

Common Types of Animal Housing

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(Designed for quick reference and easy study)

1. Conventional (Traditional) Housing

Feature	Description	Typical Use	Pros	Cons
Structure	Simple cages, stalls, or pens made of metal, wood, or plastic.	Livestock (cattle, pigs, poultry), laboratory rodents, companion animals.	Low construction cost; easy to clean; straightforward management.	Limited space; reduced animal movement; can increase stress and disease risk.
Ventilation	Natural airflow through openings or basic mechanical fans.	Small-scale farms, research facilities.	Simple design; low energy use.	Poor temperature/humidity control; higher ammonia buildup.
Flooring	Solid concrete, slatted floors, or wire mesh.	Dairy barns, broiler houses.	Durable; easy manure removal.	Hard on joints; can cause foot lesions.

2. Enriched / Welfare-Focused Housing

Feature	Description	Typical Use	Pros	Cons
Enrichment	Perches, nesting material, straw bedding, toys, foraging substrates.	Poultry (e.g., enriched cages), laboratory rodents, zoo mammals.	Improves natural behaviors; reduces stereotypies; better health outcomes.	Higher initial cost; more labor for maintenance.
Space Allocation	Larger floor area per animal; often meeting or exceeding legal standards.	Swine gestation pens, rabbit cages, fish tanks.	Reduces aggression, injuries, and stress.	Requires more building footprint.

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Feature	Description	Typical Use	Pros	Cons
Environmental Control	Automated temperature, humidity, lighting, and air quality systems.	Commercial poultry houses, aquaculture recirculating systems.	Consistent optimal conditions; disease control.	Greater energy use; higher capital expense.

3. Free?Range / Pasture?Based Systems

Feature	Description	Typical Use	Pros	Cons
Outdoor Access	Animals can roam on grass, soil, or pasture during daylight.	Chickens, turkeys, goats, sheep, cattle.	Natural foraging; improved meat/egg quality; lower feed costs.	Predator exposure; weather?related health risks; land requirement.
Rotational Grazing	Pasture divided into paddocks; animals moved regularly.	Beef cattle, dairy cows, sheep.	Prevents overgrazing; promotes pasture health; reduces parasite load.	Requires fencing and planning; labor?intensive.
Shelter	Simple barns, sheds, or portable shelters for protection.	All free?range species.	Provides weather protection; low construction cost.	May be inadequate for extreme climates if not properly insulated.

4. Intensive Indoor Systems

a. Battery Cages (Egg?Laying Hens)

- **Design:** Stacked metal cages, 1–2 birds per cage, minimal space.
- **Advantages:** High egg production; easy egg collection; low labor.
- **Criticisms:** Severe restriction of movement; high mortality from bone fractures; banned or phased out in many regions.

b. Farrow?to?Finish Pig Facilities

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- **Design:** Multi-level barns with separate sections for breeding, farrowing, weaning, and finishing.
- **Advantages:** Continuous production cycle; disease containment.
- **Criticisms:** Crowding; high ammonia; welfare concerns.

c. Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS)

- **Design:** Closed-loop water treatment with tanks, filters, and bio-reactors