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The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture (3 ed.)

James Stevens Curl and Susan Wilson
Previous Edition (2 ed.)

'This is an immensely ambitious book...On accuracy, Curl can hardly be faulted.' – Dan Cruickshank, *World Architecture*

Over 5,000 entries

Beautifully illustrated and written in a clear and concise style, this dictionary covers every period of Western architectural history. The text is complemented by over 250 beautiful and meticulous line drawings, labelled cross-sections, and diagrams. There are more than 900 new entries, including hundreds of new biographical entries on leading historical architects, as well as subjects such as algorithmic design, digital architecture, and parametric design, a ...[More](#)

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James Stevens Curl, author
Susan Wilson, author
Professor James Stevens Curl is a leading British architectural historian with many books to his name. He is a Member of the Royal Irish Academy, was twice Visiting Fellow at Peterhouse, University of Cambridge, and is currently Professor of Architecture at the

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Brief History

First edition was published in 1999 as The Dictionary of Architecture. It was first issued as an Oxford University Press paperback 2000. The second edition came in 2006. The third edition published as a hardback in 2015. Print ISBN-13: 9780199674985 and eISBN: 9780191752988.

Scope and Coverage

This is the most popular dictionary of architecture available online. This dictionary contains over 5000 entries. It covers every period of Western architectural history. This dictionary covers various areas like algorithmic design, digital architecture, and parametric design, and many entries expanding the coverage of landscape architecture. Here the texts are complemented by over 250 beautiful and meticulous line drawings, labeled cross-sections, and diagrams. There are more than 900 new entries, including hundreds of new biographical entries on leading historical architects are also available.

Kind of Information

The meaning of the terms, description and short notes on those terms, some biographies of architects are available here. See and see also references are also available here. Some terms within the meaning of a particular entry are cross referenced. Related terms of a particular entry are also given in hyper link form. Some examples are given below for clear understanding.

“Babylonian architecture Mesopotamian architecture c.4000–1250 bc.”

Early inhabitants of the region were the Sumerians, who, by the fourth millennium, had evolved a sophisticated architecture using brick, and who set the architectural agenda, virtually until Hellenistic times. They built arches with voussoirs and vaults, and used cedar-wood in great quantities. In important buildings, walls were decorated with coloured terracotta cones placed in geometrical patterns, while other characteristic elements were walls with slightly projecting decorative buttresses, vertical channelling, and stepped or triangular battlements. Towers, known as ziggurats, consisting of a series of superimposed stages, each smaller than that below, were associated with temples: an impressive example was the enormous ziggurat at Ur (C22 bc), with huge staircases giving access to the sanctuary on top. Aspects of Babylonian architecture were absorbed by the Assyrians near the end of the second millennium BC. (underlined terms are hyperlinked)

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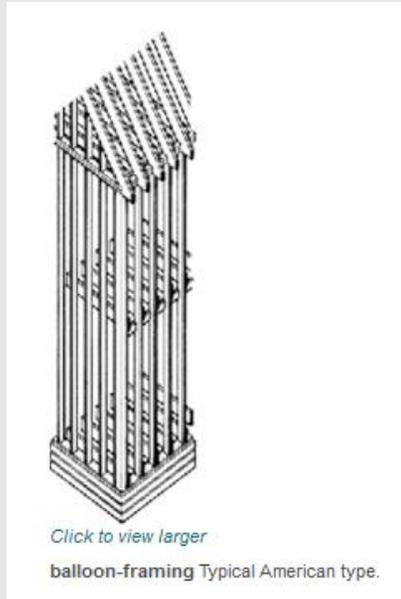
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“balloon”

1. Large ball, *ballon*, globe, or sphere placed above a column or pier as a termination.
2. Globe under a cross on a church spire or dome.
3. System of timber-framed construction common in Scandinavia and the USA in which the corner posts and studs are continuous in one piece from cill or sole-plate to roof-plate, the intermediate floor-joists being secured to them without mortises and tenons.



“CAD”

See computer-aided design.

Example of short biography is given below.

“Ryder, John Gordon (1919–2000)”

Founder (1953), with **Peter Yates** (1920–82), of the firm of English architects, **Ryder & Yates**. They joined (1948) Lubetkin's team (which included **Frank Purser Tindall** (1919–98)) in the planning of Peterlee New Town, Co. Durham, but stifling post-war bureaucracy and other frustrations led to the resignation of Lubetkin and his colleagues, and Ryder established (1950) his own practice, joined (1953) by Yates. The firm soon evolved into a multi-disciplinary organization of architects and engineers, designing numerous houses before taking on larger projects, including the Norgas Headquarters (1965), the Engineering Research Station for British Gas (1967), and the Northern Gas Training Centre (1970—much altered), all in Killingworth. From the 1960s the firm was regarded as one of the most progressive in North-East England.

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Arrangement Pattern

Entries are arranged alphabetically. Under an alphabet the entries which start with that particular alphabet are also arranged alphabetically. For an example mention may be made of fabric, fabrique, façade, Façadism, face, face-work or facing, factable etc. which come under the alphabet “F”.

Remarks

This site valuable for professionals and for anyone who comes into contact with the terms and concepts of architecture. It is beautifully illustrated and written in a clear and concise style. This dictionary little bit western biased, covers every period of Western architectural history.

Comparable Tools

- The Dictionary of Architecture & Construction (<https://evrosoriou.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/dictionary-of-architecture-and-construction.pdf>)
- Glossary of architecture

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_architecture

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