

PARLIAMENT HOUSE FACTS

The building:

- the Parliament House building was designed by Mitchell/Giurgola and Thorp Architects. This was the winning entry from 329 entries in an international competition to design a new Parliament House
- the selected site covers 32 hectares on Capital Hill
- the first hole in the ground was dug in late 1980, and construction began. The building was officially opened on 9 May 1988, and the first sitting of Parliament was on 22 August 1988
- the building was constructed with 300,000 cubic metres of concrete and 90 percent of materials used are Australian
- the curved walls of the building are surfaced with red granite from Eugowra, about 270 kilometres northwest of Canberra
- the flag mast is 81 metres high and weighs 220 tonnes. The flag is 12.8 metres by 6.4 metres which is about the same size as the side of a double-decker bus, and is possibly the largest Australian flag flying in Australia
- the total cost of the building was \$1.1 billion and is intended to last 200 years.

Inside:

- there are 4,500 rooms with a total area of 250,000 square metres
- the Foyer contains 48 Italian and Portuguese marble clad pillars
- the Great Hall contains a tapestry on the southern wall, and a parquet floor of Western Australian Jarrah with Ebony and Blackbutt inlays. The tapestry was woven in Melbourne and is based on Arthur Boyd's painting of a bush landscape
- the House of Representatives chamber is decorated in the traditional lower house colour of green which has been muted to the colours of Australian eucalypt and acacia trees
- the Senate chamber is decorated in the reds of Australian soils and red gums
- the House of Representatives has 536 seats in the public galleries while the Senate can accommodate 596 people in the galleries
- there are hundreds of other works of art inside the building including rugs, paintings, sculptures and specially designed furniture. Among the many paintings are portraits of previous Prime Ministers, Speakers of the House of Representatives and Presidents of the Senate.



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Parliament House