


## CALIFORNIA'S ADOBE BUILDINGS

Dating back thousands of years, adobe is one of the oldest and most common building materials. One-half of the world's population may still live or work in earthen buildings.


Adobe bricks are usually laid on a stone foundation and cemented together with mud mortar. These bricks are not strong, so walls may be 2 to 5 feet thick and seldom rise above two stories. They are often protected with a thin, smooth layer of mud or harder plaster made with lime, and sometimes painted with whitewash.

Adobe roofs were historically covered with reeds, but clay tile quickly became the preferred roofing material when it was available.


Many historic adobes are protected throughout California State Parks, and many of these are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Adobe bricks are made of earth, water, and often straw, which are mixed together by hands and feet.



The bricks—which are much larger than fired bricks, generally around 10" by 14"—are formed in wooden molds and dried in the sun.



Tiles reduce the risk of fire, and protect the walls from rain, which tends to turn adobe back into mud.

