Roman architecture derived from Etruscan and Greek tradition and private habitations are expressed in two typologies: the "domus" - city house, and the "villa" - rural house.

Constructed always with only one floor, the houses were divided into three zones:
- one dedicated to family ancestors and religion ("atrium"); the entrance zone with a central opening on the roof that lets in light and rain that is collected in a tub ("impluvium");
- one that unites the bedrooms and rooms; frescoed and decorated in style;
- a garden with a portico of columns ("peristilium") that face other rooms. In the back of the residence were the rooms for the slaves and the apartments for the women.

With the exception of nobility, the homes were not large. The popular folk were usually massed into store lofts ("pergulae") or in wooden condominiums ("insulae") of 4-5 floors.