## Tower bridge ****History of Tower Bridge****

### ****The Problem****

* By the late 19th century, **London’s East End** was booming, and there was a growing need for a new river crossing **downstream of London Bridge**. But here’s the catch: the Thames was a **busy shipping route**, so they couldn’t just build a standard bridge — it had to allow **tall ships** to pass.

### ****The Solution****

* In **1876**, a committee was formed to figure it out. After **over 50 designs** were submitted, architect **Sir Horace Jones** and engineer **Sir John Wolfe Barry** came up with the winner.
* Construction began in **1886** and took **8 years** to complete, officially opening on **June 30, 1894**.

## 🛠️ ****Engineering & Design****

* **Type:** Bascule (drawbridge) + Suspension
* **Length:** 240 meters (800 ft)
* **Height of towers:** 65 meters (213 ft)
* **Bascule span:** 61 meters (200 ft) — the part that lifts
* Originally powered by **steam hydraulics**; now it’s electric and oil-hydraulic.
* Materials: **11,000 tons of steel**, clad in **Cornish granite and Portland stone** to give it that stately look.

## ****Architecture****

* Style: **Victorian Gothic Revival**  
  This wasn’t just about looks — it was meant to match the nearby **Tower of London**, which gives it that iconic castle-like appearance.
* The two massive **towers** support the suspension sections and house the machinery for the lifting bascules.

## ****Lifting the Bridge****

* The bascules were originally raised about **20-30 times a day** during peak river traffic.
* Now? It's about **2-3 times a day** — and you can check the **bridge lift schedule** online if you want to see it in action.

## 🧭 ****Tower Bridge Today****

* Open to both **vehicles and pedestrians**.
* Home to the **Tower Bridge Exhibition**, which includes:
* The **glass-floor walkways** across the upper level
* The original **Victorian engine rooms**
* Interactive displays on the bridge’s history and mechanics
* It's a **Grade I listed structure**, meaning it's legally protected for its historical significance.

## 🎥 Pop Culture + Fun Facts

* Often mistaken for **London Bridge** (which is simpler in design).
* Featured in movies like:
* The Mummy Returns
* Spider-Man: Far From Home
* Paddington
* The bridge was **camouflaged during WWII** to protect it from air raids.