The Dome of the Rock is in the late Antique tradition, deriving from the Pantheon, Hagia Sophia and San Vitale, as well as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which itself resembled Santa Costanza. (Gardner)

- The dome is built of a double shell, each having 32 converging wooden ribs all resting on a cornice atop a masonry drum. The dome interior is plastered and adorned with painted and gilded designs (14th cent. reconstructions) and the exterior of the dome is sheathed with boards, lead and gold leaf. (Moffett)
ABOVE LEFT: Santa Costanza, Rome, Interior (view through ambulatory into rotunda)

Date: circa 350 CE

Note: n/a

ABOVE RIGHT: Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, (interior)

Architect: Umayyad Islamic, built by Caliph Abd al-Malik, (r. 685-705)  

Date: circa 690 CE or later

Note: Byzantine trained artists created the first Islamic monument. It has a centralized plan and a gold exterior on the dome. The central area contains the “rock”, where presumably Abraham was to slaughter his son Isaac at the command of God. The inscriptions are the oldest surviving written verses from the Qur’an and the first use of Qur’anic inscriptions in architecture.

Title: Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, cutaway drawing

Source: Pearson Publishing
Title: the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem

Architect: Umayyad Islamic, built by Caliph Abd al-Malik, (r. 685-705)

Date: 690, photo 1915 showing rock floor

Source: wikipedia

Medium: tile

Size: dome: 20 m. dia.

Note: the rock.
- the marble and tile in the interior is original. The focus of the building is the plain rock it shelters. (Stokstad)
- the column capitals are Corinthian. (Fletcher)
Title: Kubbet es-Sakhra; Dome of the Rock, interior, Jerusalem

Architect: Umayyad Islamic, built by Caliph Abd al-Malik, (r. 685-705)

Date: c. 690 CE or later

Source: Photograph, Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archive, Vienna, Austria

Medium: mosaic, faience, marble, metal, dome: wood, originally covered externally with lead, and internally with stucco, gilt and paint

Size: Interior 152’ dia./ dome: 96’ H.

Note: mosaic is comprised of thousands of small glass or glazed ceramic tesserae set on a plaster ground. Here mother of pearl is also used. Note the Kufic script above. Note ablaq, alternating colors of masonry/ [polychromy] (OUP)
Title: Dome of the Rock, interior

Architect: Umayyad, built by Caliph Abd al-Malik, (r. 685-705)

Date: c. 690 or later

Source: wikipedia

Medium: mosaic, faience, marble, metal, dome: wood, originally covered externally with lead, and internally with stucco, gilt and paint

Size: Interior 152’ dia. Dome 96’ H.

arabesque: European term for a type of linear surface decoration based on foliage and calligraphic forms usually characterized by flowing lines and swirling shapes. (Stokstad)

calligraphy: writing as an art form. The written word could convey information about a building describing its beauty or naming its patron; and it could delight the eye as beauty itself. (Stokstad)

faience: type of ceramic covered with colorful, opaque glazes, developed in Egypt. (Stokstad)

“It befiteth not (the Majesty of) God that He should take unto Himself a son. Glory be to Him! When He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only: Be! and it is.”

Note:
- Muhammad’s act of emptying the Ka’aba of pagan idols instituted the fundamental practice of avoiding figural imagery in Islamic religious architecture. Figural imagery is frequent in palaces and manuscripts and artists elaborated a rich vocabulary of non-figural ornament including complex geometric designs and scrolling foliate vines (arabesques). The written inscriptions are the oldest surviving written verses from the Qur’an and the first use of Qur’anic inscriptions in architecture. (Stokstad)
THE MOSQUE

Title: The Maqamat (“Assemblies’) of Al-Hariri

Artist: Yahya Ibn al-Wasiti, Baghdad  Date:  c. 1237


Medium: Ink, pigments and gold on paper

Size: 13-3/4" x 10-1/4" (35 x 25 cm)

mihrab: a semicircular niche commemorating the spot at Medina that Muhammad indicated the direction where the followers should pray.

qibla: wall indicating the direction of Mecca.

minbar: on the qibla, the stepped pulpit for the preacher

Note:

• Al-Hariri’s stories revolve around a silver tongued scoundrel named Abu Zayd - these vivid visualizations of Abu Zayd’s adventures provide us with rare windows into ordinary Muslim life, here prayer in the congregational mosque, [where Abu Zayd] plans to make off with the alms collection. [the listener in the front] is framed and centered by the arch of the mihrab (the niche indicating the direction of Mecca) on the rear wall...the columns have ornamental capitals from which spring half-round arches. Glass mosque lamps hang from the arches. Abu Zayd delivers his sermon from the minbar (pulpit) which is on the same qibla wall as the mihrab. (Stokstad)

• Often a dome in front of the mihrab marks its position. The niche was a familiar Greco-Roman architectural feature, generally then it had enclosed a statue. (Gardner)
Arches

- **horseshoe arch**: came to be associated with Islamic architecture – see Great Mosque of Damascus, but began with Visigoths in churches in Spain (OUP). The center point is above the spring point. (Stokstad)

- **pointed arch**: common in Gupta India, and passed through Persia to Baghdad. (OUP) has two center points (Stokstad)
Muqarnas: Small niche-like components, usually stacked in multiples as successive, non-load-bearing units in arches, cornices, and domes, hiding the transition from the vertical or the horizontal plane.

Note:
- Muqarnas were originally developed out of squinches that eased the transition between the square and circle of a dome, but they became an articulation of the fascination among Islamic artists for complex architectural patterns. (Fletcher)
- Among architectural features the following are the most recurrent and characteristic: arcading; the pointed arch; the true dome; columns; squinches; stalactite corbelling and pendentives. Among decorative techniques are banded or striated masonry; decorative bonding; relief; tile; screens and grilles. (Fletcher)
Title:  left: fractals; Bottom: Court of the Lions, The Alhambra
Architect: Ummayad dynasty
Date:  13th -14th Centuries
Source:  various

fractal: a form that repeats the same shaped elements at different scales
Title: Court of the Lions, The Alhambra
Architect: Ummayad dynasty  Date:  13th - 14th centuries
**Element of Architecture: Mosque Plans**

**Iwan:** a large vaulted space open at one end, used in Islamic palaces, mosques and madrasas.

**Note:** The central plan mosque comes directly from Byzantine architecture, and is developed by the Ottomans. We'll look at the hypostyle mosque.

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**HYPOSTYLE, FOUR-IWAN AND CENTRAL PLAN MOSQUES**

**Iran, Central Asia:** (in chapter 12)
- **Four-Iwan Mosque**
  - Great Mosque, Isfahan

**Anatolia:** (in chapter 11)
- **Central-plan Mosque**
  - Sultan Selim Mosque, Edirne

**Source:** Pearson

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**Title:** Elements of Architecture: Mosque Plans

**Iwan:** a large vaulted space open at one end, used in Islamic palaces, mosques and madrasas.

**Note:** The central plan mosque comes directly from Byzantine architecture, and is developed by the Ottomans. We'll look at the hypostyle mosque.
caravansary: an Islamic stopping place for caravans, also called a khan. It was often a rectangular walled complex with a single large portal at one end opening onto a court yard; along the sides of the complex were accommodations for travelers and animals, and having a covered hall at the end.

haram: lit. private or sacred; used to describe the sanctuary [prayer hall] in a mosque and the family living quarters in an Islamic house (Moffett).

mosque: lit. place of prostration. Based on the masjid/mosque that Muhammad created in Medina, a courtyard with covered porches at the north and south ends.

sahn: the open courtyard in an Islamic building

Note:
- The Mosque of the Prophet in Medina was a square enclosure that framed a large courtyard. As the second pillar of Islam requires prayers and ritual ablutions for purity, fountains are usually in mosque courtyards. (Stokstad)
- Muhammad directly influenced the transformation of his house in Medina into the new religion’s first congregational mosque. Muhammad encouraged ascetic attitudes in architecture, using vernacular methods for mud-brick walls and a palm-trunk roof. He insisted that he and his immediate successors be buried without monuments under the floor of the house. His initial prayer hall faced Jerusalem, which, previous to the conquest of Mecca, was favored by the Prophet as the qibla, or direction of prayers. After his conquest of Mecca, he redirected the qibla to the Kaaba. The Mosque of the Prophet in Medina probably resembled a small trader’s caravansary. (OUP)
Title: Comparison of hypostyle mosques

Date: 600-800
Source: OUP

Medium: plans
Size: see scale

**maksura/ maqsura**: a screened off area near the mihrab niche for the ruling elite in a royal mosque

**minaret**: tall slender tower in a mosque in which the muezzin/ crier calls the faithful to prayer

Note:

- The Great Mosque of Damascus gives the qibla wall heightened importance by a perpendicular nave crowned by a dome and intersecting the three long aisles of the prayer hall. (Stokstad)

- The Great Mosque of Damascus is the oldest extant mosque; built on a site on which had stood a Roman temple dedicated to Jupiter and a 4th cent. Christian church dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The minarets, possibly based on watchtowers or lighthouses, became standard features of subsequent mosques. (Moffett)

### HYPOSTYLE MOSQUES

**B-the Great Mosque of Damascus**

- 1-dome over the *qibla* direction (towards Mecca)
- 2-*maksura*/ *maqsura* area for royal family
- 3-mihrab niche (on the qibla wall)
- 4-corner towers used as *minarets* – part of a Roman enclosure
- 5-fountain
- 6-treasury

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**LEGEND**

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**haram**

**entrance on the east side**

**pavilion of remains of John the Baptist**

**possible minbar location**
Title: Comparison of hypostyle mosques

Date: 600-800  
Source: OUP

Medium: plans  
Size: see scale

hypostyle: lit. resting upon pillars. i.e. stylus like column; (stylite: column sitter)

hypostyle hall: a room with a roof supported by many columns

isotropic: Having properties that are identical in all directions (wikipedia)

Note:

- The first Muslims rejected the form of pagan temples, preferring to base their buildings on secular structures. The first mosques provided simple architectural settings without apses, side chapels, ambulatories, crypts, baptisteries, or choirs. The first two Islamic generations requisitioned diverse structures to be transformed into mosques. The most common plans: the basilica with longitudinal aisles directed to the qibla; the transverse basilica with lateral exposure to the qibla wall; the isotropic hypostyle hall. (OUP)

- Only the qibla - the direction toward Mecca to face while praying - is important. When Muslims covered buildings of other faiths into mosques, they clearly signaled the change on the exterior by the construction of minarets. (Gardner)

Legend:
- C-the Great Mosque Kairouan, 836
  - 1-nave on qibla
  - 2-mihrab niche
  - 3-fountain house
  - 4-tower minaret
Title: generic Arab hypostyle mosque

Source: Pearson

Note: the diagram and aerial view are not oriented.

• the hypostyle hall can be repeated as the congregation grows larger.
• this style developed during the Umayyad period. (OUP)
• A characteristic feature are the large minarets that stand as powerful signs of Islam’s presence in a city. (Stokstad)
Title: Great Mosque and Malwiya, Samarra, east bank of the Tigris

Architect: Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil 9r. 847-861)

Date: 848-852

Source:
islamicarchitecturebydxx.blogspot.com/2015/10/the-great-mosque-of-samarra.html
minaret: wikipedia

Medium: aerial view of mud and brick structure; spiral minaret

Size: 45,000 sq. yds.; the mosque was roughly the size of the entire Temple Mount, Jerusalem; minaret: 52 m./170’ h.

malwiya: fr. Arabic “snail shell” (Gardner)

Note: minaret is in foreground and below; the prayer hall is 9 columns deep

• the wall had 44 semicircular towers; originally a bridge linked the minaret to the mosque. May have been more of a signpost than a minaret. (Gardner)

• The city of Samarra, founded by the Caliph Al-Mu’tasim, was abandoned after about eighty years. The evocative feature is the helicoidal minaret. (Fletcher)
Title: three tiered minaret
Source: wikipedia
Note: n/a
Title: Mosque of Ibn Tulun, Cairo

Architect: Tulunid

Date: 880, minaret rebuilt 13th cent. in stone; central domed structure, 13th cent.

Source: wikimedia

Medium: view from within courtyard, red brick and plaster

Size: 162 m./531’ per side; about half the size of the mosque at Samarra.

Note:
- slightly pointed arches on heavy piers, with perforated spandrels and lacy merlons. The minaret was spiral, imitating Samarra.
- In Egypt Ahmed Ibn Tulun (r. 868–884) established an autonomous dynasty, the Tulunids. He created a new palace district at al-Qatai and furnished it with courtyard gardens, an aqueduct, a hippodrome, and barracks. The Mosque of Ibn Tulun remained intact. While the first two centuries of Islamic design pursued strict geometric order for cities, palaces, and mosques, the texture of Arab Islamic cities evolved into a dense snarl of covered markets and tightly packed courtyard houses occasionally interrupted by monumental religious complexes. (OUP)
- The Abbasid were not able to control the vast Islamic regions, and the history of Islam became that of regional powers. One of those were the Tulunids who were the first independent dynasty to rule the newly Islamic Egypt. It had a covered hall on each side. (Wiley)
- Note at left the minaret wrapped in a spiral wrap, with a square plan. The arcade is carried on piers. (Fletcher)
Title: Aerial view of the Great Mosque of Damascus

Architect: Umayyad, built by al-Walid, r. 707-14

Date: 709  

Source: akg-images/ Gerard Degorge

Medium: aerial view

portico: covered entranceway or porch with columns on one or more sides

Note:

- Mid-7th cent. the political center shifted from Mecca/ Medina to Damascus under the Umayyads. (Moffett)
- the exterior walls and/or foundations for those walls are Roman. Note three minarets. (Gardner)
- Islamic architects reused the Greco-Roman temenos; corner guard towers became the first minarets.

"Inhabitants of Damascus, four things give you a marked superiority over the rest of the world: your climate, your water, your fruits, and your baths. To these I wanted to add a fifth: this mosque." - the Umayyad caliph al-Walid I in an address to the citizens of Damascus. (OUP)
- The Umayyads settled in the Greco–Roman city of Damascus, Syria, where they sponsored a brilliant urban culture, partly based on the example of the Byzantines in Constantinople. Through the production of fine architecture and grand ceremonies, they attempted to create a charismatic setting to smooth over the succession disputes.
- a large rectangular space divided into a courtyard surrounded on three sides by arcaded porticos and a broad hypostyle prayer hall [on the south side] oriented to Mecca. Note the axis to the mihrab. (Stokstad)
Title: Great Mosque of Damascus, Syria

Architect/ Date: Umayyad, built 705-715 CE by Caliph al-Walîd I

Source: Photo by Kevin Richberg, Huffington Post 2008

Medium: Stone, marble, tile, mosaic

Size: 97 x 156 m. rectangle, 77 m./ 253’ high (unclear to which points)

Note: note horseshoe arches above column imposts.

- The Islamic builders incorporated spolia from earlier structures. Pier arcades reminiscent of Roman (aqueducts ring the courtyard. Gardner) [but note how it changes on the short side]
GREAT MOSQUE OF DAMASCUS

Title: the Great Mosque of Damascus

Architect: Umayyad, built by al-Walid

Date: 707-14, dome rebuilt in the 12th cent., photo 1862 by Francis Bedford.

Source: wikipedia

Medium: view inside courtyard

Size: n/a

Note:
- the entry from the courtyard was three stories and was flanked by two square buttresses. One large arch surrounded three arches on the first and second levels. The entire portal is topped by a pediment. (OUP)
- The building incorporates a platform for an ancient Roman sanctuary and uses Roman columns and stonework. (Stokstad)
the Great Mosque of Damascus

**Architect:**
Umayyad, built by al-Walid 707-14

**Date:** 8th cent.; dome rebuilt 12th cent.

**Source:**
muslimheritage.com/great-umayyad-mosque/

**Medium:** view inside courtyard

**Size:** n/a

**Note:**
- the entry from the courtyard was three stories and was flanked by two square buttresses. One large arch surrounded three arches on the first and second levels.
- The entire portal is topped by a pediment.
- Mecca fell to the Umayyads a year after the completion of the Dome of the Rock, and the realm of Islam regained a sense of unity. Abd al-Malik’s son, al-Walid I (r. 705–715), built three impressive mosques to celebrate the consolidation of the empire. The first entailed enlarging the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina. The second, the al-Aqsa Mosque, begun in 705, provided a congregational hypostyle hall on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The third was the Great Mosque of Damascus, which fused the mosque and the palace compound. After the demolition of a church dedicated to St. John the Baptist [that was purchased] to make way for the mosque, the Umayyads conserved the prized relic of St. John’s head in a side chamber as a benevolent gesture to the city’s Christians, who still outnumbered Muslims. (OUP)
Title: the Great Mosque of Damascus

Architect: built by al-Walid 707-14   Date: 8th cent.; dome rebuilt 12th cent.


Medium: view from within courtyard

Note: The entrance to the maksura from the sahn is through a triple arched entry that historians believe was based on the now-destroyed Chalke Gate of the palace in Constantinople. (Moffett)

Title: Chalke gate to the palace, Constantinople

Architect/ Date: The first structure in that location was erected by the architect Aetherius during the reign of Anastasius I (r. 491–518) to celebrate the victory in the Isaurian War (492–497); burned down in the Nika riots of 532; subsequently rebuilt by Justinian I (r. 527–565)

Source: http://www.antoine-helbert.com/fr/portfolio/annexe-work/byzance-architecture.html?fbclid=IwAR0P-Cy6JRCelibk3Fh7OCeoSmiltRe6Obe5JlwZeXuGs4SD1gM8I5mXEDjE

Medium: reconstruction drawing

Note: Unclear how accurate the drawing is.
Title: Mosaics from the courtyard of the Great Mosque of Damascus

Note: the mosaics offer a vision of paradise with fruit trees and fine buildings.

Note: n/a
Title: Great Mosque of Damascus: detail
Architect: Umayyad culture
Date: 709-715
Source: Internet commons license
Medium: mosaic
Size: n/a

Note:
• The mosaics are probably created by Byzantine artists. (Stokstad)
• The Koran has no prohibition against figural art, but Islamic tradition based on the Hadith shuns the representation of fauna in sacred places. (Gardner)
Title: Great Mosque of Damascus: detail
Architect: Umayyad culture  Date: 709 -715
Source: Internet commons license
Medium: mosaic  Size: n/a
Note: n/a
Title: the Great Mosque of Damascus

Architect: Umayyad, built by al-Walid 707-14

Date: 8th cent.; dome rebuilt 12th cent.

Source: wikimedia

Medium: interior view, looking onto the maksura area

Size: n/a

Note: the colossal arcades! The remains of John the Baptist are supposedly in the green glass pavilion.

• "Some Syrio-Roman fragments remain in the structure, as does a shrine supposedly enclosing a relic honoured by Muslims as well as Christians, the head of St. John the Baptist." - Encyclopedia Britannica

• Note the superimposed arcade. This will be varied at Cordoba. (Fletcher)
**Great Mosque of Damascus**

- **Title:** Shrine of John the Baptist, Great Mosque of Damascus
- **Architect:** Umayyad culture  
  **Date:** 709-715
- **Source:** Manar Al-Athar archive / راﺛﻵا راﻧﻣJudith McKenzie/Manar al-Athar

**Medium:** various stones including marble, tile, mosaic

**Size:** 97 m. x 156 m. rectangle; 77 m. / 253’ high (unclear to which points); sanctuary 136 m. / 446’ x 37 m. / 121’

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**Note:**

- The mihrab belongs to the historical tradition of niches that signify a holy place – the Torah shrine in a synagogue, the frame for sculptures of gods or ancestors in Roman buildings, and the apse in a Christian church. (Stokstad)
Title: the Great Mosque of Damascus
Architect: Umayyad, built by al-Walid 707-14
Date: 8th cent.; dome rebuilt 12th cent.
Note: n/a
Source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/347058715019195995/
Medium: interior view
Size: n/a
Title: Portions of the interior of the Grand Mosque of Damascus

Architect: Frederic Leighton (1830-1886, English)

Date: 1873-75

Museum: Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston, UK

Medium: oil on canvas

Size: 158.1 x 122 cm

Note: n/a
Title: Great Mosque of Damascus, Syria & Great Mosque, Córdoba, Spain from *Islamic Art Mirror of the Invisible World*

**Artist:** Produced, Directed by Robert Gardner, Written and Co-Produced by Carrie Gardner, narrated by Susan Sarandon

**Date:** Film Release date: 2011/ Palace built between 1354–91, Nasrid dynasty (1232-1492)

**Source:** Gardner Films

**Medium:** film

**Size:** clip: 3-3/4 minutes of film total: 90 minutes
Title: Great Mosque of Kairouan, Tunisia
Architect: Umayyad and Aghlabid
Date: 725+
Source: Tachymètre
Medium: Computer modeled using SolidWorks, Photoshop and Inkscape.

Note:
• In the 10th century the Islamic world split into separate kingdoms ruled by independent caliphs. In addition to the Abbasids in Iraq there was a Fatimid Shi’ite caliph ruling Tunisia and Egypt and an Umayyad descendent ruling al-Andalus. (Stokstad)
• Its minaret is the earliest complete surviving example of a structure built for the purpose which can be traced to towers of churches and Roman towers. (Fletcher)
Title: Map of Kairouan, Tunisia; mosque exterior, entrance gate

Architect: Umayyad and Aghlabid          Date: 1916; photo 1900

Source: Hachette et Cie, Paris; photographers unknown

Medium: map

Note: the buttressing on the exterior. The size of the courtyard relative to the rest of the city.

- The minaret's highest tower section is from 1294. (Fletcher)
One of the hallmarks of the hypostyle plan is its system of repeated bays and aisles that can easily be extended as the congregation grows. (Stokstad)

Lateral entrances on the east and west lead to an arcaded forecourt resembling a Roman forum oriented on axis with the minaret. (Gardner)
GREAT MOSQUE OF KAIROUAN, TUNISIA

Title: Prayer Hall (Hypostyle Hall)  
Great Mosque of Kairouan

Architect: Umayyad and Aghlabid  
(current state)

Date: 8th cent. and later

Source: district of Houmat al-Jami (area of the Great Mosque)

Medium: 414 columns of marble, granite or porphyry  
(among more than 500 columns in the whole mosque), taken from ancient sites in Tunisia such as Sbeitla, Carthage, Hadrumetum and Chemtou, support the horseshoe arches. The capitals resting on the column shafts are Corinthian, Ionic, Composite, etc. Some capitals were carved for the mosque, but others come from Roman or Byzantine buildings (dating from the second to sixth century), a number of the crossbeams are of cedar wood

Size: 70.6 m. wide and 37.5 m. deep, 17 aisles of eight bays

porphyry: purple igneous stone, often coming from Egypt, associated with royalty

Note: n/a
Title: Minbar and Mihrab of the Great Mosque of Kairouan, Tunisia

Architect: Umayyad and Aghlabid (current state) culture

Date: 9th century

Source: postcard c. 1900

Note: n/a
GREAT MOSQUE OF KAIROUAN, TUNISIA

Title: Mihrab of the Great Mosque of Kairouan

Architect: Aghlabid culture Date: 9th century

Medium: upper part surrounded by 139 lusterware tiles, two columns on each side of red marble with yellow veins, which surmounted with Byzantine style capitals that carry two crossbeams carved with floral patterns, each one with Kufic inscription in relief, wall of the mihrab is covered with 28 panels of white marble, carved and pierced, in a variety of plant and geometric patterns

Source: below, wikipedia

Size: 4.5 m. high and 1.6 m. deep

Note: n/a
Title: Minbar of the Great Mosque of Kairouan, and detail

Architect: Aghlabid culture

Date: c 862, erected under the 6th Aghlabid ruler Abul Ibrahim (856–863)

Note:
• oldest example of minbar still preserved today

Source: The Aghlabids and their Neighbors, Art and Material Culture in Ninth-Century North Africa

Medium: teak wood imported from India, consisting of more than 300 carved wood pieces. Panels, with the exception of nine, are originals. Now enclosed in a protective transparent barrier

Size: eleven steps, and measuring 3.93 m. long to 3.31 m. in height
**Title:** Kufah, Iraq

**Architect:** Abu al-Haiyaj

**Date:** founded 638  
**Source:** OUP

**Medium:** reconstruction plan of new capital city built on a strict orthogonal plan  
**Size:** n/a

**maydan:** a large open space used for public ceremonies in large Islamic cities.

**Note:**
- Kufah was a new city. The architect followed Greco-Roman precedents such as crossing main streets. Caliph Ali, Muhammad’s cousin and son-in-law, (r. 656-661) moved the capital from Mecca to Kufah.
- The Arab domination of Sassanian Persia and the southern Mediterranean relied upon the ideology of jihad. After the victory against the Persians, the Arabs founded Kufah in 638 on a site not far from ancient Babylon. The architect followed Greco-Roman precedents, learned through the Byzantine towns that had been founded in the region. He structured the new city on a grid with two broad cross streets. (OUP)

**LEGEND:**
1-hypostyle mosque
2-palace
3-maydan or open plaza, in each of four city quadrants
Title: Qasr Mshatta, Jordan
Architect: Umayyad  Date: 745+
Source: OUP  Medium: plan
Size: 144 m./side

Note:
- Although nothing remains of the Umayyad palaces in Damascus, the ruins of the so-called desert palaces provide evidence of great splendor. Among the finest examples one finds the Qasr Mshatta, near Amman, Jordan, built in the 740s. (OUP)
- Under construction at the time of the fall of the Umayyad dynasty. Shows a process of successive division into three parts with the main axial approach on the center line. (Fletcher)

**LEGEND:**
1-Royal Hall of three apses
2-Grand court
3-Reception court
4-entrance court, flanked by octagonal towers
5-palace mosque
6-pseudo bastions/ half round buttress towers
Title: Qasr Mshatta, Jordan
Architect: Umayyad  Date: 740s
Source/Museum: wikipedia; façade: Pergamon Museum, Berlin, above, and at site, left.
Medium: façade pieces  Size: 144 m./side  Note: n/a
Title: Baghdad, the Round City

Architect: under al-Mansur, (r. 754-775), Abbasid dynasty

Date: 762

Source: wikimedia

Medium: urban plan

Size: 2.6 m/ 1.5 mi. dia. circle

Note:
• The Abbasid Succession: New Capitals in Baghdad and Samarra: Rebellions led by the Shiites and others disaffected by Umayyad rule came to a climax under the leadership of Abu'l-Abbas, a descendent of the Prophet's uncle. The Battle of Zab, near Kufah, transferred power in 750 to the Abbasids. The second Abbasid caliph, al-Mansur, created a round city on the Tigris River, which the locals called Baghdad, built of adobe – no trace of it remains. (OUP)

• The Abbasids eventually became the champions of Sunni orthodoxy and built a new capital, Baghdad. (Wiley)
Title: Baghdad, the Round City

Architect: under al-Mansur, (r. 754-775), Abbasid dynasty

Date: 762  
Source: OUP

Medium: urban plan

Size: 2.6 m/1.5 mi. dia. circle; up to 2 million population

Note: the wall within a moat; “E” shapes are buildings.

- The gates are rotated from the cardinal directions 45 deg. so the SW gate points to Mecca. Two major cross-axial streets; instead of being lined with arcades, they were covered by vaults, creating a cool climate for the shops. Forty secondary streets led radially from the center. An outer ring, an inner ring, and a vast central void for the palace and mosque. Al-Mansur's grandson, Harun al-Rashid (r. 785–805), transferred the capital to Ar-Raqqah (Syria) in the 780s, laying out the town on an octagon. (OUP)

- The round shape signified the capitol as the center of the universe. (Gardner)

- The plan can be reconstructed from literary sources.

- The Abbasids ruled from 750-1258 from Baghdad, until it was captured by the Mongols under the successors of Genghiz Khan. (Stokstad) It becomes the current city after Iraq gains statehood in 1932.

LEGEND:
1-Caliph’s Palace
2-the Mosque
3-Market streets leading to the four major iwan gates, each covered by a vault
4-New Friday Mosque
5-Rusafah Palace
6-Al Khuld Palace (right of circle)
**SAMARRA**

**Title:** the Caliph’s Palace, Samarra, Iraq

**Architect:** Abbasid

**Date:** 836

**Source:** OUP

**Medium:** plan reconstruction

**Size:** see scale

chahar bagh/charbagh/cahar bagh: fr. Persian, a walled paradise garden; divided into quadrants by cross axial walkways (Stokstad)
harem (plural harems): fr. Ottoman Turkish fr. Arabic, “something prohibited; sanctuary, women”); or “be forbidden or unlawful”), the private part of an Arab household, traditionally forbidden to male strangers. (wiktionary)

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**Note:**
- Baghdad remained the administrative center until the 830s, when the caliph al-Mutasim (r. 833–842) took his 70,000 Turkish mercenaries north of Baghdad to the new capital at Samarra. Samarra had geometric enclaves of palaces and mosques that formed a strip along the Tigris River. To complete the city, al-Mutawakkil commissioned the largest mosque in the world, the Great Mosque of Samarra. The grandson of al-Mutawakkil brought the Abbasids back to Baghdad, leaving the sprawling mud-and-brick enclosures of Samarra to disintegrate. (OUP)
Title: *Medallion Rug*, Variant Star Ushak style. Anatolia (Turkey).

**Artist:** Islamic    **Date:** 16th Century

**Museum:** Saint Louis Art Museum

**Medium:** Wool

**Size:** 10'3" x 7'6 1/4" (313.7 x 229.2 cm).

**Note:** the central pattern is called an infinite arabesque as it repeats in every direction.

**Note:**
- The majority of Islamic buildings are fundamentally related to a principal axis. This axis, and secondary axes, frequently extended into a formal landscape which is an integral part of the design. While the prime axis was the kibla, the general concept was derived from the line of balance and symmetry implicit in the concept of perfect creation. This was the basis of the formal disposition of gardens, buildings and of articles [such as] rugs. (Fletcher
Title: Banner of Las Navas de Tolosa
Artist: Islamic Date: 1212–50
Museum: Detail of center panel, from southern Spain/Museo de Telas Medievales, Monasterio de Santa María la Real de Las Huelgas, Burgos, Spain
Medium: Silk tapestry-weave with gilt parchment
Size: 10'9 7/8" x 7'2 5/8" (3.3 x 2.2 m.)
Note:
• the banner was a trophy taken by the Christian king Ferdinand-III
• There is additional calligraphy on the sides of the banner.

“You shall believe in God and His Messenger... he will forgive your sins and admit you to gardens underneath which rivers flow, and to dwelling places goodly in Gardens of Eden.”
Title: Qur'an frontispiece (right half of two-page spread)

Artist: Islamic        Date: c. 1368

Museum: Cairo, Egypt/ National Library, Cairo. Ms. 7.

Medium: Ink, pigments, and gold on paper

Size: 24 x 18" (61 x 45.7 cm)

Note:
- the resemblance to carpets is not coincidental, and designers worked in more than one medium, leaving the execution to specialized artisans. (Stokstad)
DECORATIVE ARTS - CARPETS

Title: Detail of the Sanguszko figural design carpet, Iran
Artist: Islamic
Date: circa 1575-1600 C.E.
Museum: Miho Museum (Shumei Family Collection), higaraki, Kōka District, Shiga, Japan
Medium: Wool pile knotted on cotton warp and welt
Size: 19’18” x 10’8” (6.4 x 3.3 meters)
Note: n/a
Title: *The Emperor's Carpet* (large detail).
Iran (probably Herat)

**Artist:** Islamic

**Date:** mid-16th Century

**Museum:** The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY

**Medium:** Silk (warp and weft), wool (pile), asymmetrically knotted pile

**Size:** 24 ft. 8 in. x 10 ft. 10 in. (7.51 x 3.3 meters)

**Note:** n/a
Title: *The Emperor's Carpet* (detail). Iran (probably Herat)

Artist: Islamic  Date: mid-16th Century

Note: animal figures appear which suggests a secular use.

Museum: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY

Medium: Silk (warp and weft), wool (pile), asymmetrically knotted pile

Size: 24 ft. 8 in. x 10 ft. 10 in. (7.51 x 3.3 meters)
Title: War rug with helicopter, Afghanistan
Artist: Islamic
Date: late 20th century
Museum: Textile Museum of Canada, Ontario
Medium: wool
Size: 34 x 26” (88 x 64 cm)
Note: n/a
End of Chapter 7 Part 1