

How Did The Incas Work Stone?



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Storage

From NOVA: Rise of the Inca...

The storage system was the linchpin between production and consumption for the Andean peoples, not just the Incas but also local societies. Just to give you an idea of the scale involved, at least according to some reports, the Incas in Cuzco [the Inca capital] received all of their food either every four days or on a daily basis from the state storehouses. Around 20,000 to 50,000 people were regularly supplied.

The largest storage system was right around Cuzco itself, but if you go out into the provinces, that's where the bulk of the storage in the empire was located. There were some places, such as Huánuco Pampa, Peru or Cochabamba, Bolivia or the upper Mantaro Valley in Peru, where there were anywhere from 1,000 to 2,500 storage buildings. The kinds of things stored in those facilities ranged from very, very fine raw materials like hummingbird feathers, to sandals for soldiers and shirts for people in service to the state, to foodstuffs.

Storage



Warehouses
Built On Side
of Mountain

Storage

Warehouses



Machu Picchu



Grades of Stone Work/Masonry

- Adobe bricks
- Encased coursed masonry: in which stone blocks are not aligned
- Sedimentary coursed masonry: in which stones are laid out in horizontal rows (i.e., [ashlars](#))
- Cellular polygonal masonry: with small blocks
- Cyclopean polygonal masonry: with very large stones

The fine stone work of the latter two grades were reserved for important religious and ceremonial structures.

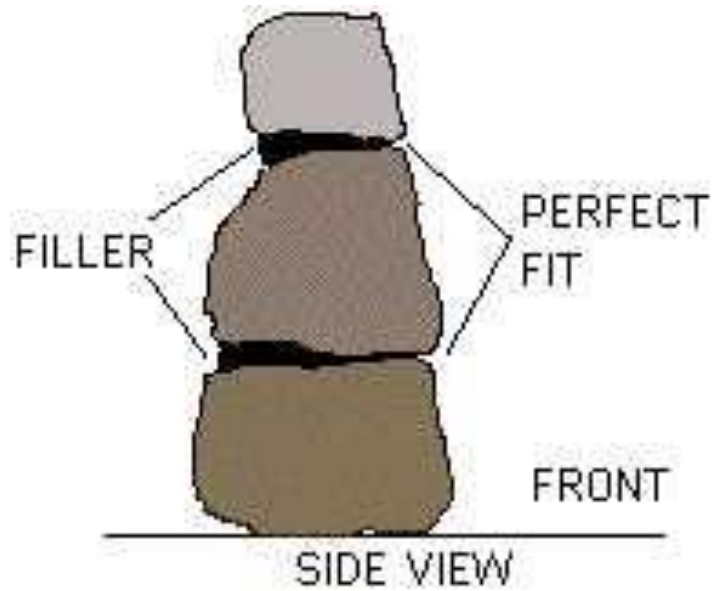
Coarse stone work and adobe bricks – such as the top 3 examples - were used for all other functional buildings – worker homes, store houses, etc.



Coricancha-Temple of the Sun



Stone Fitting



Machu Picchu Water Works

