



Let's Explore L.A. City Hall

A Young Person's Guide

Introduction

City Hall is the heart of Los Angeles and it has a story to tell. Listen and look closely. It is the story of our city, our local government at work and our community celebrations.

The building proudly displays marble, tile, granite and bronze handwork from local artists. After damage caused by the 1994 earthquake, City Hall was repaired and restored to its original beauty. The City of Los Angeles wanted to preserve and save this building for future generations . . . YOU!



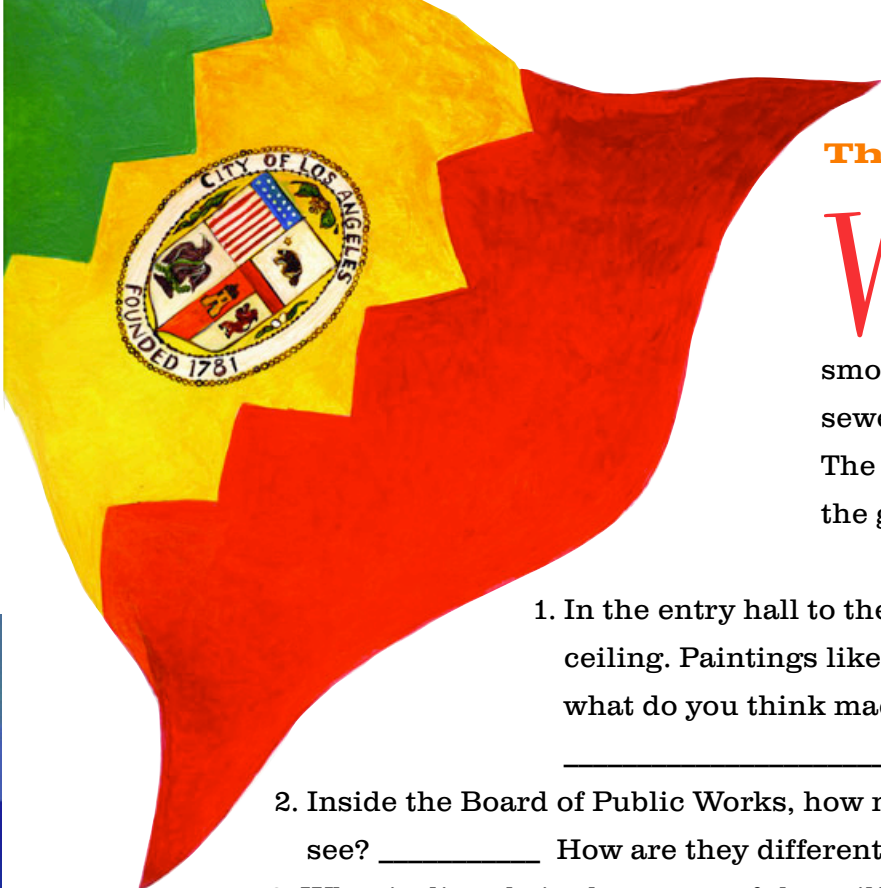
Los Angeles City Hall is
Los Angeles
Historic-Cultural Monument #150



About City Hall

This building is actually Los Angeles' third City Hall. It was built in 1928, when Los Angeles was just becoming a really big city. A team of three architects, John Parkinson, Albert C. Martin, and John C. Austin, came up with the design for the new City Hall. Their idea was to borrow from many types of architecture to create a building that was different from anything that had come before. They also wanted City Hall to be the tallest building in Los Angeles, which it was for many years.





The Board of Public Works

Welcome to The Board of Public Works. They meet in this special room. Their job is to keep the city running smoothly. Are your streetlights lit? Are your sewers working? If not, attend a meeting. The public is welcome. You may participate in the governing of your city.

1. In the entry hall to the Board of Public Works, look up at the ceiling. Paintings like these in City Hall had to be restored: what do you think made the paintings fade?

2. Inside the Board of Public Works, how many different kinds of chandeliers do you see? _____ How are they different? _____

3. What is directly in the center of the ceiling? _____

4. Name two colors of the marble columns. _____

Think About It:

1. If you took your friends to City Hall, where is the first place you would take them? Why?

2. Why do you think the City of Los Angeles wanted to restore City Hall?

Follow-up Fun to Your City Hall Visit:

1. Explore what materials were used in building your school or your home.
2. Design a flag for your school or family with a seal representing some of the special things about your school or family.
3. Write a letter to your City Council person recommending a new tree or sidewalk repair, etc. for your school. Look at your school or neighborhood environment and see if there is a safety issue that can be raised and perhaps solved here, such as parking signs, speed limit signs, additional tree plantings, etc.
4. Create your own newspaper front page. Write a headline and story about City Hall. Be creative! Draw your own “photo.”
6. Build a model of City Hall, your school or your home.

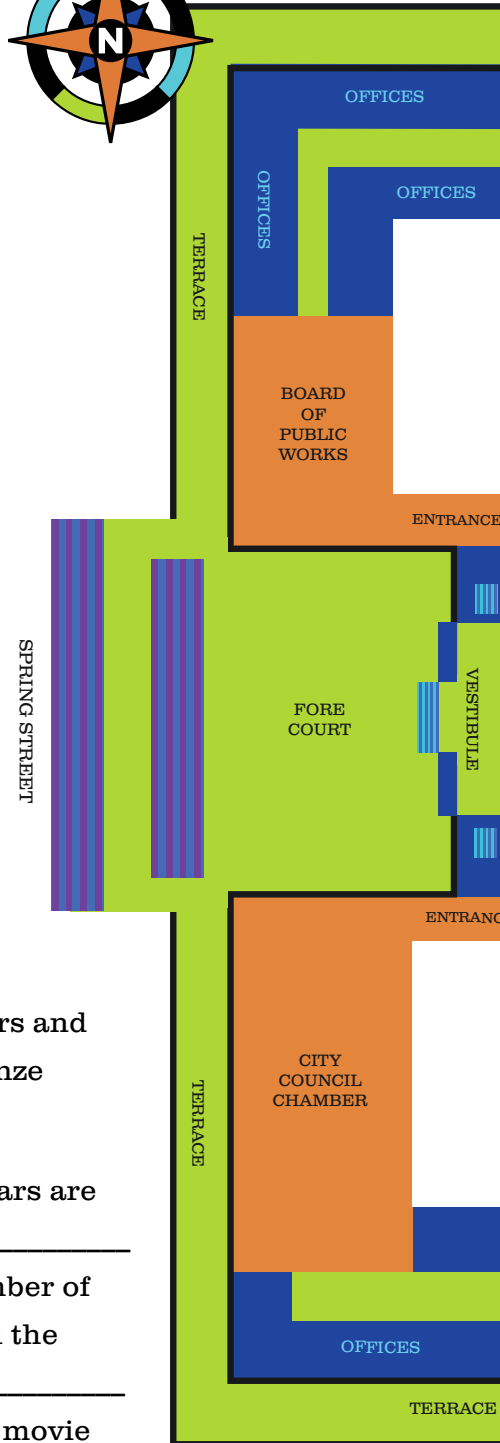
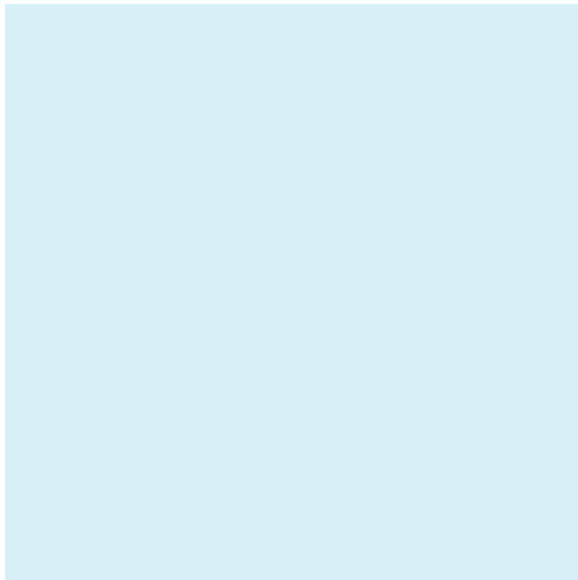
East Lobby

Welcome to Los Angeles City Hall! There are so many things to see. Where should you look first? Let's start in this beautiful lobby . . . the East Lobby. There are paintings on the ceiling, tiles on the walls and marble on the floor. The East Lobby leads into a very important office . . . can you name it? Let's see what else we can find.

1. What room number is the mayor's office? _____
2. Who is the mayor of Los Angeles?

3. Look up. What do the masters of education hold in their hands?

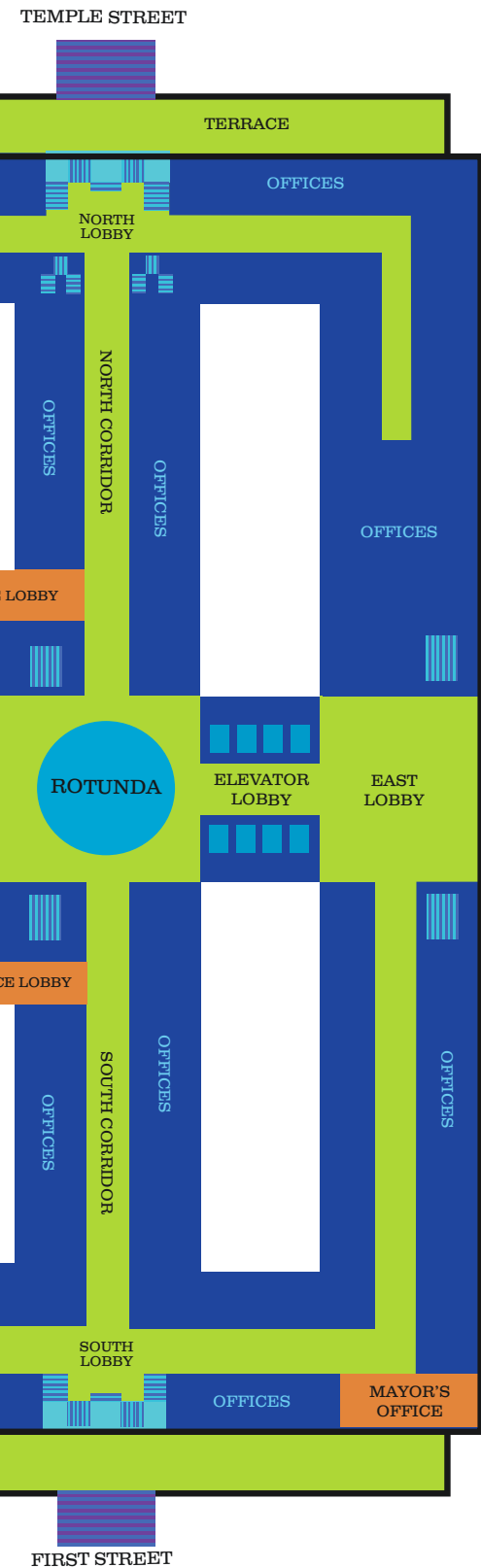
Why? _____
4. Stand facing east. Look up. Which symbol of the zodiac faces due east? _____
What is your zodiac sign? _____
5. In the square below, draw your favorite circle pattern from the tile panels on the East Lobby wall



Elevator Lobby

Walk toward the elevators and look at the beautiful bronze elevator doors.

1. How many elevator cars are there? _____
What is the total number of bronze squares on all the elevator car doors? _____
2. Look up and find the movie camera. Why do you think the artist chose to include it in his painting? _____



THIRD FLOOR, CITY HALL

Rotunda

Now we are going to the rotunda . . . rotunda . . . rotunda. Can you hear the echo? What a huge space! This area is called the rotunda because of its round shape and high dome. It's hard to decide where to look first.

1. Each column in the rotunda is made from a different kind of marble. Look closely. How many different kinds of marble do you see? _____
2. A caravel is a small wood Spanish sailing ship. Find the bronze caravel. Why do you think there is a caravel in the middle of the City Hall rotunda?

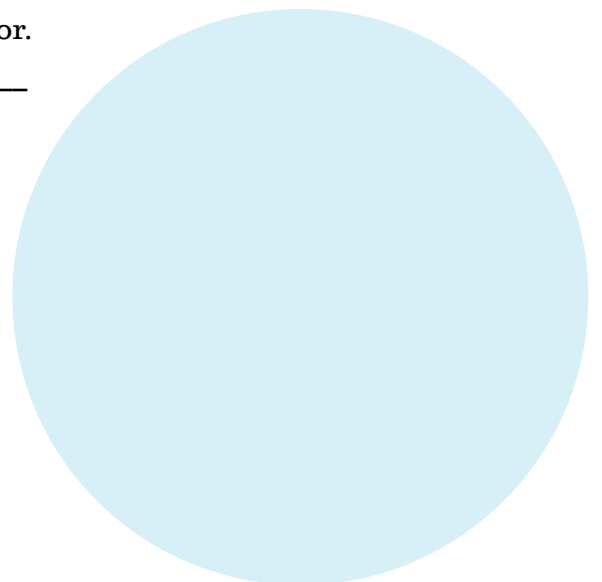
3. What material was used to make the ocean and sky around the bronze caravel?

4. Words can be part of the architecture and design. Where do you find the words: art, education, health, law, service, government, protection and trust? _____

What word would you add to this list?

5. Name three geometric shapes found in the marble floor.

6. In the circle here, draw your favorite marble tile pattern from the floor:



Spring Street Entrance

The sunlight comes in through the Spring Street entrance doors. These are the formal “front doors” to City Hall. This fancy entrance is used only for special occasions. The area just inside the front doors is called a vestibule.

1. This area of City Hall has a lot of information. Find where it tells you what year the City of Los Angeles founded. What year was that?

2. Sometimes buildings honor the people who work there. Look for the decorative tiles that tell you who the mayor of Los Angeles was when City Hall was built. What was his name?

3. The 1984 Olympics were held in Los Angeles. Find the Roman numerals that show what number Olympiad this was. Write those Roman numerals. What number is that?

City Council Chamber

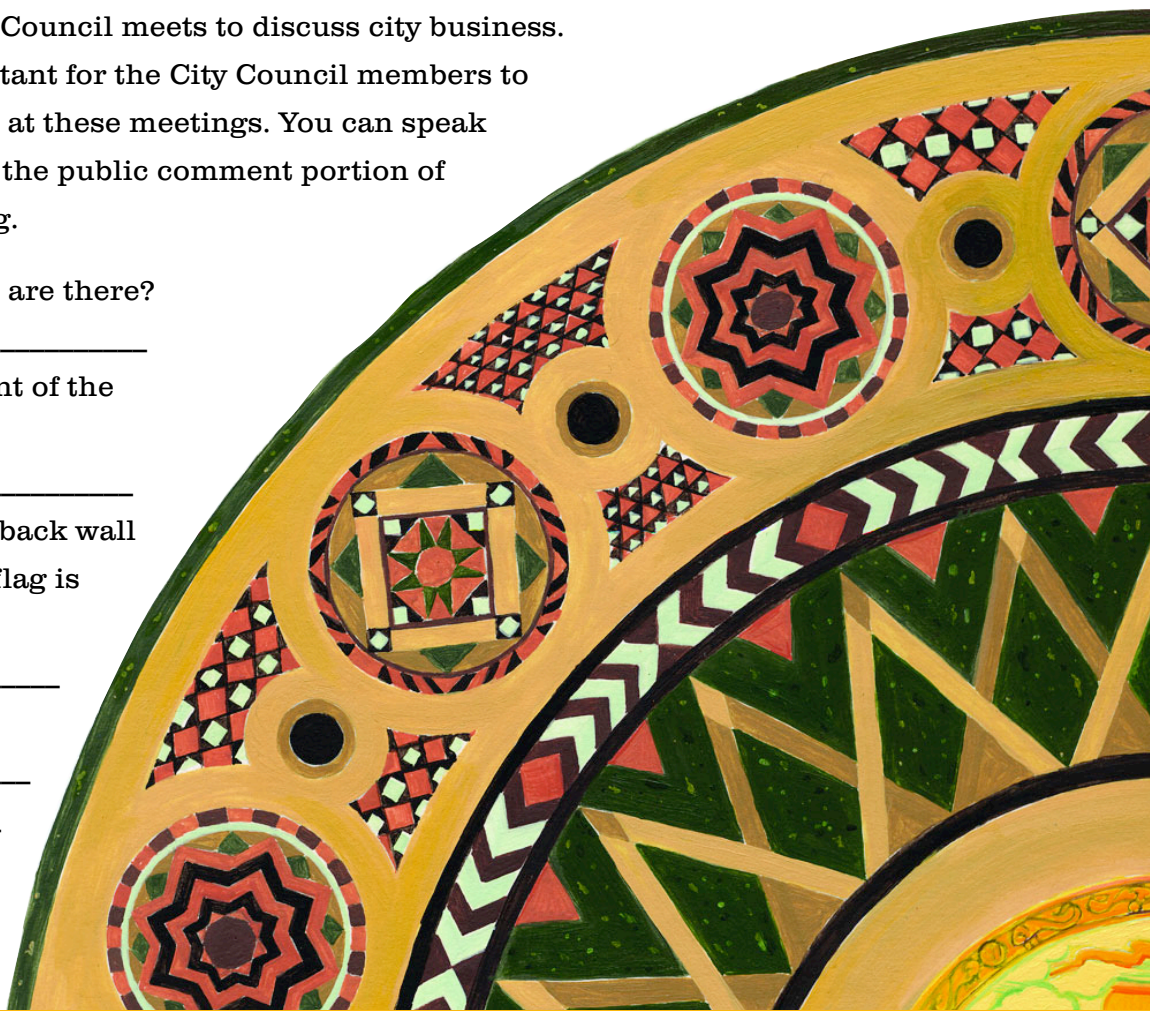
This is where the City Council meets to discuss city business. It is especially important for the City Council members to hear all the speakers at these meetings. You can speak to the City Council during the public comment portion of every City Council meeting.

1. How many council seats are there?

2. Where does the President of the City Council sit?

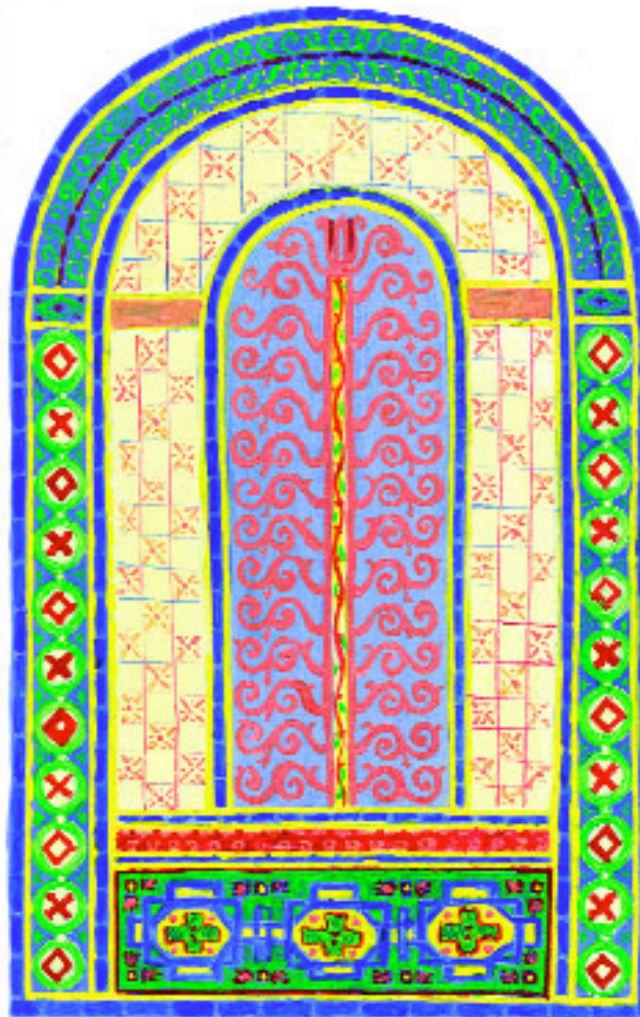
3. Look at the flags on the back wall of the Chamber. Which flag is in the middle?

Why?



City Hall Words to Know

1. **architecture** - the art or craft of designing buildings and open areas
2. **caravel** - a Spanish sailing ship
3. **chandelier** - an ornate hanging light fixture
4. **Olympiad** - a celebration of the modern Olympic games
5. **renovation** - to repair and/or remodel a building using new materials
6. **restore** - to return a building to the way it used to look using as much of the original material as possible
7. **rotunda** - a round room with a domed ceiling
8. **vestibule** - a hall, or an antechamber inside a front doorway
9. **zodiac** - a collection of 12 different symbols each representing an astrological sign



Some Important Building Materials Found in City Hall

1. **bronze** - a hard reddish-brown metal that is a mixture of copper and tin
2. **granite** - a hard gray stone used in the construction of buildings
3. **marble** - a stone that often has multi-colored patterns in it, used for buildings and sculptures
4. **tile** - a square of stone, or baked and glazed clay. Often used to cover floors and walls
5. **wood** - a hard substance from tree trunks, often used in construction; (synonyms: timber, lumber)

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More About City Hall

Debbie Bertram and Susan Bloom have written *City Hall - The Heart of Los Angeles*, illustrated by Aileen Leijten (Tallfellow Press 2003). A book for readers of all ages, it tells the story of the 1928 construction, the daily functions, and finally, the restoration and preservation of this Los Angeles icon. City Hall welcomes you, your family and friends. After reading *City Hall - The Heart of Los Angeles*, you can be the tour guide.

Available at local bookstores, The Los Angeles Public Library Gift Shop, and Olvera Street Shops.

On line at www.tallfellow.com

www.laconservancy.org

School Tours of City Hall can be arranged by calling the Mayor's Volunteer Corps docent hotline at (213) 978-1995.

The Los Angeles Conservancy offers public tours of City Hall for adults on the 1st and 4th Saturday of every month.

To make reservations for these tours visit the Conservancy's website at www.laconservancy.org or call (213) 623-2489.

For Teachers

City Hall offers you and your students a variety of historical facts and topics to discuss. By visiting City Hall, students learn and see how a major city is governed. It takes teamwork.

At City Hall, you can also see the efforts of the many citizens and craftspeople who were involved in the restoration of this important icon. Walking through this historic building, students can learn about the importance of restoration. Building materials from the 1920's are no longer available today. Broken and missing pieces of tile and marble on the interior and exterior walls had to be carefully matched and duplicated by expert craftspeople. The painted murals on the walls and ceilings had to be cleaned and repaired, one small section at a time. And they were.

City Hall was also retrofitted with 500 cushions called base isolators to help protect the structure in case of an earthquake.

And finally, the building was brought up to current safety, fire and wheelchair access codes. It is restored for the present. It is preserved for the future.