

Activity: Build like a Roman (houses)



Reconstruction of the Vine Street house, Leicester (above) and the interior of a Pompeian style atrium house (below) in Minecraft by Douglas, age 13



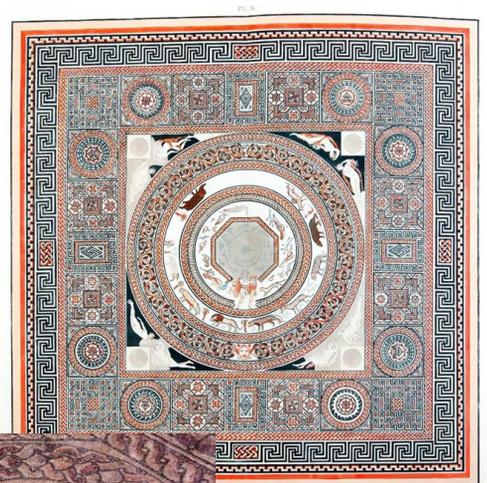
Create your own Roman house

Create your own Roman house in Minecraft. Alternatively you could draw or paint a house, build a house using Lego or cardboard, or write a description of your ideal Roman house (just as the Roman architect Vitruvius did).

Why not include colonnaded walkways (covered walkways with columns on one or both sides), sculptures, mosaics, wall paintings and furniture (see below for examples from Leicester and the villa at Woodchester, Gloucestershire). Have a look at the examples in Leicester and Pompeii on our information sheets. Archaeologists often find personal objects (such as the ivory Anubis box from the Vine Street house) that must have had special significance for their owner, perhaps reminding them of somewhere they had previously lived or visited, or a person or god that was special to them.

While houses across the Roman empire share many similar features, no two houses are the same; owners were very creative and liked to demonstrate their wealth, social status and personal taste through the choices they made. Atrium houses (see our information sheet **Houses in Pompeii**) were largely unknown outside Italy. In North Africa, for example, many houses are classed as 'peristyle' houses which have colonnaded courtyards and central spaces without a roof. The form of houses across the Roman empire depended on many factors, including local building traditions, availability of materials, skills and expertise (for example, the availability of architects and builders), the wealth of the owner and personal taste. Houses across the empire are often a fascinating blend of Roman and local traditions.

Houses had to be appropriate for the climate; for example, the design of many houses in Pompeii would not have been suitable for houses in Leicester, especially in winter. Do you know why? Have a look at the Pompeian houses and the Vine Street House (Leicester) on the information sheets, and in the Minecraft versions on the left, and compare the roof structure.



Credits: ULAS &
University of Leicester
Special Collections

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