

Guide to the tactile exploration of the book The Uffizi. Architecture and history

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Preface

This text provides a guide to the tactile exploration of the book **The Uffizi. Architecture and history** whose pages contain braille texts, images in relief and pop-ups, multi-sensory elements, qr-codes that refer to further information on the Uffizi Galleries website. The publication is both in Italian and in English.

The left side of the book contains Braille texts and each page in Italian is followed by its English translation.

The right side of the book, printed in enlarged fonts, contains the images in relief and the pop-ups, the qr-codes of the audio descriptions and the multi-sensory elements. Each tactile table is followed by a flap on which you will feel the number and the title of its braille corresponding page. [Back to list](#)

Cover

The tactile image on the cover represents the architectural pattern of the Uffizi complex, composed of three orders that correspond to three floors: the ground floor, the first floor and the second floor. This module is repeated along the two sides of the building that embrace the square.

From the lower edge of the cover, you can go up with your fingers until you feel three raised horizontal lines representing the three large steps leading to the loggia. After reaching the third line, you can go on exploring the first order of the architectural module by moving your fingers horizontally; starting from left to right you will first find a rectangular pillar, then two thinner columns, and eventually another pillar. The first order corresponds to the rooms currently reserved for public reception.

Moving your fingers slightly upwards, you will find a dotted line that marks the end of the first order and the beginning of the second. Then, moving your fingers from left to right you will find three rectangles corresponding to three small hopper windows with the function of skylights. Moving your fingers upwards again, you will feel three horizontal elements composed of many vertical lines representing the balustrades and, above them, three large windows: starting from the left, above the first window you will find a triangular pediment, above the second one a rounded pediment, and above the third window, a triangular pediment, just like the first one. These windows represent the

second order of the architectural pattern, which corresponds to the exhibition areas on the first floor. Moving on upwards, the dotted line indicates the end of the second order and the beginning of the third and final order, characterized by three large square-shaped windows and the roof. The last order corresponds to the second floor of the Gallery, the starting point of the visitor path. [Back to list](#)

Table of Contents

When you open the book you will find two flaps, both on the left and on the right side, with braille overwriting. The left wing contains the Italian version of the book's index and a square-shaped outline in relief with the qr-code that leads you to this guide; the right wing contains the index in English and the qr-code that leads you to the English version of this guide. [Back to list](#)

Incipit

The first two pages of the braille text on the left side of the book provide a brief presentation of the Uffizi: in Italian and in English, while the corresponding page on the right side of the book provides the qr-codes that refer to the extensive audio descriptions of the book's contents, the first one in Italian and the second one in English. We recommend listening to them before starting to explore the book. [Back to list](#)

Page 1: The Shape

Turn the braille pages on the left side of the book until you reach the page marked with number 1 and dedicated to the shape of the Uffizi complex. The Italian version is on the front of the page, and the English version is on the back. Turn the pages on the right side as well, to find the corresponding table with its flap. The table contains the building's plan in relief, which shows the particular U-shape of the building and its location between the two key points of the city centre: Piazza della Signoria, marked by a long dashed rectangle at the top of the page, and the Arno river, marked by three wavy lines in relief at the bottom of the page. [Back to list](#)

Page 2: Vasari Corridor

Turn the braille pages on the left side of the book until you reach the page marked with number 2 and dedicated to the Vasari Corridor. Turn the corresponding flap on the right side of the book to explore the table: here a dotted line, from the top to the bottom of the page, leads you along the whole path of the corridor from Palazzo Vecchio (the small square at the top of the page) to Palazzo Pitti (the small square at the bottom) passing through the Uffizi complex and over the Arno River via the Ponte Vecchio. [Back to list](#)

Page 3: The Architectural Pattern

Turn the braille pages on the left of the book until you reach the page marked with number 3 and dedicated to the architectural pattern. Turn the corresponding page on the right side: you will find the pop-up version of the architectural pattern described in the [Cover page](#). With both hands, explore the popped-up element: in the back you will find horizontal bands representing the scanning of the levels. Starting from the bottom: three openings are interrupted by a pillar, two columns and another pillar. Right above them: the openings of the first floor, that is the three hopper windows and, above again, the three windows with pediments. At the top: the square-shaped windows of the second floor. [Back to list](#)

Page 4: The Serliana

Turn the braille pages on the left side of the book until you reach the page marked with number 4 and dedicated to the large Serliana placed along the short side of the Uffizi building. Turn the corresponding page on the right side of the book to discover the table in relief. You can start your exploration from the lower edge of the page: going up with your fingers you will feel three wavy lines representing the Arno river; going upwards you will find a pattern of horizontal dashed lines which represent the balustrade that separates the road from the palace, which is therefore right above the river. Moving your fingers slightly upwards, you will feel three vaulted openings that compose the Serliana architectural pattern, the main figure of the short side of building; the central opening allows access to the square while the side openings lead to the loggias. Going up with your fingers, a solid line marks the beginning of the first floor: the two windows placed at the sides of this building's facade are rectangular, right between them you will find three arched windows recalling

the Serliana on the ground floor. Going up again, a dotted line marks the beginning of the second floor, that hosts large windows, separated by pilaster strips. [Back to list](#)

Page 5: Visitor Path

Turn the braille pages on the left side of the book until you reach the page marked with number 5 and dedicated to the visitor path. Turn the corresponding page on the right side and you will find the table in relief showing the map of the second floor of the Gallery: the numbers mark the rooms dedicated to the most famous artists, and the key at the bottom of the page shows the symbols for the orientation within the map. [Back to list](#)

Page 6: The Tribuna Room

Turn the braille pages on the left of the book until you reach the page marked with number 6 and dedicated to the Tribuna Room. Turn the corresponding flap on the right side to discover the table in relief showing the octagonal shape of both the room's layout and its roof lantern. [Back to list](#)

Page 7: The Four Elements

Turn the braille pages on the left side until you reach the page marked with number 7 and dedicated to the Four Elements that comprise the Cosmos (Air, Water, Fire, Earth). Turn the corresponding page on the right side and you will find a table with four tactile multi-material rectangular inserts. The first one is divided into 8 sections and represents the Air. Each section shows the braille letters corresponding to the 8 winds of the Windrose placed at the top of the roof lantern of this precious room; the only section of this insert attached to the page is the first one so you can fold the others from right to left along the vertical solid lines and obtain an octagon that recalls the lantern's shape. The second insert is dedicated to the Water as it reproduces the shape of the oyster valves applied inside the dome. The third insert referring to the Fire reproduces the smooth feeling of the crimson red velvet that covers the interior walls of the room; the fourth and last insert, dedicated to the Earth, reproduces the design of the polychrome marbles of the room's floor. [Back to list](#)

Page 8: The portraits

Turn the braille pages on the left side of the book until you reach the page marked with number 8 and dedicated to the Portraits of the Giovio Series and the Aulica Series. Turn the corresponding flap on the right side to discover the table in relief that shows the location of the portraits along the Gallery's corridor. Starting from the lower edge of the page, a series of hatched rhombuses represents the floor's decorative pattern; six horizontal solid lines mark the point where the floor and the inner wall of the Gallery meet; going up with your fingers you will feel a vertical rectangle marking one of the access doors to the exhibition rooms. Above this, three smaller rectangles marked by dotted lines represent the portraits of the Giovio Series (renowned figures from the past), and on the left side a larger portrait marked by solid lines depicting a figure from the Aulica Series (members of the House of Medici). [Back to list](#)

Explicit

The last two pages in Braille on the left side of the book, not numbered, close the book by providing a brief history of the Uffizi from the end of the sixteenth century up to the present day. [Back to list](#)

Colophon

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