

TIMBER CONSTRUCTION

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BACKGROUND

Wood construction is common for many single-family houses throughout the world. In areas where timber and wood materials are easily accessible, wood construction is often considered to be the cheapest and best approach for small housing structures.

Six main types of wood construction are listed in the encyclopedia. These types use all forms of timber available from logs to sawn/shaped timbers to smaller branches and leaves. These types also utilize various types of wall coverings from plant-based coverings to timber materials to earthen materials, such as mud or stone. The first type of wood construction is thatch construction, which is generally a traditional construction type. For examples of this type, see the traditional construction section of the encyclopedia. Other types include post-and-beam frame construction, walls with bamboo/reed mesh and post (waffle and daub), wooden frames with or without infill, and stud-wall frames with plywood/gypsum board sheathing. Two final types are wood panel construction and log construction.

Only some of the main types of wood construction are discussed in detail in the encyclopedia. The first of these construction types is stud-wall frame with plywood/gypsum board sheathing (Figure 1), which is popular worldwide and is the main type used in the United States (WHE Report 90), Canada (WHE Report 82), and Japan (WHE Report 86). For this type, walls are made of vertical timber elements of rectangular cross-section covered in light plywood or composite sheathing, with roofs made of timber members or prefabricated trusses, which are sheathed similar to the walls. The building foundations are usually concrete but sometimes are made of stone. In Japan, a post-and-beam frame is also constructed. It is similar to the stud-wall frame, except that it uses diagonal members to create its shear walls instead of sheathing. Horizontal timber construction (Figure 2) is found in parts of the Russian Federation, particularly in rural forested areas (WHE Report 56, Russian Federation). For this system, walls are made of horizontal sawn timber logs of square or circular cross-section joined without mechanical fasteners at the corners. The buildings have timber roofs and stone or concrete foundations. The final system of construction reviewed in the encyclopedia is wood panel construction (WHE Report 57, Russian Federation). This is typically found in the Russian Federation where its prefabricated panels are easily constructed for government low-income housing (Figure 3). Walls and floors are made of layered wood members with timber roofs and concrete foundations.



Figure 1: Typical two-story house in Canada (WHE Report 82)



Figure 2: Typical log house in the Russian Federation (WHE Report 56)

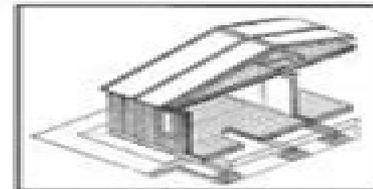


Figure 3: Typical wood panel house in the Russian Federation (WHE Report 57)

Timber Construction World Housing

L Darling-Hammond



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