

Useful Terms House Purchase, Building & DIY:

A

à aménager - for conversion; improvement
à brancher - to be connected
abat-vent - chimney cowl
accolé - adjoining
affaissement - subsidence of ground
aggloméré - chipboard
aluminium - aluminium
aménageable - convertible
aménagé(e) - fitted; equipped; converted
ancien(e) - former
appentis - lean-to
appui de fenêtre - window sill
ardoises – slates
arête (de croup) – hip
arêtier – hip rafter
à refaire – needs redoing
à restaurer – for renovation
arrière-cuisine – utility room/scullery
atelier – workshop
au clou – nailed
avant-toit – eaves

B

Baignoire – bath
Balcon – balcony
Balustrade – balustrade
Bande de recouvrement – flashing
Bâtiment – building
Balatum – linoleum
Belle vue – lovely view
Béton – concrete
Bloc – block (building unit)
Bloc de béton coulé (préfabriqué) – precast concrete block
Bois – wood
Bois feuillu – hardwood
Bois imprégné – impregnated wood
Bois pourri – wood rot
Bois résineux – softwood
Bon – good
Boug – village
Brique – brick
Bronze – bronze
Buanderie – utility room/laundry
Bûcher – woodshed
Bureau – office

C

Cable – electricity cable
Campagne – country
Carreau – floor tile
Carrelage – tiled floor
Carreleur – tiler – floors and walls
Cave – wine/cider store or cellar
Cellier – store room
Chambre – bedroom
Chape – creed

Charpente – roof timbers
Charpentier – carpenter
Châssis – window frame
Chaudière – boiler
Chauffage central – central heating
Chauffage central fuel – oil-fired central heating
Chauffagiste – heating engineer
Chauffe-eau – water heater
Chaufferie – boiler room
Chaux – lime
Cheminée – chimney or fireplace
Chêne – oak
Chéneau encaissé – box gutter
Chevron – rafter
Citerne à fuel – oil tank
Clou - nail
Combles – roof space
Commerçants – shops
Compteur – meter
Condensation – condensation
Couche isolante – damp-proof course
Couloir – corridor
Cour – yard
Couverture – roof
Couvreur – roofer, roof tiler, slater
Crépi – rendering
Cuisine – kitchen
Cuivre – copper
Cuvette de descente – rainwater head

D

Dallage – tiling
Dalle – floor tile
Débarras – boxroom
Dependence – outbuilding
Dépenses chauffage – heating costs
Double vitrage – double glazing
Douche – shower
Douille – electrical socket
Droit de passage – right of way

E

Eau de la ville – mains water
Eau de puits – well water
Échafaudage – scaffolding
Éclairage – electric lighting
Écurie – stable
Égout – sewer
Electrician – electrician
Électricité – electricity
Enduit – rendering
Enduit intérieur – plaster (internal wall finish)
Entrée – hall
Envillagement – group of buildings, farm, hamlet
Escallier – staircase
Est – east
Étable – cowshed
Étage – floor, storey
Étagère – shelf
État – condition
Évier – sink

F

Faïence – wall tiling
Faîte – ridge
Fenêtres – windows
Fenêtre à battants – casement window
Fenêtre à guillotine – sash window
Ferme – farm
Fermette – small farm
Fiche (électricité) – electrical plug
Fil (électrique) – electrical wire
Fissure, lézarde – crack
Fléchissement – deflection
Foundation – foundation
Fosse étanche – cesspit
Fosse septique – septic tank
Four à pain – bread oven
Fournil – bakehouse
Frisette – tongue and groove panelling
Fuel – domestic heating oil
Fuite – leakage

G

Gazinière – gas cooker
Gouttière – roof gutter
Grange – barn (stone + slate/tiles)
Grenier – loft, attic
Gros oeuvre – basic structure

H

Hameau – hamlet
Hangar – barn (corrugated iron + wood)
Hotte – cooker hood
Huisserie – door frame
Humidité – dampness

I

Insect xylophage – woodworm
Insert – enclosed, glass fronted fireplace
Isolation thermique – thermal insulation

J

Jardin – garden
Joli cadre – attractive setting
Jontoisement – pointing

K

L

Lambris – wood panelling
Lavabo – washbasin
Lave-mains – handbasin
Lézarde – crack
Linteau – lintel
Lucarne – dormer window or skylight

M

Maçon – bricklayer
Maçonnerie – brickwork, masonry
Maison – house
Malfaçon – defective work/job
Marteau – hammer

Menuisier – carpenter and joiner
Meubles – furniture
Mitoyenneté – attached to another property
Mitoyenneté (non) – detached
Mitre – chimney pot
Mobilier – furniture
Moquette – fitted carpet
Mortier – mortar
Moyen – fair
Murs – walls
Mur (limite de propriété) – boundary wall
Mur à double paroi – cavity wall
Mur mitoyen – party wall

N

Neuf/neuve – new
Nord – north
Novopan – chipboard

O

Orientation – facing
Oust – west

P

Panne – purlin
Parpaings – concrete blocks
Parquet – floorboards
Peintre – painter
Peinture – paint
Persiennes – shutters
Pièces – rooms
Pierre – stone
Pignon – gable
Placard – cupboard
Placoplâtre – plasterboard
Plafond – ceiling
Planche faîtière – ridge board
Plancher – structural floor
Platelage – floor timber, decking
Plâtre – plaster
Paltrier – plasterer
Pince - pliers
Plomb – lead
Plombier – plumber
Poignée – door handle
Porte – door
Porte à panneaux – panelled door
Porte-fenêtre – French door, French window
Pourriture – rot
Pourriture humide – wet rot
Pourriture sèche – dry rot
Pouters – beams
Pouters apparentes – exposed beams
Prise (électricité) electrical socket
Prix TTC – all inclusive price
Proche – close

Q

R

Radiateur – radiator
Rayon – shelf
Rayonnage – shelving

Remise – large shed
Reparation, reprise – repair
Reserve – storeroom
Reservoir (d'eau) – cold water storage cistern
Restaurée – renovated
Restaurée en partie – partially renovated
Revêtement de sol – floor covering
Rez-de-chaussée – ground floor
Rive (toit) – verge
Robinet – tap
Robinet mitiguer – mixer tap

S

Salle à manger – dining room
Salle de bains – bathroom
Salle d'eau – shower room
Séjour – living room
Serrure – lock
Seuil – threshold and doorsill
Site – location
Sol – floor
Sol ciment – concrete floor
Solve de plancher – timber floor joist
Souche de cheminée – chimney stack
Sous-sol – basement
Sud – south
Survitrage – secondary double glazing

T

Tapisserie – wallpaper
Tassement – settlement (foundations)
Taxe Foncière + Taxe d'Habitation – French equivalent to Council Tax
Terrain (superficie) – land area
Terre battue – earth floor
Toit – roof
Tôle – corrugated iron
Tout à l'égout – mains sewerage
Tout proche, tout près – nearby
Tuiles – roof tiles
Tuile arêtière – hip tile
Tuile faîtière – ridge tile
Tuile plate à emboîtement – flat interlocking roof tile
Tuyau de descente – rainwater downpipe

U

V

Vasistas – fanlight
Vélux – rooflight
Vernis – varnish
Verre – glass
Verre polit – plate glass
Ville – town
Vis – screw
Vitre, vitrage – glazing, glass, pane of glass
Vitrier – glazier
Voisins – neighbours
Volet – external shutter