

Stone-Wall Foundation

(1) Unworked Stone

The gently sloping stone-wall foundation of the Great Keep, the Inui Keep, and the Roofed Passage dates back to the original construction of the castle in 1594.

The stone-wall foundation was created using rough-hewn rock quarried from nearby mountains. Other contemporary construction methods involved cutting and setting the stones to fit together tightly, but the stones at Matsumoto Castle are largely unworked. This is called *nozurazumi*. While Although walls of this rough style were considered less refined, they required less labor and could be completed more quickly. Builders could either lay the stones in orderly horizontal lines, referred to as *nunozumi*, or stack them in a haphazard way, called *ranzumi*. ~~At Matsumoto Castle, workers built *nunozumi* walls, but in some areas the levels are not even, a style called *nuno-kuzushi* (“broken *nunozumi*”).~~

(2) Interlocking Corner Stones

For added stability, the corners of Matsumoto Castle’s foundation were finished using longer, rectangular stones interlocking in alternating directions. However, the stones are not arranged as neatly as comparable examples at other castles, so the corners at Matsumoto Castle may represent an early application of this technique.

Distinctive Tiles

(1) Rainspout Tiles

Located at the corners of the eaves, these triangular tiles are thought to have been designed to allow rainwater to drain more easily from the roof.

It is believed that the first castles to use these tiles belonged to allies of the powerful warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598). Their design originates from similar tiles used in Korean architecture. It is said that Hideyoshi and his allies imported this technology from the Korean Peninsula after their unsuccessful invasions in 1592 and 1597. After Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) defeated Hideyoshi’s allies at the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, he took control of their castles and banished them to remote provinces far from the capital at Edo. This relocation likely helped to further spread the use of rainspout tiles to other regions.

(2) Protective Tiling

An additional layer of flat tiles was added to various parts of the roof during repairs in the 1950s. These disposable tiles were placed to protect the roof from snow and ice falling from the eaves above.