



## How to determine the Sitting and Facing of a Home, Apartment or Building

### What is Sitting and Facing, and how do we use this information?

The terms "Sitting" and "Facing," simply refer to the direction a building or apartment is pointing. Which is the front, which is the back! They are opposite terms for opposite directions, like "North" and "South." In Traditional Feng Shui, we are most interested in the "Sitting" or back direction, because the Sitting direction determines the Trigram of the building or apartment, and is also used in the 24 Mountains' computations.

Trigrams are based on the eight basic 45-degree directions, north, northwest, west, southwest, south, southeast, east and northeast. The 24 mountains is based on dividing the 360 degrees into 24 directions, each of 15 degrees.

An error of even one-half of a degree in misreading the direction of a building can cause an inaccurate Feng Shui evaluation with undesirable results.

### A building has both a Yin and a Yang direction.

Sitting and Facing is one of the most advanced principles of Traditional Feng Shui, and is based on the concept that a building has both a Yin part (direction), and a Yang part (direction).

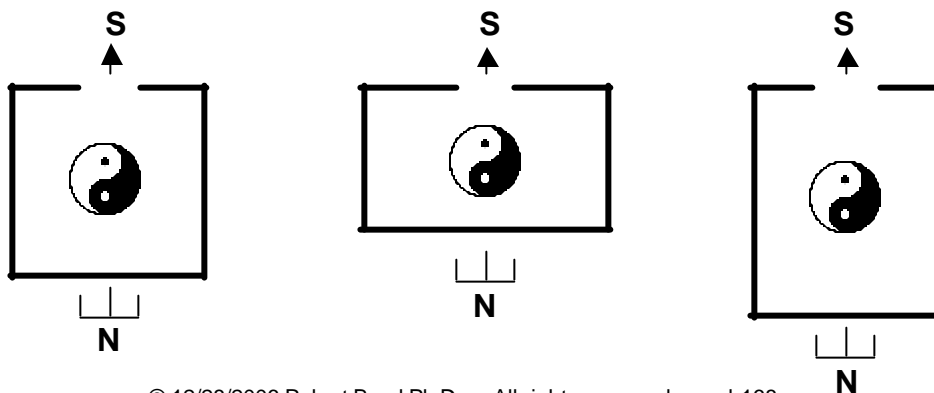
The Tai Chi symbol (at the right) illustrates the concept. The Yang (white) indicates the front or Facing direction and is represented by the arrow. The Yin (black) indicates the back or Sitting direction and is represented the Chinese symbol for mountain.



The front door does not automatically determine anything! It is just one of many other factors to be taken into consideration while analyzing the layout and design of a building or an apartment.

### In the beginning

Traditionally, Chinese homes were small, simple four-sided cottages with one doorway and no windows. The direction of the doorway indicated the Facing, while the opposite back wall determined the Sitting direction and Trigram of the house. Here are three simple floor plans to illustrate the idea.





I used North and South only as examples. The actual direction must be determined by using a compass or a Traditional Chinese Lo Pan.

Traditionally, the Sitting (Yin) direction is shown at the bottom, while the Facing (Yang) direction is shown at the top, which is the traditional way to display the Tai Chi symbol.

### Today's Homes.

Today, homes and commercial building have become larger and more complex in their layout and design. Many times it is very difficult, if not impossible to determine the Sitting and Facing directions.

I have put together some criteria to help beginning students better understand the basic concepts of Sitting and Facing as used in Traditional Feng Shui, as well as what to do when you can't determine the Sitting or Facing of a building.

The following three rules cover most situations.

1. The Kitchen Rule.
2. The Facing Rule.
3. The Baseline Rule.

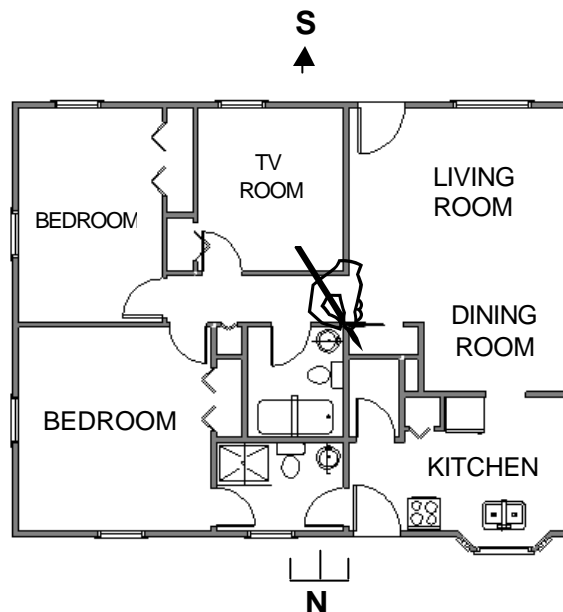
### The Kitchen Rule for Houses.

Typically, the kitchen indicates the sitting of a home. Most tract houses face the street and have kitchens in the back. The back wall of the house is usually plain, and the view is unspectacular. Again, this is the most common situation, there are many exceptions.

For purposes of discussion, let's agree that the house at the right faces a quiet residential street, and has a small backyard with an unspectacular view.

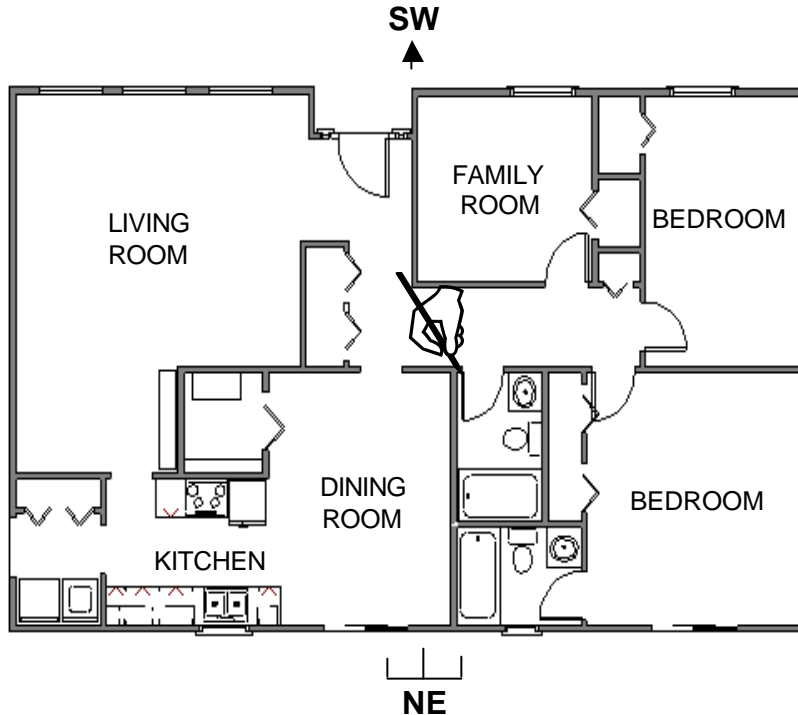
After checking with a compass we find that the house Faces South while Sitting North. So this house is a K'an, because the Sitting is in the North, and the North represents the Trigram K'an.

Notice that the Southern half (Facing direction) contains spacious public areas while the Northern half (Sitting direction) contains two bathrooms, as well as the kitchen. It seems more private and congested. Plumbing and heavy fixtures are also indicators of the Sitting direction.





Here is another example of the Kitchen Rule. I placed the Tai Chi symbol on the floor plan to emphasize the relationship of Yin and Yang to house's Sitting and Facing directions. Notice that this home Sits in the Northeast with has a Ken Trigram.



**The Facing Rule for complex and odd shaped buildings.**

Sometimes its easier to determine the facing of a building and work backwards.

In those situations ask yourself:

1. What was the architect's intention. How did the architect envision the building to face.
2. If you where to take one picture of the building, which side or view would it be.

Typical examples of such situations are:

1. Ocean front homes or homes with spectacular views where the architect has designed the home to accent the view. Many times you may enter through a door in the back, garage or side of the property.
2. Irregular shaped houses or buildings. These shapes maybe, zigzag, wing, L-shaped, X-shaped, round, have an odd number of walls, or no parallel walls.

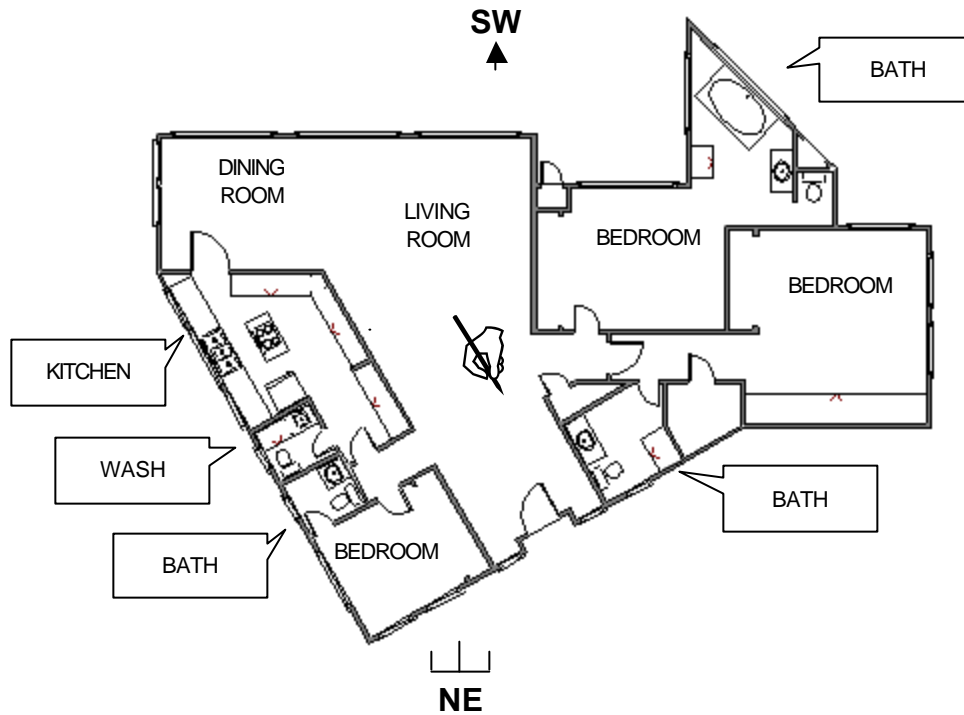
After you've chosen the Facing, then add or subtract 180 degrees from that direction, and use that as the criteria for the Sitting.

Example, your compass tells you that the building is facing North at 5 degrees, add 180. The building is Sitting 185 degrees, which indicates that it is a Li Trigram. The building's Sitting direction of 185 degrees, along with the its date of construction is then factored into the 24 Mountains computations.



### Examples of the Facing Rule.

This multi-walled home is in Beverly Hills and has a spectacular view of Southern California.



This house is also Wang Shan, Wang Shui (good for people, good for money) and has water in the Facing. Sometimes, life just doesn't get any better!



## **The Baseline Rule for Commercial property and apartments.**

This procedure is not as simple as the proceeding. It requires you to analyze the architectural features and the floor plan of the unit. The more features you can identify, the more secure you can be in your determination.

Some of the general characteristics of the Sitting or Yin direction are:

1. Smaller, darker, rooms and areas.
2. The area is private.
3. There are more bedrooms.
4. Close proximity of smaller rooms.
5. The area seems darker.
6. Outside, the back wall is usually very plain and lacks attractive architectural features.
7. The view is unspectacular.
8. A rear alley or small inauspicious backyard.

Specifically what to look for in the Sitting or Yin direction.

1. Kitchen.
2. Bathrooms.
3. Utility or wash rooms
4. Plumbing fixtures.
5. Solid baseline on the floor plan.
6. Structural elements such as the foundational supports for the floor, walls and heavy equipment.

Some of the general characteristics of the Facing or Yang direction are:

1. Larger, brighter rooms and areas.
2. The view is more beautiful.
3. There is an address number on outside of building.
4. The area is used for reception and has heavy traffic.
5. Lots of natural light from windows.

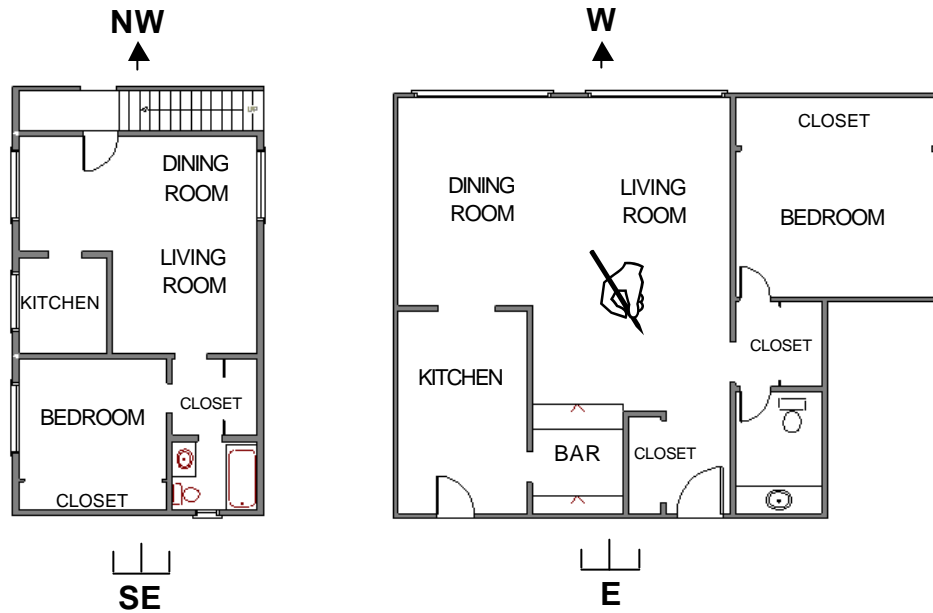
Specifically what to look for in the Facing or Yang direction.

1. Windows, the more, the larger, the better.
2. Large spacious rooms and public areas.
3. Doors.
4. A spectacular view.
5. Architect's intention. How did the architect envision the building to face.
6. Picture view. If you were to take one picture of the building, which side would it be.



Examples of the Baseline Rule.

The first, smaller apartment enters from the Facing direction and has the private rooms and areas in the Sitting. Yes, its facing has no windows! It Sits SE and is a Sun.



Notice that the larger apartment actually has two entrances, both in the Sitting. This unit Sits East and is a Chen Trigram.

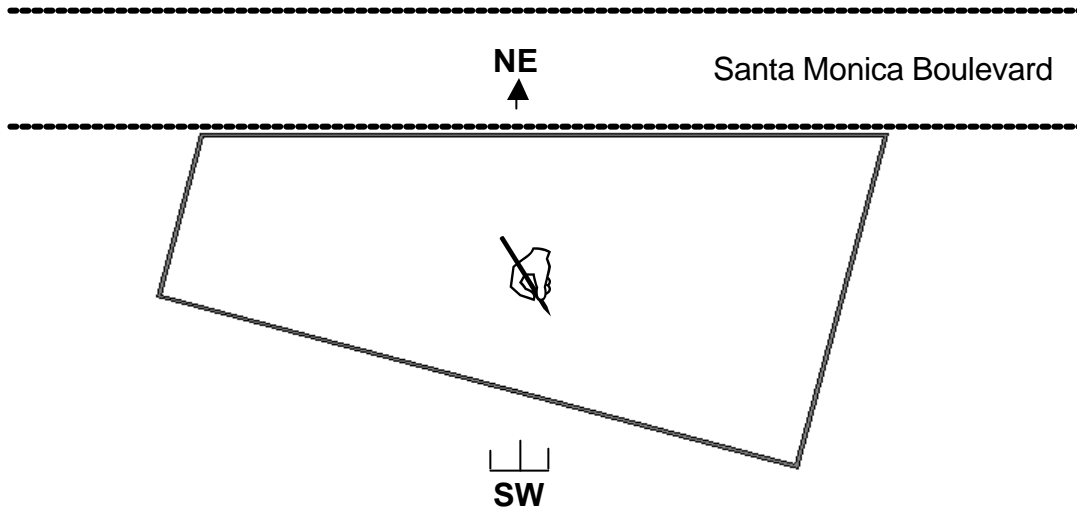
When analyzing the floor plan or layout of a building or apartment, look for the individual Yin (Sitting) and the Yang (Facing) features to help you make a determination.

The unit on the left has no windows in the facing, while the right unit has large windows. However, both units have smaller private areas, closets and a bathroom in their Sitting, and larger, more spacious public areas in their Facing.



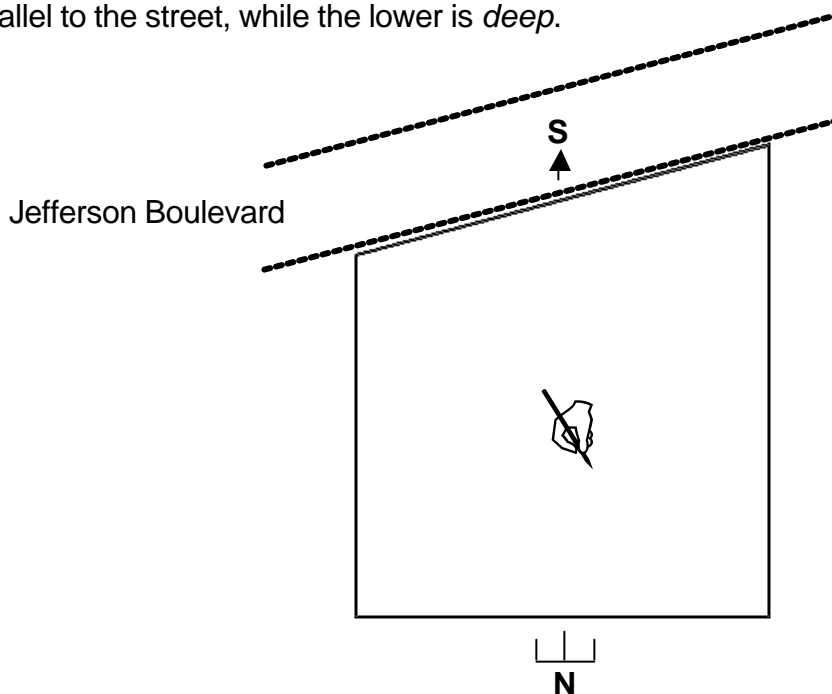
More unusual buildings.

The first commercial building is a restaurant and hotel that directly Faces Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood California. The commanding view, along with the longer line, large decorative windows, doors and other architectural features determined that the facing should be used when determining the Sitting.



The second commercial building is an industrial warehouse with none of the outstanding architectural features of the preceding. Its angled Facing wall had no relative influence on determining its Facing and Sitting.

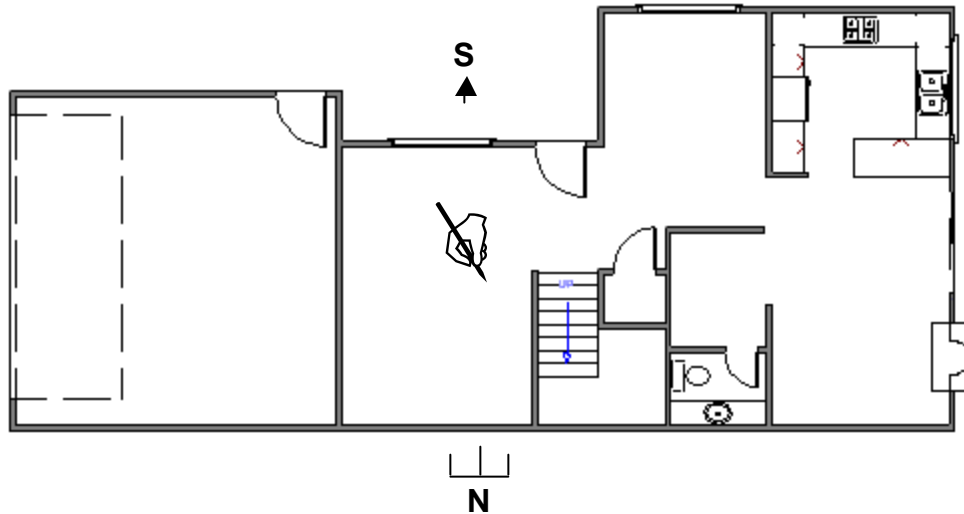
However, the major difference between these examples is that the upper unit is *shallow* and parallel to the street, while the lower is *deep*.





More examples.

The first unit is the ground floor of a two story townhouse. Notice that the kitchen is in the Facing! The long solid wall in the sitting is very Yin, while the windows, entrance and open public spaces in the Facing are very Yang.



The second unit is a one-bedroom apartment in Santa Monica, California. Again, a long solid wall in the private areas, with lots of windows in the public areas help indicate the unit's Sitting and Facings directions.

