

American Architecture

Americká architektura

periods

- Colonial New England
- Georgian or Palladian
- Federal
- Neo-classical
- Greek Revival
- Gothic Revival
- Victorian
- Sullivanesque
- Early skyscrapers – mrakodrapy
- Frank Lloyd Wright
- Art Deco
- Miesian
- Postmodern
- Deconstructive

Colonial New England

- English settlers mostly came from towns, not farms; they tried to imitate what they had been used to in England, but usually simplified – not just because of poverty and lack of materials, but because of the Puritan dislike of ostentation and display.



Birchbark wigwam

Typical of New England and eastern Canada. Algonkian languages don't differentiate between nouns and verbs: you could translate it as "house" or as "it houses."



“House of the seven gables,” Salem

Second-generation houses suggest greater prosperity (window glass was imported, and expensive) but still are Puritanically simple.



Saltbox, Connecticut

Salt came in boxes shaped like this. The slant allows heavy snow to slide off rather than caving in the roof.

eighteenth-century America

- After about 1700 the American colonies were prosperous enough to begin imitating the fashionable architecture of England. The Enlightenment era, with its emphasis on human liberty, reason, logic and science, liked the designs of Palladio, a Renaissance architect whose designs were simple, symmetrical, and evocative of ancient Greece and Rome.



Villa Cornaro

In the 1500s Palladio designed a number of villas like this one near Venice; but then he went out of fashion. Note the symmetry and classical details, like the columns.



Brick Market, Newport, Rhode Island

This 1762 building is one of the best Palladian-style structures in the northern states. Note the typical alternating fenestration (window styles).



House in Salem, Massachusetts

The style became popular in seaport towns which were in constant contact with England.



Dwight House, Deerfield, Massachusetts (1754)

Palladian also influenced frontier towns, though it is usually simpler and uses materials that Palladio would not have approved of, like wood. Note the broken pediment over the door, suggesting that the old Puritan values of the 1600s were eroding. This was a parsonage.



Governor's Palace, Williamsburg

To understand the idea of mirror-image symmetry, imagine a vertical line drawn through the center of the building.

Westover (Virginia)



Federal architecture

- During and after the Revolution, Americans wanted to get away from what they regarded as “European” – especially British – styles. For three or four decades, “Federal” was popular – though in fact it is really British – an imitation of “Adam style,” named for two architect brothers.

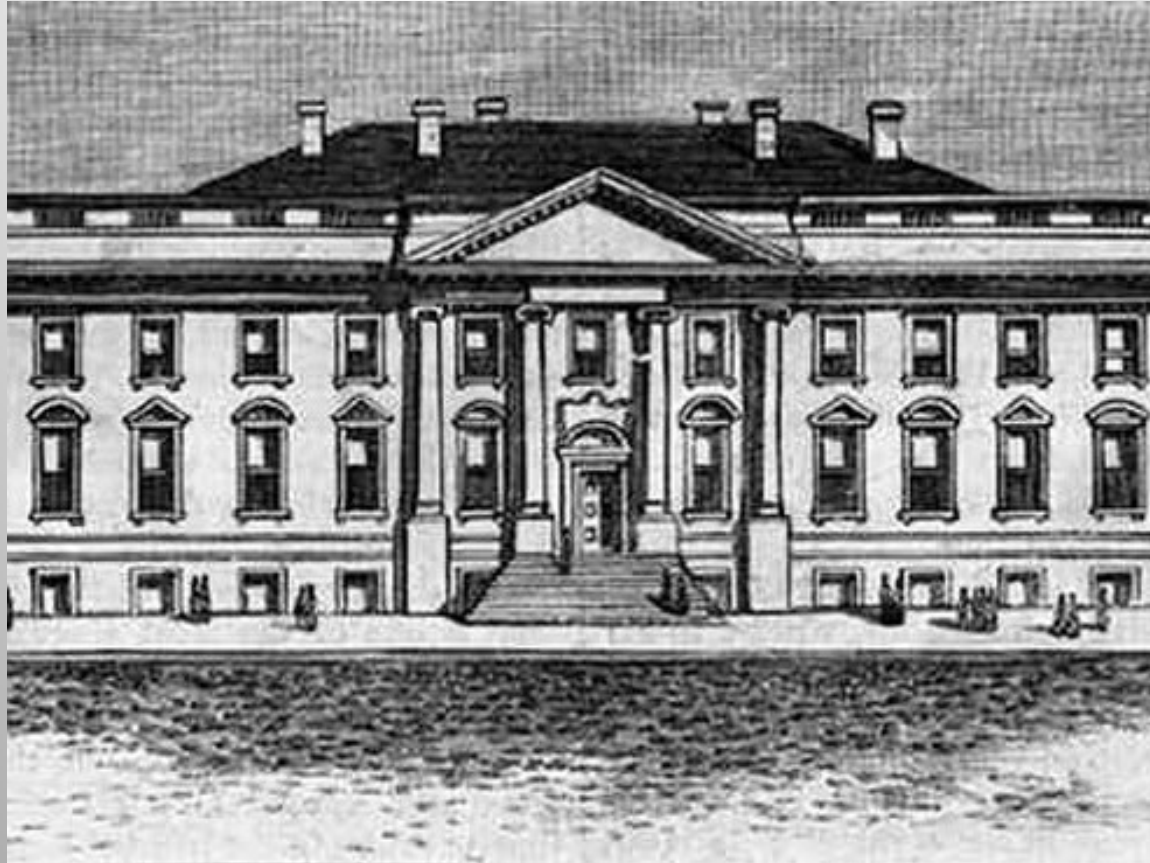


Barrett House, New Hampshire (c1800)

Note the pilasters at the corners, and the balustrade around the roof – typical Federal motifs.

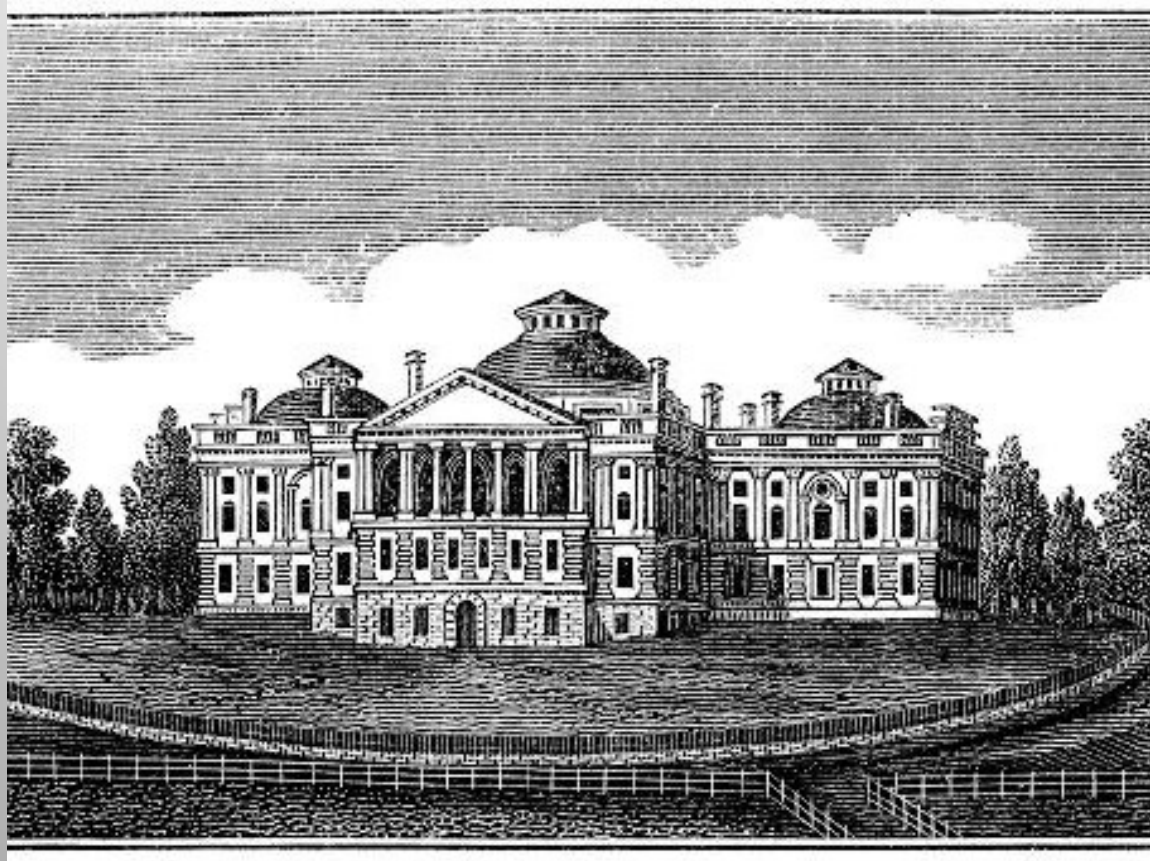
Neo-classical

- This means ‘Greek or Roman,’ but is not the same as Greek Revival (see later slides). The new republic looked back to Greece and Rome as the sources of democracy, and so new public buildings were designed to look Greek or Roman – but they often (unlike Greek Revival) violate the rules of genuine classical architecture.



White House (1790s)

A typically Roman feature: the alternating arched and triangular window pediments. Portico with ionic columns. But the roof resembles nothing the Greeks or Romans would have built.



Capitol (1793-still not finished...)

The two wings were built first (for the House and Senate) and then the central portion. Nearly all the features are Roman, but put together in ways that the Romans would not have recognized.



Capitol in 1846

The second dome is based more or less on that of the Pantheon in Rome – and does not at all match the rest of the building; it lasted only about 30 years.



Capitol today

There have been several domes; the current one was not finished until after the Civil War. It is modeled after the dome of St Paul's Cathedral in London, in turn modeled on St Peter's Basilica in Rome; it is more Mannerist than classical.

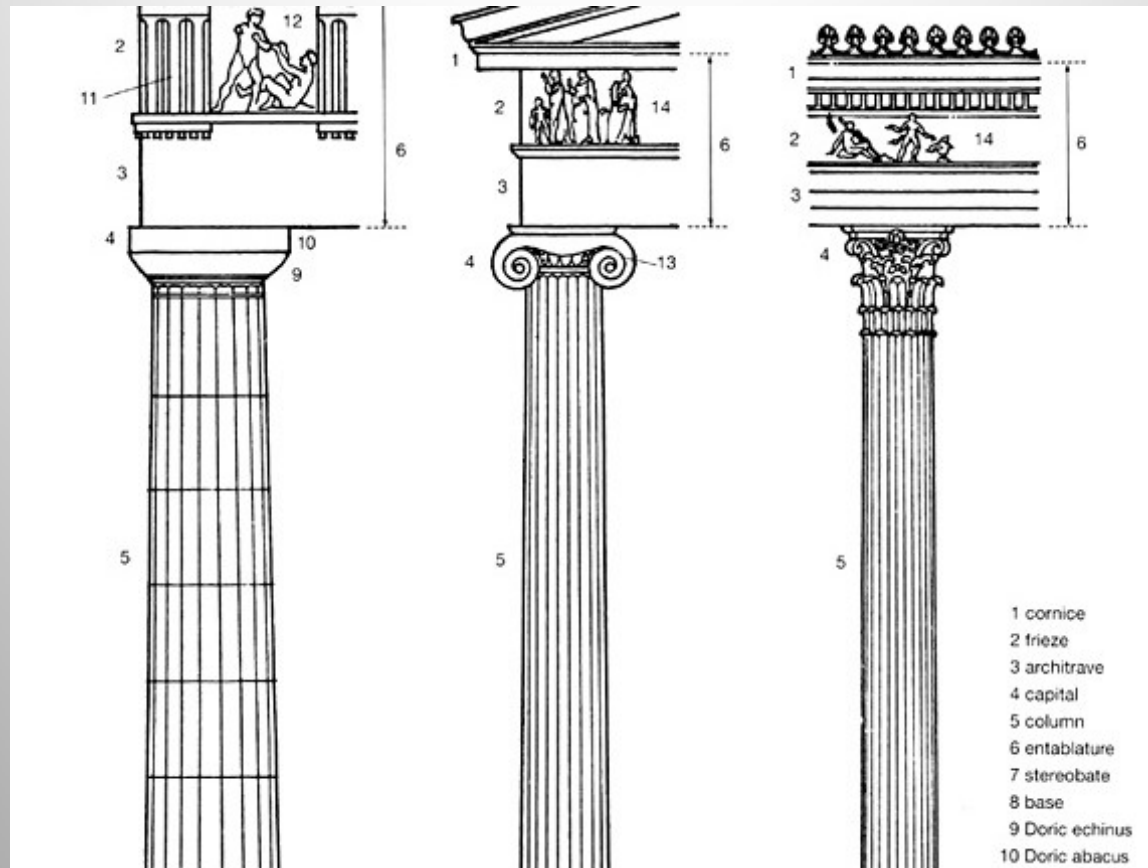


Supreme Court, Washington (1935)

A good example of not-quite-classical: Roman rather than Greek, because it is “imposing” rather than “elegant.” The architect was influenced by his friendship with Mussolini, who helped him obtain the Italian marble.

Greek Revival

- By the early nineteenth century architects, inspired by the Greek struggle for independence from the Turks, revived a more accurate form of classical architecture. In America the best examples are government buildings in antebellum plantation houses. Greek architecture pays great attention to proportion and simplicity.



The “orders”

Greek Revival is careful to use the three classical orders – Doric, Ionic, Corinthian – in the proper ways. The column capitals are easily identified, but each has associated motifs for the rest of the building as well.



Old Court House, Dayton (1850)

It's considered one of the finest examples of Greek Revival anywhere. The style is "Ionic hexastyle," and the proportions are perfect. It is modeled on a temple in Athens called the Theseum.



Rosswood (1857)

A Mississippi plantation house. The style is Greek Revival, but it begins to break some rules; the portico has two levels, and the windows are more Georgian. The large chimneys break up the symmetry. But the proportions are very good.

Greenwood (1830), Louisiana – classical Greek temples, which often had columns on all four sides, were adapted to Southern conditions – wide, deep porches are a necessity when the weather is hot and you have no air conditioning.



Gothic Revival

- In the mid-nineteenth century, the Romantic movement in literature and the arts revived interest in the Middle Ages – knights, castles, chivalry, that sort of thing. Industrialization and the fast pace of technology and social change made many people nostalgic. They rediscovered the great Gothic cathedrals of Europe (which the 18th-century Enlightenment had regarded as ugly hulks). In America, Gothic – sometimes quite accurate – appears in new churches; but also in public buildings and houses. The latter tend to use Gothic details and motifs, but assembled in ways that medieval architects would not have recognized.



St Patrick's Cathedral, New York (1858-1879)

Gothic utilizes horizontal lines and tapering spires and finials to “draw the eye upwards towards Heaven,” as one medieval builder said. St Patrick's is somewhat over-decorated, as is more typical of the late Gothic period in Europe. Two non-symmetrical steeples are not unusual.

Linden Avenue Baptist Church, Dayton (1873)

No self-respecting medieval architect would ever have worked in brick. But this church is quite good Gothic. All the basic features are here: tall flèche (the wooden part of the steeple); narrow windows with pointed arches; asymmetry; mostly vertical lines, very few horizontal; finials at the peak of the roof and on the shorter steeple at right. The semicircular arches over the doors are not typical.





Carson house, Eureka, California (1885)

Later in the century, Gothic sometimes was carried to extravagant extremes. Much the same thing happened in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages.

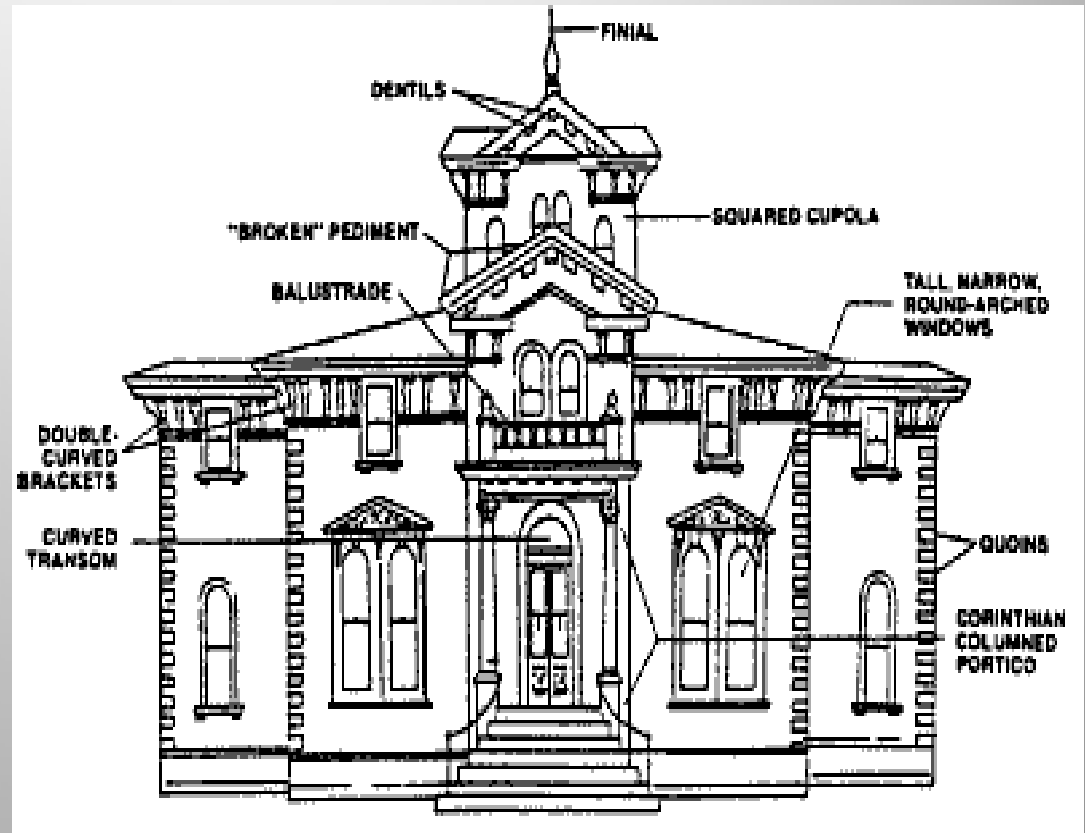


Victorian

There is no such thing as “Victorian architecture” – you have to add a qualifier, as there are so many sub-types. In America, the Victorian period (1837-1901) was one of middle-class prosperity, and so we see a lot of experimentation in ordinary houses as well as public and commercial buildings.

Characteristics of Italianate

- Low-pitched roof with projecting eaves supported by corbels
- Windows and doors with classical pediments
- First floor taller than the others, with corresponding taller windows
- Angled bay windows
- Belvedere-style towers or cupolas
- Quoined corners



Typical Italianate house – note the bracketed cornices





Oregon District, Dayton

Two varieties of Italianate: Tuscan mode and Lombard mode

Second Empire

Popular in America during and just after the time of the French Second Empire (1852-1870), at a time when everything French was in vogue.

Characteristics:

- Mansard roof, often with fish-scale shingles in a contrasting color
- Dormer windows
- Often one bullseye window
- Bay window on first floor
- Tall narrow windows, like Italianate
- Small portico or sometimes large porch, with classical columns
- Rounded or curved cupola



House (1870) in Raleigh, NC

Note the distinctive cupola with a
bullseye window, dormer
windows on the third floor, tall
narrow windows on the other
floors, porch with classical
support columns

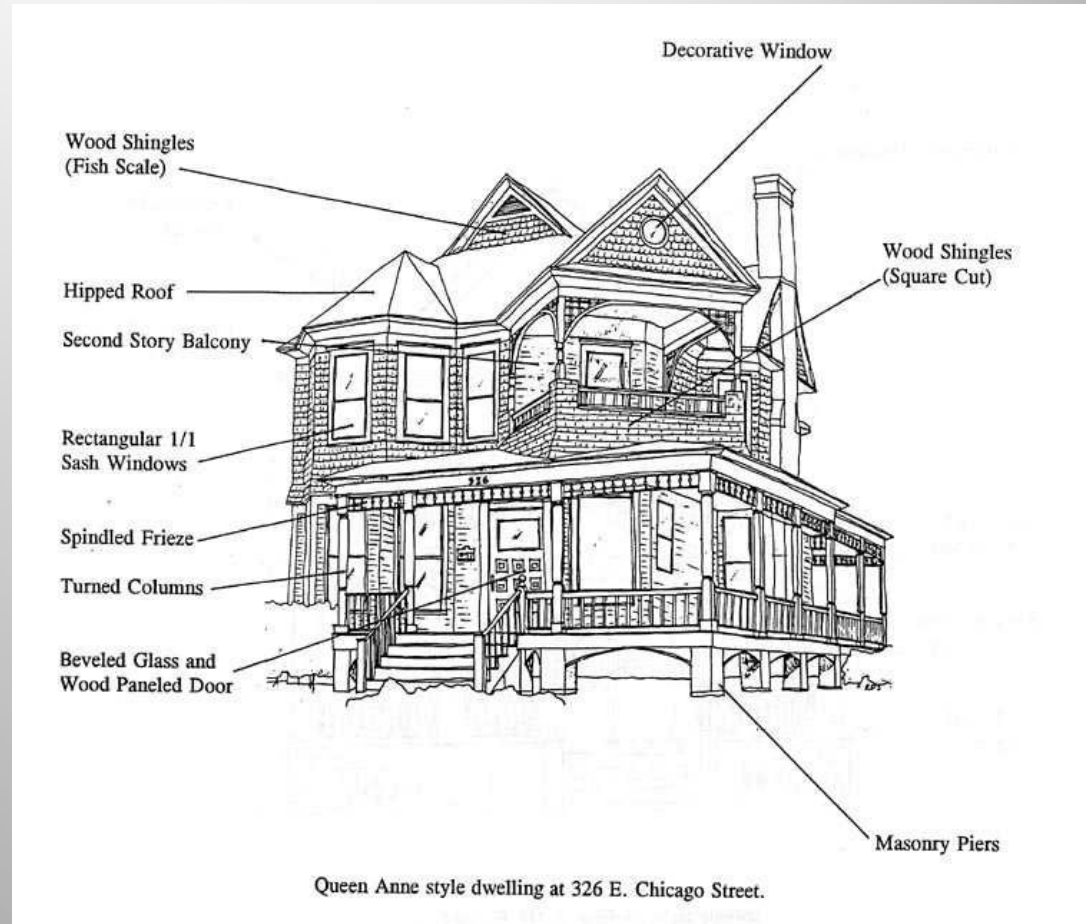


Queen Anne

It has nothing to do with the actual Queen Anne (1702-1714) the name was chosen just because it sounded classy.

Characteristics:

- Rambling, asymmetrical
- Fish-scale siding
- Dominant, sometimes cantilevered front gable
- Wide porches
- Prominent chimney
- Variety of external materials
- Round, square or polygonal tower





Queen Anne in Dayton

Superb example on Linden Avenue, in the Huffman Historic District.

Sullivan-esque

At the turn of the century we see the first skyscrapers, in Chicago and then New York. New types of structural steel and the invention of elevators made tall buildings practical. Some of the best were designed by Louis Henry Sullivan (1856-1924).

Characteristics:

- “form follows function”
- Iron or steel skeleton, covered with masonry walls
- Lush, organic ornamentation, mostly at roof level and in the interior
- Prominent Romanesque-arch entrances

This is the Guaranty Building in Buffalo (1894).





Auditorium Building, Chicago (1889)

Probably Sullivan's most famous building; now the home of Roosevelt University. Note the rusticated lower floors and the Romanesque arches.



Sullivan-esque frieze

These are often near the roofline of the building, so high up that they are not easily seen from the street. Usually terra cotta.

Wrigley Building (1924)

The architects used as a model the tower of the Giralda, a twelfth-century minaret in Seville, Spain (now the cathedral's bell tower).

Before about 1930, skyscraper architects were not really comfortable yet with the idea of strictly functional, monolithic buildings. They usually added decorative features derived from much earlier styles.



Woolworth Building

Lower Manhattan; tallest building in the world from 1913 to 1930

241.4 meters (792 feet)





Woolworth Building, New York (1913)

For a few decades, the world's tallest building. The upper stories have a very Gothic motif.



Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959)

A student of Louis Sullivan, Wright designed some Sullivanesque structures in his early career, but later developed his own unique “prairie style.”



Robie House, Chicago (1910)

Prairie style is characterized by long, low, horizontal lines; flat projecting roofs; windows grouped in horizontal bands; and complex but subdued decorations such as stained glass windows in muted colors.



Westcott House, Springfield, Ohio (1904)

Wright was much influenced by Japanese traditional architecture.



Fallingwater (1937), Pennsylvania

Wright's prairie houses are often designed to fit the surrounding landscape. In this case a stream passes under the house.



Wright room, Metropolitan Museum, New York

A typical Wright interior: lots of wood, horizontal lines, large banks of windows, geometrically designed furniture with a spare functional look.

Art Deco

Art deco was popular between the world wars, and represents a new fascination with modern technology as well as a desire to break from the styles of the past.

Characteristics:

- Bold, linear, geometric
- “machine-like” appearance
- Eclectic
- Streamlined
- use of modern materials like stainless steel and Bakelite, but also inlaid wood

The Chrysler Building is probably the most outstanding Art Deco skyscraper. The top is supposed to resemble the hubcaps and hood ornament of a 1930 Chrysler.



Empire State Building (1931)

1,250 feet (381 meters), and with its
antenna spire included, 1,454 ft
(443.2 meters)



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30 Rockefeller Center

Now the headquarters of the NBC networks. The postcard is just as art deco as the building.

850 feet (259 meters)

Now officially called the GE Building



30 Rockefeller Center

Over the main entrance. The human form in art deco is highly stylized and usually muscular.





Rockefeller Center construction (1930)

A famous and scary photo.



Radio City Music Hall (1932)

Part of the Rockefeller Center complex, the Music Hall looks rather ordinary from the outside. But...



Radio City Music Hall foyer

Radio City Music Hall foyer





Radio City Music Hall auditorium

The architect was inspired by watching the sun set over the Atlantic from the deck of an ocean liner.



Radio City Music Hall

The carpet pattern includes highly stylized images of musical images – see if you can identify some of them.

Miesian

German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969) inspired a whole generation of “form follows function” architects in the decades just after World War II. Miesian buildings are characterized by:

- Square, boxy look
- Minimal or no decoration
- Steel and glass

These apartment buildings in Chicago (1962) are Mies’ first significant American project.



Seagram Building

Mies van der Rohe also designed this New York skyscraper in 1957. At the time it was the most expensive skyscraper ever built.



Kettering Tower

Dayton's tallest building (1970) is an excellent example of Miesian. It was originally called the Winters Bank Building.



Postmodern architecture

Like other types of postmodernism, this is hard to define. In general, it means a rejection of or reaction against whatever is considered “modern.” Some characteristics:

- “meaning” is in the eye of the beholder
- Local, particular or unique ideas have value in themselves, regardless of what the “mainstream” thinks of them
- Different cultural ideas or “memes” can coexist and interact in meaningful ways
- The “modern” has been shattered; the pieces can be put back together in new ways
- A certain amount of cynicism towards generally accepted beliefs and standards



AT&T Building, New York (1984)

Now owned by Sony; designed by Philip Johnson. This is a direct reaction against the boxy, boring Miesian skyscrapers that surround it. At the top, a 'broken cornice' of the type seen on 18th-century furniture or grandfather clocks. At the base, a variety of borrowed motifs (see next slide). In between, simple and functional, but with projecting piers, like some pre-World War II skyscrapers.





AT&T Building at street level

Features copied from Italian Renaissance and medieval churches; the lobby is in the shape of a Romanesque Latin-cross chapel.

deconstructivism

Key terms:

- Fragmentation and dislocation
- Manipulation of the surface in unpredictable ways
- Avoidance of rectilinear shapes
- “controlled chaos”

56 Leonard Street, New York

By the first decade of the twenty-first century we see some far more experimental and daring skyscrapers. This Tribeca apartment building, resembling a Jenga puzzle, is described by the architects as “houses stacked in the sky.”





Weisman Art Museum, U. of Minnesota (1993)

Frank Gehry is known for his careful avoidance of straight lines and his use of unusual materials (in this case titanium – very expensive!).



Just a subway station...

Santiago Calatrava is Spanish, but has designed a number of buildings in the United States. This transportation hub planned for the site of the World Trade Center in Manhattan will probably not be built. Calatrava is known for his monochrome buildings with spiky excrescences.

Chicago Spire

Designed by Calatrava, this 150-story building was actually started in 2006 but halted by the 2008-2009 recession; whether it will be completed is not clear.

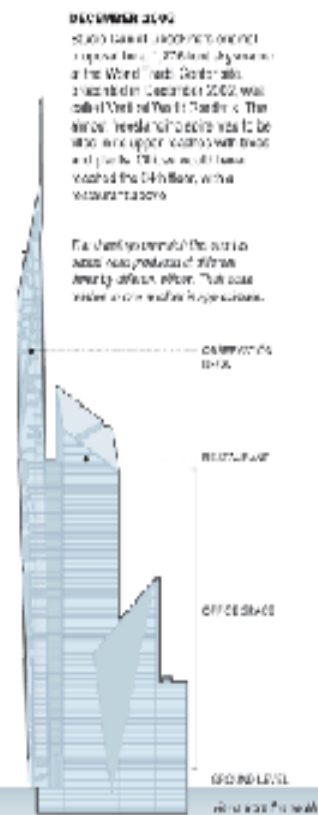


Freedom Tower's Evolution

DECEMBER 2001

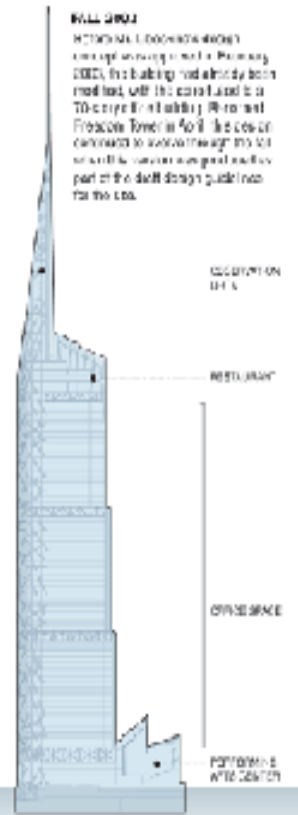
Skidmore, OWINGS & Merrill LLP released a conceptual design for a 1,776-foot skyscraper at the World Trade Center site. The design, unveiled in December 2002, was called "The New York 11 Center." The tower's headliner feature was to be a glass and copper spire with three wind vanes. The spire would have topped the 144-story, which would have 100 floors above ground.

The client requested the spire to have a "new production of African jewelry design" effect. This was never a serious architectural expression.



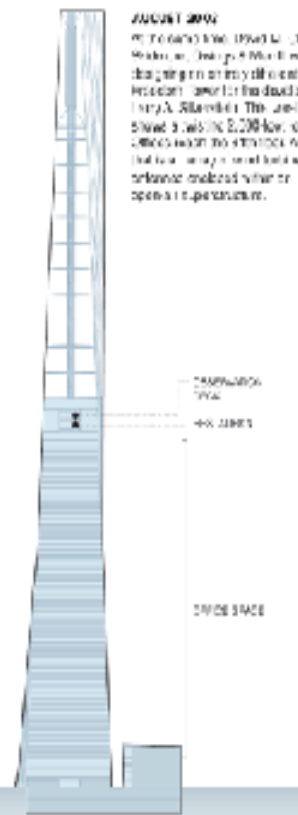
FALL 2002

ARCHITECTS SKIDMORE OWINGS & MERRILL (SOM) and architect Norman Foster's design had already been modified, with the central tower a 1,700-story steel building. The new Freedom Tower is 1,412 feet tall, and the cost of construction was estimated at \$1.1 billion. The design was a key part of the SOM design guidelines for the site.



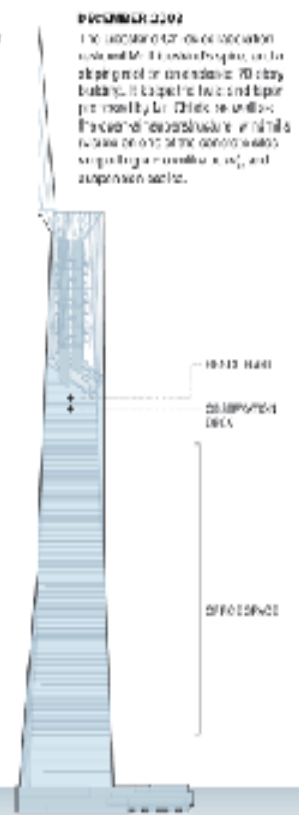
JULY 2003

THE NEW YORK 11 CENTER, 1,700 FT. TALL, WAS DESIGNED BY SOM. THE DESIGN WAS CHANGING IN AN EFFORT TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPER, JERRY A. BRONFMAN. THE DESIGN SHOWS A TOWER 1,412 FT. TALL, WITH OFFICE SPACE TO A FLOOR ABOVE THE TOWER'S TOWER HEAD AND A TOWER HEAD WITH AN OPEN AIR STRUCTURE.



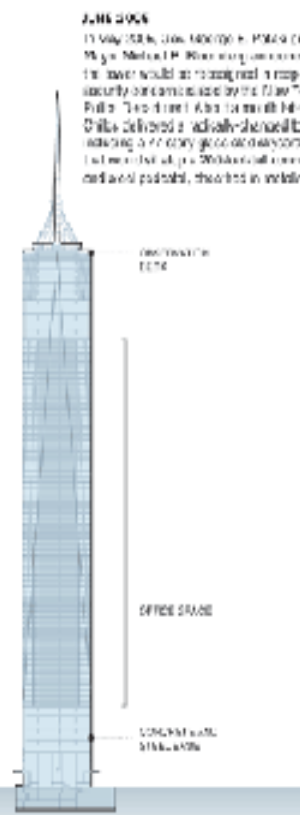
DECEMBER 2003

THE DESIGN FOR THE TOWER WAS REVISED TO 1,412 FT. TALL, WITH A TOWER HEAD WITH AN OPEN AIR STRUCTURE. THE DESIGN SHOWS A TOWER 1,412 FT. TALL, WITH OFFICE SPACE TO A FLOOR ABOVE THE TOWER'S TOWER HEAD AND A TOWER HEAD WITH AN OPEN AIR STRUCTURE.



JUNE 2004

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Freedom Tower

Liebeskind's original vision

artist's rendering of the completed tower

plan accepted in 2005; many delays due to legal arguments about ownership of the land it sits on as well as the nature of the 9/11 memorial.

104 stories; third-tallest building in the world, if the spire is included (1776 feet).

The official name is One World Trade Center, not "Freedom Tower." The new World Trade Center complex will also feature three other high-rise office buildings,



photo taken 4/8/2012

