Log Homes: Construction Types

Let this introduction to the many log home styles and construction types be a guide as you begin to develop a log home unique to you.

Part of the appeal of log home living is that no two log homes are alike. Beyond design, several structural components of log homes can be constructed in a variety of shapes, sizes and styles. Even the species of wood used in a log home can vary; dozens of wood species are used in homes throughout the country. Let this introduction to the many log home styles be a guide as you begin to develop a log home unique to you – your dream home.
LOG PROFILE STYLES

The timbers cut for a log home can be shaped into one of many profiles. These timbers are stacked horizontally to form the walls of your home. Depending on the log’s profile, these logs can be affixed by any number of spikes, nails or fasteners on the market (your log manufacturer’s construction manual can guide this process). The logs can also be “tongue & groove” where cuts to a log’s bottom edge fit into a protrusion created in a lower log’s top. Some log home manufacturers also use chinking between horizontal logs. Depending upon the manufacturer’s system, chinking can be either functional (seals the air space between logs) or cosmetic. The different profiles are:

1. Square & Rectangular Log

Logs are cut with four square corners. These logs can be uniform in width and height or rectangular.
2. Round Log

Logs are cut circular, with no angles or corners. Round log homes often use thru-bolts for support. Logs cut circular on each end but with a flat top and bottom are often called “round/round” or “double round” logs.

3. Swedish Cope

Logs are cut circular, with a crescent removed from the bottom of the log, so that each log can stack atop another.

4. D-Log
Logs are cut with one round side and one flat side for consumers who desire one side of a log wall to have a flat surface while the other retains a rounded edge.

5. **Handcrafted**

Timbers are debarked by hand and each log retains its natural shape. Handcrafted log homes are built so each log is in a precise location in the home, allowing for maximum stability while retaining a rustic look.

**CORNER STYLES**

1. **Interlocking Corners**

Wood is cut from the four sides of a log, recessing an area to lock into the intersecting log and hold both logs rigidly in place in all directions. (Similar to the Lincoln Logs you played with as a child.)

2. **Saddle-Notch Corners**
Used with the Swedish cope profile, an additional crescent is cut from each log to allow logs from the opposing wall to lock into place at the corner.

3. Dove Tail

A log’s end is cut to produce a fan-shaped wedge. As the logs are stacked, the ends of one wall’s logs lock into the perpendicular logs.

4. Butt & Pass

One log stops where it meets a perpendicular log, which extends past the corner of the home.
5. Corner Post

A vertical post at each corner has a mortise along its length into which the logs lock.

Illustrations courtesy Kuhns Bros. Log Homes Inc., Honest Abe Log Homes and The Original Lincoln Logs, Ltd.