

### Sultanate Architecture

Architecture is a reflection of the thoughts and perspectives of any given era. India showcased a rich architectural tradition, predominantly characterized by Lintel Style. This style prominently featured pillars and beams. However, with the arrival of the Turks, a new architectural style known as the arch style was introduced. This style centered around the utilization of arches and domes. Moreover, the use of lime and gypsum began to influence architecture, making the construction of arches more convenient.

#### ■ Early Architecture

When the Turks arrived India, they initially did not have the time to develop entirely new architectural styles. Instead, they embraced and adapted the existing popular architectural styles existing in India, giving rise to what is now known as Muslim architecture. Examples include the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque in Delhi and the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra in Ajmer, both constructed by Qutbuddin Aibak. Interestingly, Indian architecture and Muslim architecture shared common features that facilitated this fusion. Firstly, both styles embraced the concept of open courtyards. Secondly, ornamentation played a significant role in the decorative aspects of both architectural traditions. These shared elements enabled a seamless integration of Indian architectural elements into the Islamic architectural style.



During this period, the Qutub Minar, located in present-day Mehrauli in Delhi, held significant importance in the architecture of the Sultanate era as a commemoration of Turkish victory. The Qutub Minar exemplifies the Indo-Islamic architectural style, characterized by its solidity and beauty. The entire structure is crafted from red sandstone. Notably, the tower's balconies are a remarkable feature, showcasing skilled craftsmanship. The effective design of the minaret is further enhanced by the use of striated and angular projections on its walls, as well as panels and upper stages adorned with red and white sandstone.

#### ■ Ilbari Dynasty's Architecture

Upon establishing their rule in India, the Turkish rulers enlisted the expertise of Indian architects to independently construct their magnificent architectural wonders. Consequently, it was very natural for Muslim architecture to be influenced by the indigenous Indian style. As different dynasties ascended to power, a gradual amalgamation of the arch style and the lintel Style emerged, giving rise to a distinctive Indian architectural tradition.

Under the Ilbari dynasty, Iltutmish played a pivotal role in architectural endeavors. He successfully completed the construction of the Qutub Minar, which was initially initiated by

Qutbuddin Aibak. Furthermore, he built the **Sultan-i-Ghari** as a memorial for his son, Prince Muhammad. Notably, the tomb of Balban holds great significance as an architectural marvel, credited with introducing a scientific form of dome for the first time. However, recent research indicates that the Alai Darwaza, constructed by Alauddin Khilji, predates the tomb of Balban as the earliest example of a scientifically designed dome and arch.

### ■ Khilji Architecture

During the Khilji period, the arch style in architecture reached a greater level of maturity. It is believed that the Alai Darwaza, constructed by Alauddin Khilji, represents the first scientifically designed example of arches and domes. Additionally, this architectural masterpiece introduced the use of marble, making it the first Muslim structure in India to incorporate the use of marble.

It is said that Alauddin Khilji envisioned a tower twice the size of the Qutub Minar, but unfortunately, due to his untimely demise, he could not complete this ambitious project. However, he did oversee the construction of the Jamat-i-Khana mosque, situated near the dargah of Nizamuddin Auliya. This mosque stands as an early example of architecture built upon Islamic principles.

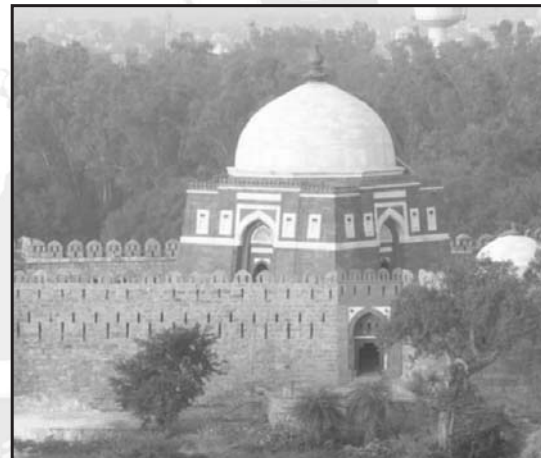


### ■ Tughlaq Architecture

The Tughlaq period holds special

significance in the development of architectural styles. Compared to earlier periods, Tughlaq architecture demonstrates a better integration between the Arch style and the Lintel style. The use of debris instead of high-quality construction materials during this era reflects the economic challenges faced by the state.

Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq and Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq employed casting wall, known as Salami (Batter), in their architectural designs. The Tughlaq rulers constructed three notable medieval cities: Tughlaqabad by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, Jahanpanah by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, and Firoz Shah Kotla by Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Muhammad bin Tughlaq's architectural contributions include the construction of quadrangular arches, achieving a harmonious blend of Arches and the Lintel style. This architectural style was later adopted in the construction of Fatehpur Sikri during the reign of Akbar.



If we examine the architecture of Firozshah Tughlaq, we come to know that there is no use of casting wall or Batter in his architectural style. However, a notable feature of his architecture is the decorative use of lotus motifs.

### ■ Lodi Architecture

Lodi architecture showcases a remarkable harmony between the Arch and the Lintel style. During this period, the architectural structures were constructed amidst beautiful gardens. Notably, features like Chhajja (eaves) and Chhatris (domed pavilions) were incorporated

into the designs, which are influenced by Indian (Hindu) architecture.

The distinct characteristics of Lodi architecture are as follows:

1. The buildings were constructed in the center of gardens.
2. Octagonal shapes .
3. Double-layered domes were employed.
4. The architecture was built on elevated platforms.



### Mughal Architecture

The Mughal period witnessed extensive exploitation of resources, providing ample means for architectural construction. Furthermore, several factors contributed to the promotion of architectural endeavors during this era. Firstly, the Mughal emperors themselves displayed a personal interest in architectural construction. Secondly, a noteworthy development was the introduction of architectural blueprints, which were prepared prior to commencing the actual construction process.

#### ■ Babur and Humayun

Upon his arrival in India, Babur found little attraction in the existing architecture, deeming it lacking in proportion and balance. However, he was greatly impressed by the architectural marvels of Gwalior. Babur oversaw the construction of various mosques, including those in the old Lodi fort and a memorial mosque in Panipat. Furthermore, he introduced

innovative methods in garden design, example like Arambagh and others.

Similarly, Humayun, like his father Babur, had limited time for architectural pursuits. Nonetheless, he commissioned the construction of several mosques during his reign. It was following his demise that his wife, Hamida Banu Begum, took upon herself the remarkable task of building his tomb, which stands today as a unique masterpiece.



The mausoleum of Humayun presents a remarkable amalgamation of Islamic and Hindu architectural styles. It is designed in the Charbagh style, showcasing the influence of Hindu architecture. The placement of the mausoleum in the center of a garden and the use of umbrellas as architectural elements are indicative of Hindu architectural traits. Simultaneously, the presence of double-layered domes and minarets represents distinct Islamic architectural features.

Furthermore, Humayun's tomb serves as a testament to the grandeur of Mughal reign. It conveys the profound significance of the resting place for the revered soul, urging for eternal peace. The construction of the tomb amidst a serene garden setting creates an ambiance of tranquility and sanctity.





### ■ Akbar period Architecture

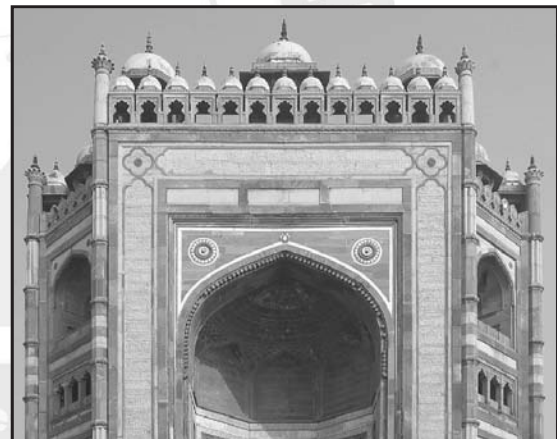
Akbar, a remarkable ruler, displayed exceptional skills as a builder, completing construction projects in two distinct phases. During the initial phase, he commissioned the construction of forts in Agra, Allahabad, and Lahore. In the subsequent phases, he started the construction work at Fatehpur Sikri.

Akbar's architectural masterpieces, crafted with splendid red stones, exude the grandeur and vitality of the mighty Mughal Empire. The architecture serves as a testament to the empire's power and energy, offering a glimpse into its remarkable evolution.

According to Abul Fazl, Akbar commissioned splendid structures in Agra. It is believed that over 500 buildings were constructed in the Gujarati and Bengali styles. Regrettably, Shah Jahan demolished these structures, replacing them with new edifices. Consequently, only the Jahangiri and Akbari Mahals in Agra remain as remnants from Akbar's reign.

The architecture of Akbar predominantly showcases the Lintel style, with a special emphasis on its implementation. The Arch style, on the other hand, was primarily employed for decorative purposes.

Following his victorious campaign in Gujarat, Akbar initiated the construction of Fatehpur Sikri. Subsequently, the magnificent Buland Darwaza was erected after his victorious campaign of Deccan.



### ■ Jahangir period Architecture

During the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, a gradual development in architectural style can be observed. While Akbar's architecture radiated power and grandeur, the architecture of Jahangir and Shah Jahan embraced a more delicate and feminine beauty. Notably, three significant structures were constructed during Jahangir's era:

1. Akbar's Tomb in Agra
2. Tomb of Abdul Rahim Khan-Khana in Delhi

### 3. Tomb of Itmad Daulah in Agra

Jahangir emphasized specific methods of ornamentation and decoration-

1. Use of marble in jali(lattice) work
2. Use of Pitradura technique

It was during this period that the construction of white marble buildings started, which were subsequently adorned with intricate designs of semi-precious stones in the form of flowers and leaves.



### ■ Shahjahan Period Architecture

During Shah Jahan's reign, a significant passion for architecture was evident. He initiated the construction of various forts and buildings, notably demolishing structures erected by Akbar within the Agra Fort and replacing them with new buildings made of white marble. Additionally, he established a new capital named Shahjahanabad in Delhi, where he constructed the magnificent Red Fort alongside numerous other buildings. Shah Jahan's love for white marble persisted, and he adorned his structures with marble lattice and pietra dura. Moreover, he introduced a novel decorative technique characterized by the use of multi-layered arches.

The most remarkable creation of Shah Jahan's era is the Taj Mahal. It embodies almost all the distinctive features of Mughal architecture, including

1. Charbagh style garden layout,
2. Use of double-layered dome
3. Use of decorative Chatris(umbrellas)

### 4. Use of pitradura for decoration

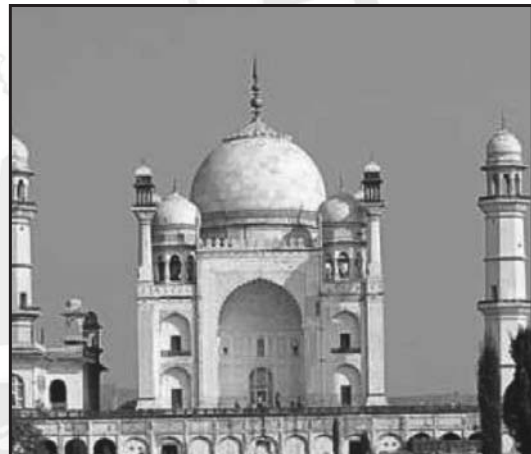
### 5. Use of a high platform for Buildings



### ■ Aurangzeb period Architecture

During the era of Aurangzeb, there was a decline in architectural activities, and only three structures were built, which did not have a significant impact. These structures are -

1. Moti Masjid in Delhi.
2. Badshahi Mosque in Lahore.
3. Tomb of Rabia Durrani in Aurangabad.



### ■ Shershah period Architecture-

Sher Shah is regarded as a precursor to Akbar, not only in the realms of administration and economy but also in the field of architecture. It is believed that Sher Shah, prior to Akbar's reign, achieved a better synthesis between the Arch and Lintel styles in architectural construction. His tomb at Sasaram, constructed under Sher Shah's guidance, stands as a remarkable example of his architectural acumen. Situated amidst a pond, the tomb showcases a skillful implementation of the Lintel style,

complemented by decorative umbrellas influenced by Hindu architecture. Notably, the structure stands on an elevated platform and features a single dome instead of a double-layered dome. Sher Shah's architecture emanates power and confidence.



■■■

