**Guide specification** – A resource specification section that is used as a guide or assist to persons writing or editing contract specifications.

**LEED** – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. A sustainable design building certification system promulgated by the United States Green Building Council. Also an accrediting program for professionals (LEED APs) who have mastered the certification system. [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

**Leeds** – A city in Yorkshire, England. [www.leeds.gov.uk](http://www.leeds.gov.uk).

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**Manual of Practice™** – (MOP) Previous edition of CSI's Project Resource Manual (PRM).

**MANU-SPEC®** – A manufacturer's proprietary guide specification library published by Reed First Source. Formerly published by CSI. [www.reedfirstsource.com](http://www.reedfirstsource.com)

**Master specification** – A resource specification section containing options for selection, usually created by a design professional firm, which once edited for a specific project becomes a contract specification.

**MasterFormat™** – Industry standard for organizing specifications and other construction information, published by CSI and Construction Specifications Canada. Formerly a 5-digit number system with 16 divisions. Now a 6- or 8-digit numbering system with 49 divisions. Note that CSI does not publish a guide specification library.

**MASTERSPEC®** – Subscription master guide specification library published by ARCOM and owned by the American Institute of Architects. Complies with CSI MasterFormat. [www.masterspec.com](http://www.masterspec.com)

**PageFormat™** – Companion industry standard to MasterFormat. Dictates the page design of construction specifications.

**PRODUCT MASTERSPEC®** - A manufacturer's proprietary guide specification library based on MASTERSPEC sections and published by ARCOM. [www.productmasterspec.com](http://www.productmasterspec.com)

**Project Resource Manual/CSI Manual of Practice®** - Industry resource text for the organization, preparation, use and interpretation of construction documents. Previous edition: see Manual of Practice.

**Proprietary Specification** – A method of specifying that references the name of a manufacturer or product as a means of establishing the required characteristics of a product.

**SectionFormat™** – Companion industry standard to MasterFormat. Organizes specification sections into 3 parts, subdivided by standard article titles.

**SpecsIntact** – Specification editing software developed by NASA and used by several federal government agencies. <http://specsintact.ksc.nasa.gov/>

**SPECTEXT®** – Subscription master guide specification library published by the Construction Sciences Research Foundation. [www.spectext.com](http://www.spectext.com)

**UL** – Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. A private testing and labeling organization that develops test standards for product compliance. UL standards appear throughout specifications, often in roofing requirements, and always in equipment utilizing or delivering electrical power. [www.ul.com](http://www.ul.com)

**UFGS** - Unified Facilities Guide Specifications. A master specification library published for use by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Naval Facility Engineering Command, and the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency. Edited using SpecsIntact software. [www.ccb.org/docs/ufgshome/UFGSToc.htm](http://www.ccb.org/docs/ufgshome/UFGSToc.htm)