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Using terra cotta in an expanding urban world

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In the United States, 82.5 percent of the population is urban—a number translating to more than 268 million people in 2016. (This number was obtained from the United Nations [UN] Populations Division's *World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision*.) This creates a need for increasingly dense housing, along with investment in commercial offices, transportation facilities, government complexes, and schools. In some urban areas, this growth is being accommodated by the construction of taller buildings.

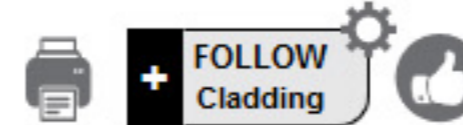


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Terra cotta, a construction material with a lengthy history, offers some of the most versatile solutions to meet the demands of **modern tall building design** (generally described as buildings of 14 stories or more, although not limited specifically by height). This natural, lightweight, cost-effective material offers many options for attractive exteriors with a vast palette of colors and textures, and can enhance the energy performance of virtually any building. The 'chameleon' among exterior building materials, terra cotta can take on appearances ranging from sleek and modern to intricate and historical.

Skylines across the country feature a broad array of construction styles, chronicling decades of design trends and accompanying shifts in building elements. For these structures, versatile materials that meet current standards, deliver comfort and safety, and decrease energy demand must be selected. Considered from the perspective of material performance alone, this is an enormous task.

When aesthetic aspirations are also taken into account, few materials support the expansion of existing structures, allow options for restoring and refacing buildings, and exhibit the required performance values. The durability, natural manufacturing, and attractive color and texture of terra cotta place it on this list.



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