

Pratt Institute Libraries Research Guide: New York City Buildings

PrattCat

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REFERENCE BOOKS

Reference 720.9747 S839

New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age by Robert A.M. Stern, 1999.

Reference 720.9747 S839N

New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915 by Robert A.M. Stern, 1983.

Reference 720.9747 S839NE

New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism between Two World Wars by Robert A.M. Stern, 1987.

Reference 720.9747 S839NEW

New York 1960: Architecture and Urbanism between the Second World War and the Bicentennial by Robert A.M. Stern, 1995.

Reference 720.9747 S839NEWY

New York 2000: Architecture and Urbanism between the Bicentennial and the Millennium by Robert A.M. Stern, 2006.

Reference 720.97471 H313

1000 New York Buildings by Bill Harris, 2002.

Reference 720.97471 M883

The Architectural Guidebook to New York City by Francis Morrone, c1998.

Reference 725.23 B189

Directory of Manhattan Office Buildings by Robert F. R. Ballard, 1978.

Reference 728.31 N888

Living It Up: a Guide to the Named Apartment Buildings of New York by Thomas E. Norton, 1984.

Reference 974.7102 D537

The Landmarks of New York: an Illustrated Record of the City's Historic Buildings by Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel, 2005.

ARTICLES

Avery Index

<http://library.pratt.edu/databases.html>

The Avery Index is the most comprehensive listing of journal articles on subjects including architecture, history and practice of architecture, landscape architecture, city planning, and historic preservation. Indexes articles from nearly 800 US and foreign architectural journals published worldwide. Records date from the 1860s to the present. Try searching by the name of the building, the architect, or the address.

MAPS & ATLASES

Digital Sanborn Maps -- Access available onsite in the Library.

Sanborn fire insurance maps are large-scale plans containing data such as the outline of each building, the size, shape and construction materials, heights, and function of structures, location of windows and doors. The maps also give street names, street and sidewalk widths, property boundaries, building use, and house and block numbers. Extensive information on building use is given, ranging from symbols for generic terms such as stable, garage, and warehouse to names of owners of factories and details on what was manufactured in them.

Zoning Maps – New York City Department of City Planning

http://www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/dcp/html/zone/zh_readmap.shtml

Zoning maps show the boundaries of zoning districts throughout the city. The maps are regularly updated after the City Planning Commission and the City Council have approved proposed zoning changes.

Historic Maps – Located in the Atlas section.

- Sanborn Manhattan land book of the City of New York
- Sanborn building & property atlas of Brooklyn, New York
- Title Atlas of the City of New York, Borough of Manhattan: from Actual Surveys and Official Plans. Vol. 1, Battery to 14th Street

New York Public Library's Digital Collection of Early Real Estate Atlases of New York

http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/dgtitle_tree.cfm?level=1&title_id=1013612

This digital collection contains more than 35 historic New York City maps.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTIONS

ArtStor

<http://library.pratt.edu/databases.html>

ARTstor is a digital library of nearly one million images in the areas of art, architecture, the humanities, and social sciences.

Photographic Views of New York City, 1870s-1970s from New York Public Library

http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/explore/dgexplore.cfm?topic=cities&collection=PhotographicViewsOfN&col_id=219

More than 54,000 New York City archival photographs from the 1870s-1970s arranged by borough and street; the majority are exterior building views and neighborhood scenes from the 1910s-1940s.

Architecture and Interior Design for 20th Century America from the Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/gottscho/>

The Gottscho-Schleisner Collection is comprised of over 29,000 images primarily of architectural subjects, including interiors and exteriors of homes, stores, offices, factories, historic buildings, and other structures. Subjects are concentrated chiefly in the northeastern United States, especially the New York City area.

NEW YORK CITY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

*Check the departmental websites for visitor information. A photo ID is required to visit these agencies.

New York City Department of Buildings

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dob/html/home/home.shtml>

Anyone who intends to demolish, alter, build an addition or erect a new structure must obtain a building permit from the Department of Buildings to ensure that the resulting structure complies with all applicable laws. Department of Building records include applications for construction, building permits, and architectural plans. Department of Building records go back to April 1865. The records are accessed using block and lot numbers (found on Sanborn Maps) and the address of the properties.

Municipal Archives

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/records/html/about/archives.shtml>

- **Department of Buildings' Docket Books**

http://home2.nyc.gov/html/records/html/collections/collections_dob.shtml

The "docket books" in this collection provide essential information -- architect, dimensions, date built, etc. -- in summary form, about every building constructed or altered in Manhattan from 1866 to 1959. They are frequently the only resource for information about buildings that have been demolished.

- **Tax Records**

http://home2.nyc.gov/html/records/html/collections/collections_valuation.shtml

The tax assessment records record the owner, or occupant, of the property, a description of the property (dimensions of the lot and building), and its assessed valuation. They are particularly useful for dating structures prior to establishment of the Department of Buildings. The DOB was established in 1866 for Manhattan and 1898 for the other Boroughs.

- **New York City Tax Photographs**

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/records/html/taxphotos/home.shtml>

Between 1939 and 1941, New York City photographed every house and building in the five Boroughs.

City Hall Library

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/records/html/about/chlibrary.shtml>

The City Hall Library is New York City's official depository for all agency published reports and studies. The Library has a collection of approximately 250,000 items that includes:

- New York City neighborhood files
- New York City history
- Annotated New York City street name index