

History of Tokyo Station

In 1889, the Governor of Tokyo prefecture issued the Tokyo City Improvement Ordinance, setting in motion the construction of an elevated railway line between two terminals, Shimbashi and Ueno. The Tokyo prefectural government also established a plan for the installation of a central station in the middle of Tokyo around the same time. The survey and early scheme of the station were initially entrusted to Hermann Rumshottel and Franz Baltzer, German engineers who were also involved in the design of the elevated city railway stretching between Shimbashi and Ueno. In 1903, the Japanese architect Kingo Tatsuno, who was known for designing the headquarters of Bank of Japan and had established himself as a pioneer of Japanese modern architecture, was commissioned to design the Central Station. He followed the layout plan envisioned by Baltzer, while elaborating the design with his own distinctive features. After several design changes and suspension of the project during the war with Russia, the construction of the Central Station finally began on March 25, 1908. It opened for business about six years later on December 20 after the official announcement that the formal name would be Tokyo Station—an easily recognizable designation for the station at the heart of Japan's growing capital.

Tokyo Station miraculously survived the Great Kanto Earthquake and had remained a majestic landmark of the imperial city for 31 years until it was burnt down in air raids during the World War II in May 1945.

Tokyo Station Timeline

1872	■ Shimbashi-Yokohama Line opens
1889	■ Announcement of the City Improvement Ordinance to build the Central Station
1903	■ Franz Baltzer submits scheme for the Central Station
1903	■ Kingo Tatsuno appointed as the architect for the Central Station
1910	■ Kingo Tatsuno submits final plan
1914	■ Tokyo Station opens
1915	■ Tokyo Station Hotel opens
1923	■ The Great Kanto Earthquake (almost no damage to Tokyo Station)
1945	■ Roof of Tokyo Station damaged during World War II
1947	■ Tokyo Station reconstructed as a two-story building
1951	■ Tokyo Station Hotel resumes operation
1964	■ Tokaido Shinkansen Line opens
1972	■ Sobu Line opens
1986	■ The illumination of Tokyo Station Marunouchi Building starts
1988	■ Tokyo Station Gallery opens
1995	■ Chuo Line elevated platform opens
2000	■ Establishment of exceptional floor area ratio districts
2001	■ The Research Committee for Regeneration and Improvement of the Tokyo Station Area established
2002	■ Committee for the preservation and restoration of the Tokyo Station Marunouchi Station Building established
2003	■ Tokyo Station designated as an Important Cultural Property of Japan
2012	■ Preservation and restoration of Tokyo Station completed



Kingo Tatsuno (1854-1919)

Kingo Tatsuno was a first-generation student of the Technical College of the Imperial University (the predecessor of Tokyo University). On his return to Tokyo, he succeeded Josiah Conder to teach for 18 years at the Technical College and founded the Architectural Institute of Japan in 1886. He started his private practice in 1902.

His work features a combination of red brick and granite stone stripes with dome structures that cap a building. His most notable work includes the headquarters for the Bank of Japan (1896), which is characterized by solemn granite stones. He was a pioneer of Japanese modern architecture and undertook over 200 built works throughout the course of his career.



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●1:Top above: Steel framework of the station at completion (1911)/2:Top below: On the day of opening (1914)

●Middle left: Dome interior /Middle center: VIP waiting room /Middle right: Vaulted ceiling of dome

●Below: Central entrance

●Bottom left: Reconstruction work in progress/Bottom right: After reconstruction

