

Longhouses and Yihakan



**Captain John Smith
Chesapeake National
Historic Trail**



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The type of house that American Indian in the Chesapeake Bay built is called a longhouse. It is made by lashing together wooden poles and covering them with mats made of bark or reeds. Longhouses could be up to 200 feet long. Multiple families would share one longhouse that was divided into different rooms using mats and raised platforms. Longhouses would be used until the tribe decided to move their town to a new place. When families moved away from their towns during hunting season, they would build much smaller houses called yihakan using the same building method. Women were responsible for house-building.