

Housing

Aboriginal Housing Technology

Indigenous people throughout Australia had many different types of housing.



Lean-to
A semi-permanent dwelling, usually leaning against a stone, wall or tree.

The climate, the natural environment, the resources available, the family size and the needs of the language group were all factors that affected the type of housing that were made in an area.

Houses simply provided shelter through the day and night and protected people from different climates and weather conditions.



Palm Hut
A temporary hut made of light sticks and palm leaves.

Gunya or Wiltija are well known Aboriginal names for a house, however each language group had its own name for a house. In the Torres Strait Islands houses are often called huts. Fire was always present around gunyas as it was used to drive away snakes and mosquitoes and other insects as well as for cooking and heating. Houses were either temporary, used for short periods of time and built to be deconstructed easily, (bark, light sticks, vine etc.) or semi-permanent, built with stronger natural materials to last for a longer period of time.

Sometimes these houses were moved intact to a new area with the family (large sticks, woven, twine, bark). Permanent dwellings were built with the strongest materials available (hard woods, woven strings and twine, hard barks). Often these houses were supported by heavy beam dug in the ground. These houses are continually maintained to ensure strength and durability.