

AN ABENAKI VILLAGE

The Abenaki built their wigwams and longhouses in a circle around the outside of the village. The middle of the village was a shared community space. There was usually a large fire pit and plenty of space for chores. This was where people tanned hides, made pottery, and prepared food for winter storage. It was also a safe place for people to keep an eye on small children and to protect the tribe's elders.

The Abenaki sometimes built a fence out of tall tree trunks around their camp. This is called a **palisade**. It helped protect the Abenaki from animals and attacks from unwelcome visitors.

The Abenaki grew crops right outside their village walls. They didn't clear large fields. Instead, they planted their food together in small areas and changed where they planted things each year. This let the soil rest and build up nutrients. Some of the most important crops were corn, beans, and squash. They planted them all together - not in rows - so each plant could help the others to grow.

The best place to build a village was next to water, like a lake or a river. The Abenaki needed a steady supply of fresh drinking water. They also used the water for travel and as a place to fish.

1. How did the Abenaki use natural resources to build their villages? Give three ways.
2. Many Abenaki moved to different locations for summer and winter. How do you think the village organization would change from summer to winter? How would it stay the same?
3. What do you think were some of the advantages of building a palisade? What are some of the disadvantages?
4. Think about your town or your neighborhood. How is it similar to an Abenaki village? How is it different?

