

Llamapaedia

Fencing

Most types of fencing are acceptable for llamas. Llamas and alpacas tend to be very respectful of fences. Under normal circumstances, they do not try to push through, scoot under or jump over their boundaries the way other types of livestock attempt to do. The type of fencing you use depends on safety, geography, economics, convenience, durability, required maintenance and what may already be present on the farm. All these factors make the choice of fencing a very individual one. There is no single best type of fence for llamas, but some factors must be kept in mind when choosing a type of fence.

Safety of the llamas is the most important consideration when choosing fencing. Llamas and alpacas have large protruding eyes that can easily be injured by sharp areas on a fence. Sharp edges can also cause cuts and scratches on the face and legs. Because of this, **barbed wire should never be used** for llamas or alpacas. Barbed wire is not necessary to keep them in and can only cause damage without providing any benefit.

Fencing should also have spaces which are large or small enough to prevent heads, necks and legs from getting caught. Llamas, including crias, will try to stick their heads through the fence to consume vegetation on the other side. (The grass is always greener over there!) The spaces in the fence should allow room for them to freely place their head and neck through or they should be small enough that they cannot get their head completely through the fence.

Another consideration for llama fencing is keeping other animals out. If there are serious problems with dogs or other predators in your area, a fence which keeps them out gives you and your llamas a little more peace of mind. Even though llamas are used as guard animals, they can still be susceptible to dog attacks. Keeping deer or snails out to prevent meningeal worm is also a consideration, but it is difficult to do. Fencing must be very high to keep deer out and the fenceline must have a couple feet of pavement or gravel under it to prevent snail migration.

Types of Fencing

Vinyl

This fencing is safe and durable but one of the most expensive types of fence. There are no rough areas that could injure the llama and the spaces are large enough to safely accommodate them putting their heads through the fence. It is not good at keeping other animals out.

Wood Rail

This is fairly safe and durable. It may require more maintenance than vinyl fencing, but is usually a little less expensive. It is also not very good at keeping other animals out.

Chain Link

This fence is durable and fairly safe, but can be expensive. It is good at keeping other animals out and prevents llamas from sticking their heads through or getting caught in the fence. There may be areas where pieces of metal or welding protrude out. This could injure the llama, but the fence can be checked and the sharp areas can be filed down.

High Tensile

This is relatively safe, but less durable. Tree limbs or other things hitting the wire can disturb the integrity of the fence. Electrification is not necessary to keep llamas in, but it can be electrified to help keep other animals out. Some maintenance is involved in maintaining tension and clearing vegetation for the electrified version. Llamas, especially males playing rough, could accidentally run into the fence and cut themselves or get tangled or caught.

Wire

This is the most economical type of fencing. It is not as durable as the other types, but is still fairly safe. Take care to choose wire with spaces small enough to prevent heads and legs from getting through the fence and getting caught.

There are many other types of fencing. You can choose any fence which suits your needs and tastes and keeps your llamas safely within their pastures and barnyards. There are many types of fencing and this is most certainly not a complete list. An example of the pros and cons of more popular types of fencing is meant to help in identification of the pros and cons of other types of fencing. The best way to learn about the day-to-day use of different types of fencing is to speak with those who have it on their farms. You can choose any fence which suits your needs and tastes and keeps your llamas safely within their pastures and barnyards. *Last updated September 2, 1996*

Return to Facilities

