



Capitol Tour

State of **W I S C O N S I N**

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Wisconsin State Capitol Exterior



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Capitol Exterior

The Wisconsin State Capitol is located in the heart of downtown Madison on an isthmus formed by Lake Mendota to the north and Lake Monona to the south. Accenting the beauty of the Capitol building is the 13.5 acres of Capitol grounds on which it sits. During the summer, there are 15 flowerbeds on the grounds, containing over 25,000 annual plants. The grounds are also home to 154 trees, of which there are 30 different varieties.

Construction of our current Wisconsin Capitol began late in 1906 and was completed in 1917. George B. Post & Sons were the architects for the project. Originally, the Capitol and its power plant cost 7.25 million to build. Today the building is insured for \$200 million, not including the artwork and furnishings. The Wisconsin State Capitol is 284.4 feet high from the ground floor to the top of the statue on the dome - just three feet and one-half inch shorter than our Nation's Capitol in Washington D.C.

The exterior of the Capitol is constructed entirely of White Bethel Vermont granite. This material compares to marble in whiteness and general appearance. It is the hardest and most durable stone used in the construction of the Capitol building.

The four wings of the Capitol face the four diagonal streets of the City of Madison. Each wing is one hundred and twenty-five feet wide, eighty-four feet high and one hundred and eighty-seven feet long. The west wing houses the State Assembly. The east wing contains the Governor's Conference Room and the Supreme Court. The State Senate is in the south wing. The North Hearing Room and

the GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) Memorial Hearing Room are found in the north wing of the Capitol.

The dome, completed in 1915, is the focal point of the Capitol building. It dominates the four wings and rises 162 feet above them. The Capitol dome is the largest dome by volume in the United States and one of the largest in the world. It is also the only granite dome in the United States. The dome consists of inner and outer structures. The inner dome (coffer dome) is visible from the Capitol rotunda. Three observation decks encircle the outer dome. The lowest observation deck is open for public viewing during the summer months.

On top of the great granite dome stands the gilded bronze statue "Wisconsin" which symbolizes our state motto "Forward". "Wisconsin" has graced the top of the Capitol since 1914 and is 15 feet, 5 inches tall and weighs over 3 tons. In her left hand, "Wisconsin" holds a globe with an eagle perched on it and on top of her helmet is our state animal - the badger. Daniel Chester French of New York sculpted the statue for a cost of \$20,325.

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