

# Ultimate Guide to Farm Fencing



Farm fencing comes in so many forms you may need clarification about the type or style you need. But ultimately, it depends on why you want the fence and what you expect it to do.

This guide will walk you through the different types of fencing suitable for the farm. From field fencing for livestock to poultry fencing for the chicken run to a split rail for the roadside, we'll discuss what type to use for each purpose.



## Plan your farm fence

Before choosing a fence, ask yourself what you expect it to do and plan where it will go. Experts suggest creating a sketch of the property. For large parcels, an aerial photograph or print from Google Earth will help. Label each area with potential uses.

Once you know what goes where you'll see where you need to draw in fences and what type they'll need to be. Make sure to differentiate between permanent fencing, like along the perimeter, and temporary fencing, like for rotational grazing. Finally, label where you'll need gates and what type.

For further reading on fence planning, see our guide, "[Planning a Fence: Step-by-Step.](#)"

## What type of fence

Some fences are suited for perimeter or roadside locations, while others aren't. Other types work well for temporary fencing. Here we'll look at all the different types of fences and their various uses.

### Perimeter fencing

To indicate boundaries, you want a permanent fence. And for road frontage or around the garden, you may want a more decorative style than what you choose to enclose the back forty. The following types of fences work well for perimeters.

#### Rail fence

A split rail fence is a rustic style of fencing suited for establishing a roadside boundary. Made of log rails inserted into holes in the posts, it's an easy, DIY-friendly option and gives your property an old-time look.

#### Board fence

A board fence looks smart around the perimeter of the property, horse pasture, or garden or lining the driveway. Typically, a board fence consists of three to four rows of 1x6 boards stretched between **pressure-treated posts** spaced eight to 10 feet apart. Even though a board fence is made of rot-resistant wood like pressure-treated pine, cedar, or redwood, most property owners paint it to prolong its lifespan.

#### Wire fence

Typically made of **woven wire**, barbed wire, or electric high-tensile wire, a perimeter wire fence does more than indicate property lines. It also keeps animals where they belong.

For more information about building a wire fence, see our guide "[How to Build a Welded Wire Fence](#)."

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### Temporary fence

For rotational grazing purposes, movable poultry runs, or any other temporary land uses, you want something fast and easy to put up and take down. For this, most property owners use a **plastic mesh**. Plastic mesh fencing comes in various styles and colors depending on your needs.

Another temporary fence option includes **electric netting**. Quick and easy to move around, this fence style is ideal for pastured poultry.

## Farm fence post options

### Metal T-posts

**T-posts** are used for all types of wire fencing. They're made of heavy metal and shaped in a T to provide strength. Generally pounded into the ground using a post driver, T-posts have anchors at the bottom to hold them in the ground.

Before beginning your fencing project, see our guide "[How to Install T-Post Fencing.](#)"

### Step-in posts

Typically made of lightweight plastic or fiberglass, **step-in posts** are perfect for temporary fencing. They're inexpensive, easy to use, and make movable chicken yards or rotational pastures a breeze.

### Treated wooden posts

Typically, wooden posts come in **pressure-treated pine** in 6-8-foot lengths and last 25 to 30 years. They're suited for woven wire, barbed wire, and board fencing.

### Other wooden posts and rails

To avoid chemically treated wood, you may prefer posts made of other hard, rot and insect-resistant woods like locust, redwood, and cedar. You can find them locally, depending on the area of the country you live in, or make your own.

For more information about wooden fence posts, see our "[Wooden Fence Post Buying Guide.](#)"



## Fence gates

### Wooden gates

**Wooden gates** are the perfect complement to your board fence. While they are available to purchase already made to standard sizes, they're easy enough to make yourself.

### Tube gates

**Metal tube gates** last a long time and are easy to install. They come in sizes ranging from 3-foot walk-through gates to double-wide drive-through gates. They are the best option for fences surrounding animal pastures.

To make life easier, install automatic gate openers. To learn how, read our guide "[How to Power an Automatic Gate Opener.](#)"

## Wire fencing options

### Barbed wire fences

**Barbed wire** is two strands of high-tensile wire twisted together with knotted barbs every three to five inches. It's an affordable option for large cattle pastures but unsuitable for smaller livestock like goats or llamas.

To learn how to safely install a barbed wire fence using t-posts, read our guide, "[How to install t-post fencing](#)."

### Woven wire fence

Woven wire fencing has horizontal and vertical wires woven into a grid pattern with a knot at each intersection. The openings come in various sizes. Typically, fencing with smaller holes on the bottom and larger ones at the top is called **field fencing**. Woven wire fencing is ideal for perimeter fencing around hay fields, orchards, or gardens.

For more information, read "[How to Build a Welded Wire Fence](#)."

### Electric wire fence

Created by stringing several high-tensile wires from post to post, an **electric fence** has electricity running through the top strands of wire. It's an excellent option for all breeds of livestock. And, properly installed, an electric fence deters predators from small animals like poultry and beehives. Electric fences also require a charger, insulators, and grounding rods.

To learn to install electric fencing, read our guide, "[Installing an Electric Fence](#)."

### Welded wire fence

Wire fencing created by tack welding the intersections of the horizontal and vertical wires is called **welded wire**. Typically, the openings in welded wire are 2x4 inches, making it perfect for small animal enclosures, chicken runs, or to keep furry pests from nibbling on the garden.

### Poultry netting

The least durable of all your wire fence options, **poultry netting**, has wire woven to form hexagonal openings. It's used primarily for chicken runs. However, some predators can tear through it effortlessly. **Electric poultry netting** makes moving temporary runs easier and provides better protection against predators.

Of course, these aren't your only options. Depending on the type and style of fencing you install, you may find other supplies and materials to make life easier. For more farm fencing options, visit our latest [fencing and gate catalog](#).