



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

Concrete is the most commonly used building material in the world.



Modern architecture is a popular style.

Find out about architecture

Have fun identifying different styles of buildings in your area.

Architecture is the science and art of designing buildings, including homes, schools, offices, and museums. Architects, the people who do the design, must take into account how a building will look and how it will function for the people living there or using it. Like other forms of art, popular styles of architecture change over time. Here's what you need to know to explore different types of architecture.

Learn the history

People have been creating buildings for various purposes for thousands of years. Some of the oldest surviving examples of architecture are monuments to a civilization's gods or rulers. For example, the Great Pyramids of Egypt were created in 2550 to 2490 BCE as tombs for their leaders. As early as the 6th century BCE, the ancient Greeks and then the Romans built rectangular temples made of stone. Meanwhile, in China, traditional temples and homes have been made with wood and tiles for thousands of years.



The Great Pyramids are made of stone.

Recognize ancient styles

One popular style of architecture is known as classical. It was first used by the Greeks and Romans, and it's known for its use of columns. The columns can be decorative, provide support to a ceiling, or both. You might see them today on official buildings, such as

courthouses or town halls. Another ancient style that's still used today is Gothic architecture, which originated in the 12th century in Europe. Many churches today contain Gothic decorations, such as pointed stone arches in the ceiling.

Spot newer architecture

You may also notice different architecture styles used in homes, perhaps even in your own neighborhood. Homes created in the Victorian style often have wrap-around porches and decorative trim.

Homes made of stone and stucco are often considered to be part of an Arts and Crafts design style. Modern design, which became popular in the 20th century, led to many homes being built with a flat roof and fewer walls.

Understand the principles

Besides considering who will be using or living in a building, architects also factor in how a design should make people feel. For instance, should the building blend with nature or is the building meant to represent unity for competition, such as for a baseball stadium? Most important, architects must ensure their building will be stable and safe. Architects use elements such as arches, steel beams, and rods to make sure walls, ceilings, and roofs can be held up securely through all types of weather and use.

Famous buildings around the world

Check out these interesting examples of the many types of architecture that can be seen today.

Burj Khalifa

This skyscraper in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, features a tube-like design. It's currently the tallest building in the world at more than 2,700 feet high.



Taj Mahal

Built in the 1600s, this monument to the wife of an ancient emperor in

India combines Islamic, Persian, and Indian styles of architecture. Built of white marble, it can appear to change color based on the intensity of the sunlight.



Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

This Spanish museum resembles a piece of art itself. The huge, titanium-plated curves make it look like a sculpture.



Chrysler Building

This New York City skyscraper is famous for its geometric

decorations on the top of the building. Many consider it to be the classic example of Art Deco architecture, which was popular in the late 1920s when the building was constructed.

