

## ***SAH Archipedia* Student Manual**

*SAH Archipedia* can be used in the classroom as a model for developing interpretive and analytical building histories with descriptive text, appropriate citations, photographs, and accompanying metadata. This instruction manual provides guidance on completing the Building Entry Template so students can create their own entries.

### ***History***

*SAH Archipedia*, an open-access, online educational resource focusing on the history of the U.S. built environment, is a collaborative project of two internationally recognized scholarly organizations, the [Society of Architectural Historians](#) (SAH) and the [University of Virginia Press](#) (UVA Press). It contains histories, photographs, and maps for over 20,000 structures and places. These are mostly buildings, but as you explore *SAH Archipedia* you will also find landscapes, infrastructure, monuments, artwork, and more. This cross-section of the country demonstrates the richness and diversity of architecture and building practice across many centuries, from mud brick to steel, from ancient cliff dwellings to contemporary office towers—a history that unfolds in individual building entries and thematic essays written by leading architectural historians who survey and explain styles and typologies, materials, and techniques, as well as social and political contexts from local to state to national levels.

The content of *SAH Archipedia* was originally drawn from the award-winning book series, [Buildings of the United States](#) (BUS), and includes histories and thematic essays from all of the published BUS print volumes. In 2017 we reached our goal of representing all fifty states in *SAH Archipedia*. This resource has continued to grow with the addition of peer-reviewed born-digital content and as new BUS volumes are completed. In 2019 we relaunched the site as a mobile-friendly, open-access resource available for the benefit of all who share an interest in the history of the built environment. Through *SAH Archipedia*, SAH and UVA Press promote excellence in research, interpretation, and publishing about buildings, landscapes, and urbanism. Lead funding for *SAH Archipedia* has been provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

## ***Elements of a Building Entry***

*SAH Archipedia* building entries consist of the following:

- Descriptive and interpretive essay that is between 250 and 1,000 words;
- Bibliographic references;
- Geographic and semantic metadata;
- Timeline of building events;
- Photographs

The best building entries are accessible narratives that point out notable characteristics while conveying a building's importance and its surrounding context. A good example is the Eldridge Street Synagogue (<http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/NY-01-061-0006>).

Though most building entries on *SAH Archipedia* deal with single buildings, entries may also deal with a complex or site as a whole. See, for example, Laramie's West Side Neighborhood (<https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/WY-01-001-0075>). Students can create a set of linked entries, with a main entry describing the site as a whole, and separate entries for the individual buildings within the site. See, for example, 7th and 8th Street Historic District (<https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/NM-01-047-0067>) and its linked entries.

Entries should focus on buildings that are still standing. Demolished buildings may be referenced in the text but should not be the focus of the entry.

## ***Instructions for the Building Entry Template***

Students can complete their own building entries using the attached PDF form. Below are instructions for each field.

### **Title**

The title should be the present-day name of the building, structure, or site that reflects its current use.

### **Subtitle**

Subtitles are only necessary if the building's use or name has changed; in such cases, the original building name is the Subtitle. See Bayard Sharp Hall (St. Thomas Church) (<https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/DE-01-NK9.16>).

A Subtitle can also indicate an alternative name for the building or site. See Ford Rouge Center (The Rouge) (<https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/MI-01-WN134>).

### **Image and Photo Credit**

Right-click on the thumbnail image field and select "Add Image." Upload your selected image. Include the photo credit and any licensing information, such as "Anne Ruthmann, CC BY-SA 4.0."

High-resolution digital images suitable for publication can be submitted separately. Consult with your professor to see if they would like to receive these photos via Dropbox, Google Drive, or other cloud service. Photographs should ideally be shot in Tiff or RAW format at 600ppi, but JPG is also acceptable. Images must be at least 1024 pixels on the longest side. Image files should be labeled with the building name and the city and state in which it is located. E.g. "Eldridge Street Synagogue\_ New York, NY"

#### **Photography Tips**

Multiple shots are ideal. If you look through *SAH Archipedia* you'll see that entries with several good shots clearly stand out. Also note that if your text mentions details of the building, shots of those details would be ideal.

Photographing a building in spring or early fall foliage can often block building details, although we understand this cannot always be avoided.

Perspective is always difficult to control when shooting "up" at a building. The best way to shoot is from a wide angle, and not too close to the building. If this is not possible and you

are forced to shoot “up,” please be sure to leave room at the top of the photo. For example: if you’re shooting a church with a steeple make sure the top of the steeple isn’t at the top edge of your image. Photoshop or other editing software can be used to correct parallax errors, i.e., a leaning building view.

If you are not able to shoot the photograph yourself you’ll need to locate an image shot by someone else. Public domain images are always acceptable, and photographs with Creative Commons licensing are also acceptable as long as the specific license is noted after the photographer name. For contemporary buildings, you may want to contact the architect of record. Do not submit photographs for which you do not have permission to use.

## Headnote

The headnote is a summary of key information about the building—the date of construction, the architect(s), and the address.

A basic headnote, for example, should be formatted as follows:

*1977–1979, I. M. Pei and Partners. 1 John F. Kennedy Rd.*

The headnote for a building with several significant events should be formatted as follows:

*1869–1895, Jean-Baptiste Lamy, Antoine and Projectus Mouly, François Mallet, Michel Machebeouf, and Martius Martin; 1935–1940 stabilization, John Gaw Meem; 1966–1967 east end completed, Urban Weidner; 1980s renovation, McHugh Lloyd and Associates. 131 Cathedral Pl.*

Editorial preference is for publicly visible buildings that are still standing. If a building is only visible from a special vantage point, note this in the Headnote. For example:

*1965, Meathe, Kessler and Associates. Pro Club Dr., approximately 4 miles southwest of Manistee. Visible from the water.*

For buildings on street intersections or for addresses on plazas, circles, or other nonstandard street configurations, supplement the street address with additional locational information, such as *Main St. at Sycamore St.* For rural sites, an additional directional in the headnote can be included, such as *7.3 miles southwest of [nearest city].*

If your entry treats a complex or site, its address should include the bounding streets, for example: *Bounded by Arch, Front, Market, and 3rd sts.*

## Essay

This section is where you include your text, which should be a brief narrative (250-1,000 words) that not only describes the building but also places it into its surrounding context, that is, its local, social, and historical contexts, in addition to material and or stylistic considerations. For the purposes of *SAH Archipedia*, merely describing the physical features of the building without interpreting its form and context is not adequate. See *Tips for Writing about Architecture* at the end of this document.

## Bibliography

Key references (books, articles, websites, etc.) should be cited according to *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition, 2010), chapter 14.

For example, a book should be cited as follows:

Sandoval-Strausz, A.K. *Hotel: An American History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

An article should be cited as follows:

Mota, Nelson. "From House to Home: Social Control and Emancipation in Portuguese Public Housing, 1926–76." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 78, no. 2 (June 2019): 208-26.

A website should be cited as follows:

"Charnley-Persky House." Society of Architectural Historians. Accessed September 10, 2019. <https://www.sah.org/about-sah/charnley-persky-house/history>.

When using National Register forms, authors should seek out the references included in the forms, and only cite the form itself as a last resort. To cite a National Register forms, please use the format below:

Kolberg, Persijs, "Omaha National Bank Building," Douglas County, Nebraska. National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, 1972. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

## Building Timeline

This section captures everything that has happened to the building during its “lifetime.” From design and construction to subsequent occupation and use; changes of function, ownership or access; renovations, expansions, or other design changes—each of these is listed as a separate event, with the year/s followed by a description of the event and the architect or other associated people. Multiple events should be input in list form:

1902 design and construction, Frank Lloyd Wright  
1944 Charles C. Thomas assumes ownership  
1987 restoration, Hasbrouck Peterson Associates  
2010 repairs and upgrades

## Related Entries

If you are creating subentries to accompany a main entry that deals with a complex or larger site, this field is where you would type in the Title of the related subentry.

## Metadata

*SAH Archipedia* uses controlled vocabulary and name authorities to ensure consistency across the resource, especially in metadata.

**Architect:** For buildings that have known architects, whether individuals or firms, contributors must consult the following name authorities, in this order of priority:

(1) the first entry in Getty’s Union List of Artist Names (ULAN) (available online at: <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/ulan/>)

(2) the American Institute of Architects (AIA) listing (available online at: <https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/AHDAA/overview>).

Credit should always be assigned to a firm rather than individual principals or partners, unless the firm is officially known by an individual’s name.

Names should be listed in the “firstname lastname” format. Semi-colons should separate multiple architects or architectural firms. The architect’s ULAN or AIA ID should be listed in parentheses following the name, for example, “Truman O. Angell (500476296).” If the architect cannot be found in either database, include the full name with no ID number, for example, “Peter Herter.” If the architect is unknown, please leave this field blank.

**Types, Materials, and Styles:** Semantic tags for building types, materials, and styles use terms from the *Getty Art & Architecture Thesaurus* (available online at: <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/>).

**“Types”** refers primarily to function and use. Add as many tags as needed to identify the building type with respect to its original and current use (e.g., use “houses” and “historic house museums” for a building that is both a house and a museum; or “churches” and “performing arts centers” for a building that was once a church but is now a performing arts center).

**“Materials”** refer to the physical stuff of which a building is made. Include only materials that are most prominent, significant, or unusual.

**“Styles & Periods”** refers to the commonly accepted names for stylistic groups and distinct chronological periods within architectural history.

Note: there can be as many Building Types, Materials, and Styles & Periods as necessary. They should be separated by a semi-colon in each field. The AAT ID number should be listed in parentheses following each term. For example: “historic house museums (300005815)”.

## Location

List the Street Address, City, State, County, Zip Code, and Geospatial Coordinates in the relevant fields.

You can use Google Maps to generate longitude and latitude pairs, which should be entered in the decimal format. The steps for this process are:

### Mac users:

1. Open <https://maps.google.com/>
2. Type the address for your building into the navigation bar to the right of the Google logo, including the city and state.
3. In satellite view, zoom in until you clearly see the outlines of your building on the Google Map. Make sure 45° view is off.
4. Click once directly in the center of your building. The red pin marked A should jump to the position your cursor was just in, and a green arrow should appear next to it.

5. Highlight and copy the coordinates displayed in the navigation bar to the right of the Google logo—the positive value is the latitude and the negative value is the longitude of your building.
6. Paste these coordinates into the appropriate fields.

PC users:

1. Open <https://maps.google.com/>
2. Type the address for your building into the navigation bar to the right of the Google logo, including the city and state.
3. In satellite view, zoom in until you clearly see the outlines of your building on the Google Map. Make sure 45° view is off.
4. Click once directly in the center of your building, and without moving your cursor, right click once; in the pop-up menu that appears select “What’s here?” The red pin marked A should jump to the position your cursor was just in, and a green arrow should appear next to it.
5. Highlight and copy the coordinates displayed in the navigation bar to the right of the Google logo—the positive value is the latitude and the negative value is the longitude of your building.
6. Paste these coordinates in the appropriate fields.

Note that occasionally Google gets the location wrong—for example, the wrong building on the wrong block when a street has a N., S., W., or E. designation, or in rural areas that Google has not yet mapped. Please double-check the map to make sure the coordinates are on the correct building or site.

## **General Editorial Guidelines**

For style, capitalization, and spelling follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition, 2010), *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (or *Webster's Eleventh Collegiate Dictionary*), *Webster's Geographical Dictionary*, and *Webster's Biographical Dictionary*. If two spellings of a word are given, use the first. General style points follow:

### **Numbers**

Use numerals for dimension and area in architectural descriptions (20 x 40 feet; 28 acres), and for population figures (1,200 residents; an auditorium seating 1,500).

Spell out numbers for centuries: nineteenth century (or nineteenth-century architecture), not 19th century. (But use numerals in the Headnote.)

Express all numbers in number spans (1937–1938, not 1937–8 or 1937–38).

### **Dates**

For approximate dates, use c. 1935 or 1930s, not c. 1930s. The abbreviation for *circa* is not italicized and is followed by a word space.

*SAH Archipedia* uses the American date style of month-day-year (e.g., August 26, 1882).

### **Addresses**

For street names in running text, spell out *street*, *road*, *avenue*, and so on. Capitalize when used with the name of a single street (Monroe Street), but lowercase when used collectively following two or more street names (between Market and Forster sts.).

Addresses in Headnotes follow the same rules for capitalization but use the abbreviations *St.*, *Rd.*, *Ave.*, *Blvd.*, *Ln.*, *etc.* (*sts.*, *rds.*, *aves.*, *blvds.*, *lns.*, *etc.*). If your material includes many street names that incorporate compass directions and you want to abbreviate these in Headnotes (S. Main St.), do so consistently. For numbered streets, use *4th Avenue/Ave.*, not *Fourth Avenue*.

In either text or headings, roads and highways are styled as follows:

Interstate: I-95

Federal: U.S. 12 or Michigan Avenue/Ave. (U.S. 12)

State: MI 1 or Woodward Avenue/Ave. (MI 1)

County: Schoolcraft County 432; Farm to Market 2021 = FM 2021

## ***Tips for Writing about Architecture***

Adapted from Michael Lewis, Faison-Pierson-Stoddard Professor of Art at Williams College, architecture critic for the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Buildings of the United States* Associate Editor

There is no standard template that an *SAH Archipedia* entry must follow—nor should there be one. Depending on the circumstances, an entry might concentrate on a building’s style, floor plan, ornament, or construction system; it might look at the architect who designed it, the builder who constructed it, the client who commissioned it, or the people who occupied it. The building might be important because it is strikingly unusual or because it is strikingly *usual*, appropriately illustrating what is typical. The entries should be primarily interpretative, rather than descriptive, focusing on what is important about the building. These guidelines suggest some of the things to consider when writing your entry.

### **1. Why will a reader be interested in this entry?**

It is your job as author to persuade the reader about why a particular building matters. If the entry consists only of a list of facts about the building with no context about its significance (whether that significance is architectural, historical, cultural, technological, etc.), there is nothing for the reader to take away from the entry. Writing an entry consists of two different operations—the gathering of facts and the organization of these facts into an argument. A large part of the work is done when the research is finished, but something important still remains: the conversion of that research into tight, lively, informative, thoughtful prose.

To seize the attention of a reader, each entry must provide some sort of tangible reward for reading. But unless the author personally knows what the nugget of interest is in each entry, then it cannot be communicated persuasively to the reader. This nugget of interest will be different for each building—for example, an extraordinary occupant, an unusual stylistic choice, a pioneering use of a new building technology. It may be something very modest, as simple as a building having 12-over-12 sliding sash windows. But if this is the case, it is your obligation to persuade the reader *why* these 12-over-12 sliding sash windows are of great interest.

### **2. Provide context within each building entry**

Your goal should be to make the building come alive, as an object of intense interest, and to help the reader see it more clearly. Your building is connected to social and cultural movements greater than itself; it is the result of significant economic forces, migration and settlement pressures, wars and capitalist gambits and idealistic schemes. It might express human thought or craftsmanship at high levels, or it might reflect machine production or widespread cultural patterns of symbolism. These are all great and irresistible forces even

though they might be expressed in something as small as the tooling of a molding or the aluminum pediment on a mobile home. It is your job to call the reader's attention to the presence of these big forces, which are often only visible in details. Do not diminish your building by making it a mere example of a historical style or sub-style; that is seldom the most interesting thing you can say about your building.

### **3. Write an essay, not a checklist.**

In describing a building, too often authors simply catalogue the parts of a building. This will encourage the reader to look at the parts that are listed but not to see how these elements belong to a greater whole. In a good description, the parts of the building are used as bits of evidence to support an argument or idea about a building. Here is an example where a college administration building is described in the check-list manner that enumerates the elements but completely misses the effect they have on the design:

*With Founders Hall the two engaged towers flanking the main entrance are not symmetrical. The western tower is faceted while the eastern is completely rounded. The window treatments also differ slightly.*

This passage enumerates the features of the facade but doesn't help the viewer to see the architectural composition—the amazing cluster of masses surrounding the opening. Instead of a list of architectural features, the author should use these features to support an argument about the building:

*The facade is a lively arrangement of abstract geometric volumes: a square tower emerges between two projecting bays, one polygonal and one circular, dramatically offsetting the cavernous void of the entrance below.*

This second version helps the viewer see the composition in its entirety—a massive jumble of strong volumes—whereas the first version limits attention to the asymmetry. The second version helps the reader see the building; the first version, only its parts. All entries should be reviewed before submission to see that the description is not merely a recitation of features but that it helps make a claim about the building's importance.

### **4. Each entry should have a beginning, middle, and end.**

Any good essay should have a logical sequence; it should begin with one idea and lead in a logical manner to a concluding idea. The stronger the momentum is between the ideas, the stronger the entry. If every sentence begins with the word “*the*”, it is a warning sign that you are piling up declarative sentences, without relating them to one another.

A good test to apply to any entry is to try to scramble the order of the sentences. If they can be rearranged and still make sense, then you do not have a true essay but merely a set of notes about the building, a collection of free-floating facts presented in checklist fashion (see Writing Point #3 above). When the essay is over, the reader should have a sense of having received a *complete thought* about the building—not necessarily all there is to say about it, but a finished product.

### **5. Descriptions should move from general to detailed.**

When describing a structure, always note general architectural features first (number of stories, shape or plan, material)—that is, the basics of the building—before moving onto analysis of the stylistic details.

### **6. Tighten your writing!**

Your writing should be clear, concise, and written in a manner that makes every word count. This requires a careful use of subordinate clauses so that minor and major points are placed in proper relationship. Here is an example of “flabby” writing:

*John Simmons was hired by the college trustees in 1871 to lay out the entire campus and design the necessary buildings. The Simmons firm, with offices in Columbus, was founded by John Simmons, who was later joined by his son Frank H. Simmons (1844-1919) in 1880. Six buildings were eventually built according to the Simmons' designs, four remain today.*

This could be condensed as follows:

*From 1871 to 1904, the Columbus architect John Simmons (after 1900 in partnership with his son, Frank H. Simmons) designed all the buildings of Oak College. Four of their six buildings survive.*

The first version has 59 words and the second 32. The name Simmons appears five times in the first version, twice in the second. Finally, the second version contains more information than the first, giving the full range of Simmons' work on campus. The point here is that it is not enough simply to list the pertinent facts. They must be arranged in the tightest and most economical formulation. (By the way, the first version ends with a run-on sentence, a grammatical mistake that shows up from time to time. This, of course, can be cleared up by editing, as we do here, but it's always better if the author does it herself or himself and gets the right emphasis and language.)

Try reading your entry aloud. You will likely notice where sentences can be condensed.

### **7. Do your sentences vary in length, rhythm, and structure?**

Good writing acquires momentum and urgency from the rhythmic variation of short and long sentences. Sentences that follow the same format throughout the essay can result in a flattened tone. Read your entry aloud to see where the sentences can be varied to create livelier prose.

### **8. Emphasize the active voice, rather than the passive.**

Although there are sometimes occasions when the passive voice is useful, be careful not to overuse it. Most of the time, a sentence is much more effective if it is couched in the active voice.

Passive (avoid): “The building **was designed by** Frank Lloyd Wright in 1904.”

Active (preferred): “Frank Lloyd Wright **designed** the building in 1904.”

### **Recommended Reading:**

William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White. *Elements of Style*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920.