Halden High Security Prison – Norway

**Work of Art**  
To ease the psychological burdens of imprisonment, the planners at Halden spent roughly £1 million on paintings, photography and light installations. According to a prison informational pamphlet, this mural by Norwegian graffiti artist Dolk "brings a touch of humor to a rather controlled space." Officials hope the art — along with creative outlets like drawing classes and wood workshops — will give inmates "a sense of being taken seriously."

**The Outside In**  
The maximum sentence in Norway, even for murder, is 21 years. Since most inmates will eventually return to society, prisons mimic the outside world as much as possible to prepare them for freedom. At Halden, rooms include en-suite bathrooms with ceramic tiles, mini-fridges and flat-screen TVs.  
  
**Home Away from Home**  
Every 10 to 12 cells share a kitchen and living room, where prisoners prepare their evening meals and relax after a day of work. None of the windows at Halden have bars.   
  
**Free Time**  
Security guards organize activities from 8:00 in the morning until 8:00 in the evening. It's a chance for inmates to pick up a new hobby, but it's also a part of the prison's dynamic security strategy: occupied prisoners are less likely to lash out at guards and one another. Inmates can shoot hoops on this basketball court, which absorbs falls on impact, and make use of a rock-climbing wall, jogging trails and a soccer field.

**More than Turnkeys**  
Norway's prison guards undergo two years of training at an officers' academy and enjoy an elevated status compared with their peers in the U.S. and Britain. Their official job description says they must motivate the inmate "so that his sentence is as meaningful, enlightening and rehabilitating as possible," so they frequently eat meals and play sports with prisoners. At Halden, half of all guards are female, which its governor believes reduces tension and encourages good behavior.