

THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE

An Icon of American Engineering & Design



OVERVIEW

A Bridge Like No Other

The Golden Gate Bridge is a suspension bridge spanning the Golden Gate, the one-mile-wide strait connecting San Francisco Bay to the Pacific Ocean.

When it opened in 1937, it was both the longest and tallest suspension bridge in the world — a record it held for nearly three decades.



Opened

May 27, 1937



Total Length

8,981 ft (1.7 mi)



Main Span

4,200 ft

HISTORY

Building the Impossible

1917

- Joseph Strauss first proposes a bridge across the Golden Gate strait

1929

- Design refined with Irving Morrow (Art Deco styling) and Charles Ellis (engineering)

1933

- Construction begins on January 5 under extreme conditions

1937

- Bridge opens to pedestrians on May 27 — 200,000 people cross on day one

1964

- Verrazano-Narrows Bridge surpasses it as the longest suspension bridge

Structural Marvel



Main Cables

Each cable is 7,659 ft long and 36.5 inches in diameter, containing 27,572 individual wires — enough to circle the Earth 3 times.



Tower Height

The two main towers rise 746 ft above the water, equivalent to a 65-story building. They were the tallest on any bridge when built.



Seismic Retrofit

A major retrofit completed in 2008 strengthened the bridge to withstand an 8.3 magnitude earthquake on the San Andreas Fault.



Wind Resistance

The bridge deck can swing up to 27 ft sideways and flex 16 ft vertically, designed to handle winds up to 100 mph.

BY THE NUMBERS

The Bridge in Figures



~40M

Vehicles
cross annually



\$35M

Original
construction cost



80,000

Miles of wire
in main cables

ICONIC DESIGN

Why International Orange?

The bridge's distinctive color — officially called **International Orange** — was chosen by consulting architect Irving Morrow.

The color was originally a sealant (primer) applied to the steel. Morrow recognized it complemented the natural surroundings — the warm hills, blue sky, and cool fog — and lobbied to make it permanent.

The U.S. Navy had initially wanted the bridge painted black with yellow stripes for visibility. Morrow's vision prevailed, creating one of the most recognizable landmarks in the world.

**International
Orange**

#C0440E



Thank You



"The Golden Gate Bridge is possibly the most beautiful, certainly the most photographed, bridge in the world."

