



The Ten Books on Architecture

Vitruvius Pollio

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A treatise written in Latin on architecture, dedicated to the emperor Augustus. In the preface of Book I, Vitruvius dedicates his writings so as to give personal knowledge of the quality of buildings to the emperor. Likely Vitruvius is referring to Marcus Agrippa's campaign of public repairs and improvements. This work is the only surviving major book on architecture from classical antiquity.

According to Vitruvius, architecture is an imitation of nature. As birds and bees built their nests, so humans constructed housing from natural materials, that gave them shelter against the elements. When perfecting this art of building, the Greeks invented the architectural orders.

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