



Buildings for calves

Successful calf rearing relies on providing appropriate accommodation that gives each calf:

- A dry, well bedded lying area
- Adequate ventilation that is draught free, particularly at stock level
- Minimum air volume per calf
- Adequate space for each calf to grow and thrive.

These requirements should also be combined with a high level of management.

Airspace

Air volume required per calf:

Calf Liveweight (kg)	Air volume required (m ² /head)
Up to 60	6
61 to 85	10
86 to 140	13
141 to 200	15

Accommodation

Individual pens width must be at least equal to the height of the calf at the withers and the length must be at least equal to the body length of the calf, multiplied by 10%.

Typical individual calf pen sizes

Recommended minimum dimensions for individual calf pens (up to 8 weeks)

BS5502, Part 40, 2005

Liveweight (kg)	Approx age (weeks)	Pen size length (mm)	Width
Up to 60	Up to 4	1500	1000
Up to 80	Up to 8	1800	1000

Under current welfare regulations, a calf is defined as a bovine animal up to 6 months of age. Accommodation should comply with the Welfare Code for Cattle and the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007.

Regulations also require that the walls of the pens should be perforated to allow each calf to have direct visual and tactile contact with other calves.

All calves must be provided with appropriate bedding. In pens it is vital that it is clean, dry and comfortable at all times. To achieve this, the pens should have a floor below the bedding that aids free drainage, i.e. a slope of 1 in 20 under the bedding; or, where the pens have slatted floor in them, bedding must be placed on top of the slats.



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Group housing

Unobstructed floor space per calf

After 8 weeks of age, all calves must be group housed. To assist management and reduce disease risk, groups should not be any bigger than 20 head and should contain animals of the same sex and age. At all times the calves must be able to stand up, turn around, lie down, rest and groom themselves without hindrance. To achieve this in group housing the minimum unobstructed space allowance for each calf must be as indicated as below:

Calf Liveweight (kg)	Minimum space for each calf (m2)
Up to 150	1.5
151 to 200	2.0
Over 201	3.0

Feeding and Drinking

It is recommended that a completely separate area close to the calf accommodation (particularly individual pens) is provided for feed preparation. Calves housed in individual pens will usually be provided with feed and water in buckets which are positioned at the front of the pens so that the calf can access them as required. All buckets must be filled at least twice a day and cleaned at least daily. Passageways between two rows of calf pens (i.e. facing each other) should be at least 1.2m wide, measured between the buckets.



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Further information is available from:

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