

For the most part, however, Mexican builders are more interested in obtaining foreign technology to speed up the construction of concrete buildings, than in moving to alternative materials. Partnerships with foreign construction companies are seen as one method of obtaining this technology, as well as financing.

MATERIALS USED IN MEXICAN HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, 1990 IN PERCENTAGE

	Material	Relative Use
Floors	Cement or concrete	53
	Mosaic and other coverings	19
	Earth	27
	Others	1
Roofs	Concrete or brick, earthen brick over rafters	51
	Metal or asbestos sheets	18
	Tile	10
	Cardboard	10
	Palm or wood	9
	Others	2
	Walls	Brick, block
Adobe		15
Wood		8
Mud		2
Reed, palm or bamboo		2
Cardboard		1
Metal or asbestos sheets		1
Others		1

Source: Centro Impulsor de la Construcción y la Habitación (CIHAC), Promotion Centre for Construction and Housing, 1993 catalogue.

Alternative building systems that combine non-traditional materials and concrete are considered to have the best potential. There have been a number of demonstration projects in recent years using polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic combined with concrete. Homes built from these components are relatively inexpensive and also allow very fast construction, reducing bridge financing costs. According to industry experts, these building systems face considerable obstacles. Mexicans are reluctant to use plastic because it does not look substantial. PVC parts must be imported, which takes time and creates problems for replacement parts. Also, Mexican workers do not usually know how to use PVC technology and few are interested in learning. Notwithstanding these objections, Mexico's acute housing shortage may eventually force a change in consumer attitudes.