



ROMAN ARCHITECTURE



Architecture: the art or practice of designing and constructing buildings.

Innovator: a person who introduces new methods, ideas, or products.

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The Romans continued the work of the earlier classical Greek architecture. They improved their designs to make them much stronger, often using concrete (realising it could support great weight). As the Roman Empire expanded so did the ideas and creativity for the Roman buildings.

Craftsmen would use marble and this can be evidenced in statues and the *nymphaeum* (ornamental fountains). Though the most common marble was available from Tuscany, coloured varieties of marble was much favoured by Roman architects, for example, yellow Numidian marble from North Africa, purple Phrygian from central Turkey, red porphyry from Egypt, and green-veined Carystian marble from Euboea, but this was often saved for use on columns due to the transportation cost.

Ancient Roman architecture inspired much modern architecture, including the White House, home of the American President.



ORNATE DESIGNS

Romans preferred the more ornate Corinthian designs taken from the Greeks. The Corinthian order is the last developed of the three principal classical orders of ancient Greek and Roman architecture. The other two are the Doric order which was the earliest, followed by the Ionic order. Some columns continued to be used even when they were no longer structurally necessary. This was to give buildings a traditional and familiar look, for example the front of the Pantheon (c. 125 CE) in Rome.



ROMAN INNOVATORS



As innovators, they uniquely combined existing techniques with creative design to produce a whole range of new architectural structures such as the basilica, triumphal arch, monumental aqueduct, amphitheatre, granary building and residential housing block.

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EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What material did the Romans start to use for stability?
2. Where does red porphyry originate from?
3. Which famous building the America was inspired by Roman architecture?
4. Who used ornate Corinthian designs first?
5. Name one of the three principal classical orders of ancient Greek and Roman architecture?