

A Taste of Pennsylvania Barn Styles and Roof Types



English barn modified with windows on gable end. The “English” barn is also called “Yankee” barn, “Connecticut” barn, or “thirty by forty” (its characteristic dimensions). An English barn is a one-story barn that is not banked. It has three bays — one for livestock, a central threshing floor, and a mow for hay, straw, or sheaves. A central door, in the eaves side, leads to the threshing floor.



Basement Barn with ramp. The basement barn (also called a “raised basement barn” or a “side-hill barn”) is essentially an English barn raised up on top of a full basement.



Tobacco Barns are gabled, predominantly frame construction (though may have stone foundations), rectangular in shape and fitted with means of ventilation, usually by hinges that permit cladding boards to be opened, either horizontally or vertically. They usually have roof ventilators - sometimes vents that run the length of the roof ridge, sometimes cylindrical vents with conical tops. Interiors have framing in bents about 10-15 feet apart on which laths loaded with tobacco leaves can be hung.



Wisconsin dairy barn with Rainbow roof. A full first story rises up from ground level; its walls are pierced with many windows. Internally, this barn has a central aisle running the entire length of the ground level, with gable end doors on either end. The second, upper level provides ample feed and hay storage room,



Gable Entry Bank Barn is banked on its gable end (rather than eaves side). A large gable-end door on the upper level provided easy access to hay and machinery storage space, while gravity aided feeding hay to the stables below. Access on the lower level was also through another gable-end door, on the opposite end.



Rainbow or Arched Roof



Gambrel Roof (barn) with Shed in foreground



Gable Roof

Note: These are only some types of barns in the Northern Tier. Many barns are variants of one or more of these types. Please use this as a general guide only. Usage is as important as roof shape so don't worry too much about categorization.

Photos and text from the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission website.

For further information go to: <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhp/Agricultural/Context/FieldGuide/types.asp>