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Matthys Levy

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Why Buildings Fall Down: Why Structures Fail by Matthys Levy

The authors examine buildings of all kinds, from ancient domes like Istanbul's Hagia Sophia to the state-of-the-art Hartford Civic Arena. Their subjects range from the man-caused destruction of the Parthenon to the earthquake damage of 1989 in Armenia and San Francisco., Why Buildings Fall Down, Why Structures Fail, Kevin Woest, Mario Salvadori, Matthys Levy, 9780393311525

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If a skyscraper is 200 m (650 ft) tall and a gale blows it hard at the top, there's a huge turning force trying to tip the whole building over to the side. That's why tall buildings need deep foundations (where a significant part of the building is constructed underground to support the part that's above ground). If something tries to push the top the building to one side, the foundations effectively resist and push it back in the

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through the nervous system of its electric wires. A building reacts to changes in its outer or inner conditions through its brain of feed-back systems, is protected by the skin of its facade, supported by the skeleton of its columns, beams, and slabs, and rests on the feet of its foundations. Like most human bodies, most buildings have

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Because the aircraft hit the buildings at an angle, the fires from impact covered several floors almost instantly. As the weakened floors began to bow and then collapse, they pancaked. This means that upper floors crashed down on lower floors with increasing weight and momentum, crushing each successive floor below.

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Buildings have fallen throughout history whether made of wood, steel, reinforced concrete, or stone. But these failures do respect the laws of physics. All are the result of static load or dynamic forces, earthquakes, temperature changes, uneven settlements of the soil, or other unforeseen forces.

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