

Concrete

Try It Out

Build a structure. A house. A bridge. A well. These miniature blocks are made with the same substances that make up the full-sized concrete blocks we see all over the place.

What's going on?

Concrete is a relatively simple building material. It's basically sand, gravel, cement, and water. But it has a long history. Cultures around the world have made their own types of concrete for thousands of years. The Romans, Chinese, and Egyptians all refined their recipes over the years to create stronger, longer-lasting concrete.

What's the big deal?

Advances in concrete have given us a way to make some pretty impressive structures, and we have so many people to thank for it. With the invention of reinforced concrete, which itself had a number of principal inventors, structures became taller and longer. Many bridges and buildings owe their existence to the centuries of collaboration and cooperation it took to refine concrete.



Some of the oldest concrete structures still in existence, like the Colosseum above, are from the Roman Empire (Image: meva.net)

Wonder While You Walk...

The addition of the steel rebar to reinforce concrete helped concrete structures survive some of the forces concrete isn't very good at handling on its own. What sort of forces did rebar help with, and why?



Little Free
Museum

What will you discover *tomorrow*?
littlefreemuseum.org

We host rotating exhibits on science and technology.
Ideas or suggestions? Let us know.

facebook.com/littlefreemuseum
[@LFMuseum](https://twitter.com/LFMuseum)
info@littlefreemuseum.org

Like us on Facebook
Follow us on Twitter
Send us an email