



## Graphic #4 label

### Wichita Grass Homestead

Building traditions of the Wichita Indians continued long after their initial contact with European explorers and European-American settlers. Photographs and other sources sometimes help archeologists clarify the artifacts and features that they discover at archeological sites.

This photograph shows the traditional grass houses and arbors of a Wichita Indian homestead in Oklahoma around 1890. On the far right is a grass house. The similar structures with grass only on the tops and exposed pole frameworks are summer arbors. Often the only evidence archeologists find of grass houses are circular patterns of dark circular stains left by burned poles from such a framework.

The Wichita were gardeners as well as hunters as evidenced by their tools. Tools, such as bison scapula hoes and bone digging stick tips, were often used for cultivating crops. To the left of the grass house in this photo is a flat platform that probably served as a drying rack. By drying produce from the gardens, the Wichita preserved food for the winter when they lacked fresh produce.

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Image source: Nabokov, Peter and Robert Easton. *Native American Architecture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

*Puzzles from the Past: Problem Solving Through Archeology* Traveling Resource Trunk, Kansas State Historical Society, 6425 SW Sixth Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66615-1099, 785-272-8681, [kshs.education@ks.gov](mailto:kshs.education@ks.gov) , [www.kshs.org](http://www.kshs.org)