

# National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

**Criterion A.** That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; **or**

**Criterion B.** That are associated with the lives of significant persons in or past; **or**

**Criterion C.** That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; **or**

**Criterion D.** That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

**Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance.** To be designated historic, a property must not only be shown to be significant under established criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either retain integrity (this is, convey their significance) or they do not.

The chart below was created by Arizona State Historic Preservation Officer James Garrison in 1989. The matrix identifies how aspects of integrity combine to convey the significance of various property types based on the criterion chosen to substantiate significance.

## Aspects of Integrity: Generalized Application

Jim Garrison 1989

	Property Types				
Criteria	Building	District	Site	Structure	Object
A. Event/ History	Location Materials Feeling Association	Location Setting Feeling Association	Historic Location Setting Feeling Association	Location Materials Feeling Association	Materials Feeling Association
B. Person	Materials Feeling Association	Location Setting Materials	Historic Location Setting Association	Materials Feeling Association	Materials Feeling Association
C. Design/ Construction	Design Workmanship Materials Feeling	Setting Design Feeling Materials	Architectural Setting Design Feeling	Design Workmanship Materials Feeling	Design Workmanship Materials Feeling
D. Likely to Yield/ Has Yielded	Workmanship Materials	Location Materials	Archaeological Location Materials	Workmanship Materials	Workmanship Materials

Aspects of Integrity: Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, Association

**Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognize seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity.** To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of these aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is necessary for a property to convey its significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant.

**Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.** The relationship between the property and its location is often important to understanding why the property was created or why something happened. The actual location of an historic property, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare cases, the relationship between a property and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved.

**Setting is the physical environment of a historic property.** Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves how, not just where, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve.

**Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.** It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property (or its significant alteration) and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials.

**Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.** The choice and combination of materials reveal the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. Indigenous materials are often the focus of regional building traditions and thereby help define an area's sense of time and place. A property must retain the key exterior materials dating from the period of its historic significance. If the property has been rehabilitated, the historic materials and significant features must have been preserved.

**Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.** It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components. It can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. It can be based on common traditions or innovative period techniques. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of a craft, illustrate the aesthetic principles of a historic or prehistoric period, and reveal individual, local, regional, or national applications of technological practices and aesthetic principles.

**Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.** It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the 19th century. A grouping of prehistoric petroglyphs, unmarred by graffiti and intrusions and located on its original isolated bluff, can evoke a sense of tribal spiritual life.

**Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.** A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. For example, a Revolutionary War battlefield whose natural and manmade elements have remained intact since the 18th century will retain its quality of association with the battle.

**Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register.**