

COUNTRY LIVING



D I G E S T

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1.BUDGETING YOUR LOG HOME: WHERE DO YOU START?

The Log home industry has matured these last many years, but there is still a lot of confusion about how much a log home costs. Naturally, everyone wants to know the cost of the log package; however, the budgeting only starts here. If you are shopping for a milled log package (as opposed to hand-crafted, which is a totally different category), the difference between one manufacturer's price and another is minimal when compared to the total cost of the structure. Here are some reasons why:



Other materials. The logs themselves only form a portion of the material costs of the home. Once the log walls are erected, you still have to worry about a floor, a roof, the windows, the doors, the plumbing, the kitchen... the list goes on and on. Some manufacturers quote a "weathered-in shell" which includes the logs, the windows and roof - all the elements that enclose the building (protecting the house against the weather). Other manufacturers only quote the log package, and leave it to the contractor to provide the other materials locally. When pricing a log package, make sure you are comparing "apples to apples".

From our experience, the price of the Logs only constituted approximately 1/5 of the total price of the finished structure. As for the rest... it's a high-end custom home, and like any custom home, your cost is limited by your imagination - and your budget. You decide whether to use hardwood floors or carpet, marble counters or formica, a metal roof or asphalt shingles. No log home company will offer these products to you. Unlike a Development contractor who offers you a limited selection, you choose everything yourself, from doorknobs to toilets. Once you start factoring in all these items, you will discover that there isn't a whole lot of difference between a log home any another home - except for the exterior walls.

Local price differences. We built our log home in New Jersey, which tends to be a lot more expensive overall than much of the rest of the country. The same house in Tennessee would cost considerably less in lumber and other materials. Also consider that labor costs vary wildly as well. A very big part of your budget will cover the labor, because this home will be built entirely by hand. Your contractor may not have to peel or notch the logs, but he will still be placing the logs one at a time, making sure the walls are plumb, drilling holes for the wiring, cutting settling gaps above the windows and doors, possibly fitting the roof frame one board at a time. Your builder is the most critical part of the project, and it's not necessarily a good idea to go with the cheapest quote. Do you really want him to cut corners to stay within a low quote?

Design features of the house. The most dramatic log homes have roof lines that point in all directions, dormers that grace the front, vaulted ceilings in the great rooms. But

remember that every new angle you add to the roof adds exponentially to the cost of the project. If you need to keep costs down, think about a simple roof line with not too many angles.

Also, the old adage remains especially true with log homes: it's much cheaper to go up than go out. If you want a rambling one-story ranch house, you will have a bigger foundation cost, a bigger roof to consider, and lots more labor. If you build more stories and a smaller foundation, even though you will have to invest in a staircase the savings are considerable.

So what is the bottom line? A basic budgeting cost in the Northeast US would be \$140-\$150 per square foot for a milled log home; this is about the equivalent of a high-end custom stick-frame house. This does not include the land, the well, the septic, the driveway, etc. It does include the basement, the kitchen, the plumbing, etc. This is the turnkey budget for the house only. You can certainly do less if you give up a lot of amenities, but I wouldn't advise a starting budget of any less than \$130 per sq. ft. You may find yourself running out of money way too soon, and that would be a terrible shame.

2. WHAT DO YOU PREFER - A GRID CONNECTED OR OFF-GRID INVERTER?

Grid Connected and off Grid Inverters offer consumers both economic and environmental advantages. In this first decade of 21st Century, numerous technological evolutions in the field of Solar Energy are seen. People have realized that the problem or scarcity of fuels or non-renewable energy resources and their rising cost can be fixed only through natural energy - Solar Power. This energy crisis is also due to over-population as cities across the world are becoming bigger and thickly populated, resulting in greater demand for power.



These days power supply failures are becoming very common in big as well as small cities. In such a situation power through a Grid Connected or off Grid Inverter can come to the rescue. Whether it is Grid-connected PV power or Off-grid PV system, it's all about getting the necessary power during these power outages. They offer consumers both economic and environmental advantages; however, it is important to understand the difference between Grid Connected and off Grid Inverter.

Difference between PV Grid Connected and Off-Grid Inverters

PV Grid Connected Inverters: PV (Photovoltaic) Grid like conventional power grids supplying power offers power to consumers as per the demand. The major difference is that these PV grids don't rely on various sources of power like hydro-electric power suppliers and thermal power stations. It totally relies on the power of the sun - sunlight. Interestingly, it is simple - the entire process is basically a give and take policy. While using a PV Grid Connected Inverter one would utilize the power of a grid during power outages (during inclement weather or days without adequate sunlight). In return the power is given back to the grid during the time when it is not used.

PV Grid Connected Inverters are good enough for small homes or apartments, and finding the right inverter solutions for grid-connected solar power systems is not very tough. You can even get an inverter system designed with the help of a mechanic. Here the major advantage is that the Photovoltaics are decentralized, which means that solar power is generated right where it is required, so there won't be energy losses and no transmission and distribution costs.

Off-Grid Inverters: Independent of the power grid, Off-Grid Inverter is a necessary component for home, RV and cabin systems. At times these inverters work with generators to recharge batteries within a system. Electricity is stored in these batteries. Often used for smaller jobs, the function of an off-grid inverter is to charge the batteries and transform the direct current (DC) from the batteries to the alternating current (AC) that powers various electronic devices. Many secluded locales and small cottages use these power inverters as they are very portable.

People tend to use pure sine inverters much more than modified sine inverters because off-grid PV systems are mainly responsible for the electricity in a house. Even though modified sine inverters are less expensive, they are not ideal for running household appliances because the quality of electricity is quite bad.

Conclusion:

Now that you know the difference between PV grid connected inverter and an Off-Grid inverter, you can meet the dealers supplying solar products in your city and get an inverter that suits your power requirements. Always make sure that you choose the right inverter - one that can give maximum performance along with flexibility and ease of use

Woodworking is one hobby that can also be a rewarding profession if you love to work with your hands and build beautiful pieces of furniture from wood. When you learn the woodworking crafts and become a fine woodworking craftsman, you will be able to build all kinds of furniture, (table, beds, and chairs), with ease. You can then sell your completed woodworking projects and make a handsome profit.



It takes time to become skilled in the craft of woodworking. The nice thing about working up to that expert craftsman level is you will be able to build some really nice furniture for you and your family to enjoy. Imagine building a custom coffee table or grandfather clock and having it sit in your living room. It will be a topic of conversation whenever you have friends come over to visit. They will ask: How did you make it? Where did you get the woodworking plans? How long did it take to complete the project? What kind of wood did you use? What kind of tools did you use? How on earth did you make such a beautiful piece of furniture? As you discuss your work, a sense of pride will come over you and don't be surprised if your friends ask you to make one for them too!

If you are thinking you are too old or too young for woodworking, think again! You are never too old or too young for such a fun hobby and it's perfect for beginners!

Where to Begin in Woodworking?

Start with an idea in mind of what you want to build and then get a really good woodworking project plan that is geared toward beginners. There are several small woodworking projects for beginners available for purchase from online woodworking retailers. A few woodworking plan suggestions to get you thinking are: a jewelry box, a music box, a clock, a bird house, a chessboard or checkerboard, a rocking horse for a child just to name a few. Of course you can start out with as grand a woodworking plan as you choose. However, the chances are if you start out with a small woodworking project at first, you will have a better chance of completing the project.

Your woodworking project plan should include some lists! Lists of: woodworking hardware, the amount and type of wood required, and the required hand tools and power tools to complete the project. Note: A word of caution about buying woodworking tools. Only buy what you need to complete your immediate or upcoming project. This is important especially if you are a beginner and just starting out. Tools are not cheap. The beginner needs good woodworking tools, but you can easily break the bank buying lot of tools you may not use all that often. When you do buy tools, buy quality. Do a little research and compare products. Buy the best that you can afford at the time.

Here is my Beginners List of Woodworking Hand Tools:

A claw hammer, wood chisel set, a hand saw, a miter box with a saw (for cutting angles), a coping saw, finish punches, flat and straight tip screwdrivers, a rubber mallet (for tapping pieces together while not damaging the wood), woodworking clamps, a wood vise, a bench plane, a rasp, a tape measure, a 12" steel rule, a 6" steel square, and don't forget the wood glue and a brush to spread the wood glue! Of course you will need a dry place to work and may need a pair of saw horses to work on.

Here is my Beginners List of Woodworking Power Tools:

Circular saw, a jig saw, a table saw, a belt sander (to remove larger amounts of material and level out larger surfaces), an orbital finish sander, a 3/8" electric drill, a 12v or 18v cordless drill.

Here is my Beginners List of Woodworking Safety Equipment:

Safety glasses, clear safety goggles, dust masks, face shield, hearing protectors, Nitrile disposable gloves

We could go on and on with listing more woodworking hand tools and more woodworking power tools here, but the idea is to buy the essential hand and power tools that beginners will need. You can always add to your toolbox as you gain experience!

Guidance for Beginner Woodworking Craftsmen:

You now have a great new hobby in woodworking, you have purchased your woodworking project plan and you're really excited to start using your new woodworking tools, but how? Your woodworking project plan should provide you step by step directions and techniques to complete your project. But if you are unsure about what to do there is help available! There are several places that beginning woodworkers can learn about the woodworking craft. First, subscribe to one of the several woodworking magazines available. Every month the writers in woodworking magazines do a story on how to improve your woodworking craft. Whether it is showing you how to apply a finish to a completed project, or how to make a mortise and tenon joint, something new can be learned every month. Next, is buying instructional DVD's like the ones created by Fine Woodworking Magazine. Instructional Woodworking DVD's cover topics such as: mastering your table saw, how to use a router, how to turn wood projects, turning wooden bowls, and wood finishing basics. As you can see, there are many educational resources available for the beginning woodworker to learn the woodworking craft.

4. HOMESTEADING SKILLS TO LEARN

There are many skills our grandparents had that have been lost today. Various homesteading skills are lost on the modern city dweller. Providing food and water for you are paramount. Knowing how to collect and purify water, from any source, including but not limited to rain, is a crucial skill in the event of disaster, water contamination or even water shortage. During World War II most everyone had what was called a Victory Garden. These were essentially edible gardens that people used to produce some of their own food in order to reduce the demand and to supplement their food rations.

Gardening is probably one of the skills that many people still have, but most gardening now is done with non-food producing plants. Maintaining a garden to provide vegetables, fruit, nuts, and herbs is a critical homesteading skill. Food is necessary to life, so knowing how to grow food is one of the first skills any new homesteader should learn.

Preserving the food grown is probably one of the next most important skills to acquire. Knowing how to store the food for the long term will keep the food on the table in the long term. We all know that most food is seasonal, therefore to be able to eat it out of season means preserving it by canning, dehydrating, smoking or freezing.

Emphasis should be placed on canning and dehydrating as those are probably the top two ways to store fruits and vegetables. Freezing is good, but can result in freezer burn over time, and is dependent upon having continuous electricity. Depending upon electricity for food storage without having your own solar electricity generation makes the homesteader just as dependent as anyone else on the grid.

Cooking food from scratch is a skill that many new homesteaders will also want to learn. Making bread from wheat berries is quite a process, but if you know how to do it, you would have bread cheaper when there is food on the shelves at the grocery store, and if there is no food on the shelves, you'll have bread when others don't.

Raising and butchering small livestock like chickens, rabbits and ducks is something few people can do these days. Having the knowledge to do this will keep protein on your table in good times and in bad.

There are other skills that are good to learn too. Sewing, soap making, candle making, building, herbal remedies, harnessing solar and wind power, hunting, fishing, mechanical repairs, the list is long, but all of these skills will only make the life of a homesteader better to know.

5. DIY SOLAR PANELS FOR THE AVERAGE JOE DIYER

Today, solar energy is great option for those who would like to save money on their monthly energy bills. A family can build small solar panels to power a section of their house, or they can build a more extensive solar panel system and eliminate their costly energy bills.



If someone wants to begin living off of solar energy, he or she can either spend thousands on a professionally installed system, or choose to build their own. I believe that building your own solar panels is a viable option, and totally possible for anyone who is willing to spend \$200 and dedicate a weekend to constructing their solar powered panels

For those interested in DIY solar energy panels, there are a few things you need to keep in mind:

- o You're probably going to need a good DIY solar panel guide
- o You need a complete parts list
- o You must have access to the necessary tools
- o Be ready to put in some work!

Building panels can be tricky, especially if you have no experience. That is why it is crucial to start out right, with a thorough DIY solar panel manual. There are a lot of manuals and guides online to choose from, and some are definitely better than others. You want a guide that has a complete DIY solar panel system manual, a parts list, a money-back guarantee, and training videos. Some offer other bonuses as well, like how to build a windmill or make biodiesel, but you may or may not care about those.

Of course, if you have experience constructing panels or know someone who does, I would not worry about buying a guide. However, if you do plan to purchase a guide, I would check out Green DIY Energy; I have reviewed many DIY guides and Green DIY Energy is my top choice. Earth 4 Energy and Power 4 Home are also good choices.

I like Green DIY Energy the most because it is the most thorough guide, in my opinion. You get access to manuals for constructing a solar power system and a windmill system, a complete parts list, and two hours of "how-to" training videos on the more technical aspects of creating your solar panels.

Another thing I liked was the step-by-step example the Green DIY people gave about how they created a solar panel system for \$98. They did that by using used parts or broken parts which needed a little bit of repair work before being implemented into their system. However, if you don't want to go through that extra work, you can expect to spend a little under \$200 buying the needed parts (all new parts) for your DIY solar power system, which is still really cheap.

6. THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF DOLLS HOUSE FURNITURE

Dollhouses are miniature versions of big houses complete with all the rooms and fixtures. They originally became popular centuries ago in Europe. The first models were baby houses which were cabinets that are built with full furnishings and are made to be displayed in a room. They were made as adult collections and were not meant to be played with by kids. It was only in the 20th century that toy miniature houses and dolls house furniture were manufactured for little girls to enjoy.



Just like your own house, dolls houses need furniture too. In order to create a homely atmosphere in these tiny houses, you must decorate them with beds, sofas, cabinets, and even create awesome lighting conditions too. Some houses come with built in dolls house furniture but there are some that have none. For toy collectors, looking for the right furniture for their miniature houses can mean a lot of fun.

Miniature furniture has many different designs as well and you can choose a design to match the theme of your doll house. Many houses are replicas of the classic castles and houses and so they have a very vintage feel. Because of this, many furniture pieces that were sold were classic furniture sets that are perfect for old fashioned houses.

Modern dolls house furniture is available too for the more contemporary modelled miniature houses. There are scaled designs of couches, cabinets, bed and tables patterned from the many modern furniture of today.

Dolls house furniture are made from different materials too. Bathroom fixtures, for instance, are made with ceramics. Furniture that are made from this material are usually made with the intention of using it for display only. They have the same delicate and intricate design that you will see in a normal sized furniture.

You can also get miniature furniture that is made from wood. These wooden furnishings are made with the same craftsmanship as that of a regular sized wooden furniture. However, they are usually made from soft thin wood like plywood or fiber boards to allow carving despite the small size.

Plastic is also one of the materials that is popular for dolls house furniture. They are easy to mold in order to imitate the shape and design of regular furniture. They come in very bright colors and the designs are just charming. Usually, fixtures that are made from this material are created for kid's play houses. They are lightweight and they do not easily break even when dropped.

7. ARE YOU READY FOR AN ULTRA TINY HOME?

Home building trends from 2008 to 2014 are showing a decrease in the square footage of residential family homes. Trulia reports that the average American home size has decreased every year since 2008. In the 1950's the average home size was less than 1,000 square feet. By the early 2000's homes were approaching 2,600 square feet.

Whether it was the economy combined with high heating and cooling bills, or the maintenance toll that larger houses were extracting, people began to choose and build smaller homes just before the recession. Good timing. Exceptions abound of course - wealthy buyers are still building mansions, but it is a small percentage of the market. Market share has actually grown for homes sized less than 1500 square feet.



What is most confusing in the data is the "small home" segment. Builders will give you different answers to the question, "How big (or small) is a 'Small Home?'" Consensus is that a "small home" is 1,500 square feet or less. You might say that this is not a small home at all. Then there is the term "Very Small Home." A very small home, if you research the phrase, turns out to be less than 1,000 square feet. Again, you might comment that 1,000 square feet is just fine.

Continuing down this arbitrary path, we come to the term "Tiny House." A tiny house is described by TinyHouseTalk.com as a home with less than 400 square feet. OK, I hear you saying, that is small. But wait. There's more. We have the term "Ultra Tiny House." I bet you can figure this one out. Less than 100 square feet? Yup. These tiny homes can be as small as 90 square feet complete with bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom and a common area. How is this possible? Designboom.com is a web site with pictures of these truly tiny homes and it is remarkable. I don't think I could do it!

Finally, if you want to get away, you can still buy a motorhome or RV with a lot more space than a Tiny House. But you can also get away with a Portable House, sometimes called a "Towable Home." The Custom 30 Foot House by Colorado-based Rocky Mountain Tiny Houses, featured on Gizmag.com, is a handsome example. Built for a family of 3, it offers 200 square feet on the main floor and 100 square feet in two separate lofts. The home features seating for six, a wood stove, large refrigerator, washer/dryer, and a dishwasher. The bathroom includes a composting toilet, sink, a small bathtub, and a shower. The house rests atop a 30 foot trailer, and can be towed by a full size car or truck.

An interesting final fact on American home sizes. Our homes are considered extravagant by the people in most other countries across the globe. In Spain and France, an average home size is less than half the size of an American home, and in the United Kingdom

homes are one third the size at about 800 square feet. So the next time you walk into your American home, appreciate the fact that it's bigger than you thought it was.

8. BENEFITS OF A GRIND USING THE COUNTRY LIVING GRAIN MILL

There are so many different aspects of our daily lives that we give no thought to, especially when it comes to the labor saving devices that we interact with every day. The effects that processing has on foods has been well documented since man first began preparing, cooking and processing his foods. Once we took a step beyond the hunter/gatherer and began to change how our foods were composed, we began to have a large impact on the overall nutrient makeup and composition of our foods. Even the simple act of grinding grains and beans that we otherwise wouldn't be able to digest is a dramatic change over the natural state.



While not all of these base changes are bad (as we already discussed - these changes can make otherwise indigestible foods a part of our regular diets) some have the final result of having stripped out all nutrients from the things we eat. We already have a general sense that the more "processed" our foods are, the less health and natural they are for us. Food industrialization and mass production have reduced most of our packaged foods to an almost sawdust state - ultra-pasteurization and the quest for the eternal shelf life have destroyed our foods very soul. We know these things about our processed foods, but what is happening in our very kitchens? What impact has your microwave had on your reheated leftovers? What does the long term storage that your freezer offers mean for your nutritional intake?

One particular area of concern may come close to the heart of your families nutritional plans - you may already be enjoying the benefits of grinding your own wheat in your home and baking homemade bread. Studies have shown that switching from store bought processed breads to your own breads made from freshly ground whole wheat flour presents a dramatic improvement in the nutritional value of your bread. Studies have also shown that many of the critical nutrients that we look for inside of the wheat grain are adversely affected by heat. Is the electric impact grinder that you're using to process your wheat heating your flour to levels that destroy the very nutrients that you're trying to recover?

While there is no question that a large percentage of the wholesome goodness lost to mass produced breads remains in home baked bread even when a grain mill has removed some of the nutrients, is there an option that allows you to keep as many of those vitamins and minerals as possible? The solution is a cool grind - grinding the flour and keeping it at temperatures under 130°F. How can this be done? We must look outside of the standard electric offerings and slow down the grinding process while still keeping it effective for the everyday home baker. The Country Living Grain Mill is one of the best solutions available on the market today - oversized stainless steel burrs mean

that your flour can be processed quickly by hand while keeping the heat caused by friction around 120°F for the highest amount of nutrient retention possible.

Why temperature is so important

NB. F = Degrees Fahrenheit and C = Degrees Centigrade

Temperature is critical in determining how long to cook a turkey, for the simple fact that the bird must have reached a uniform temperature of at least 165 F throughout in order to destroy harmful bacteria. You do not want to give your guests food poisoning!



The turkey is a weird shaped food source! - Large body covered with thick flesh around the breast area, large legs made up of dense muscle and a large internal cavity. Because of this, it is not as easy as cooking a single joint of meat for example. The breast meat tends to cook much faster than the dense muscular leg meat, so there is a risk of over-cooking the breast meat whilst waiting for the leg meat to cook thoroughly.

Deciding how long to cook a turkey is not an easy question to answer as there are so many variable factors to consider.

The type of oven

With conventional gas or electric ovens (not Microwave, Convection, Rotisserie) the top of the oven is the hottest zone. The middle part of the oven is usually the coolest zone. The bottom part of the oven is usually also a cool zone in a gas oven, but in an electric oven this area can be a hot zone. As the turkey will remain in the same position throughout the cooking cycle, this will influence the length of time and how evenly the turkey cooks.

Microwave ovens work on an entirely different principle but due to the larger size of turkey compared to chicken, may not be large enough to cook turkey.

Convection ovens are more efficient than conventional ovens because an internal fan circulates hot air all around the food. Turkey cooked in a convection oven should be more evenly cooked with maybe a 50% saving in time.

Rotisserie ovens are also more efficient than conventional ovens because the food is continually turned allowing heat to penetrate evenly.

Size and weight of the turkey

No surprises here, but the larger and heavier the turkey, the longer the time period for cooking! If the turkey is so large that it only just fits into the oven, seriously consider using a bigger oven or buying a smaller turkey. The reason for this is that to cook the

turkey thoroughly, there must be a good air space all around the turkey to enable hot air to circulate. If this is not the case then it will be difficult to gauge cooking times and ensure even cooking throughout.

Fresh or frozen turkey?

Many people prefer to cook a fresh turkey as the taste is said to be superior to frozen. Fresh turkey should be purchased 1 to 2 days prior to cooking and stored in a refrigerator. When ready to cook take out of the refrigerator and allow to come up towards room temperature.

Frozen turkey is more convenient for many people however and provided the correct thawing out procedure is followed, should be safe and tasty. Care must taken to follow the suppliers thawing out instructions correctly, including that applying to stuffing. A general guide to thawing frozen turkey stored in a refrigerator is to allow 24 hours for every 4-5 pounds weight (e.g. a 14 pounds turkey would take 3 to 4 days to thaw out).

Deciding how long to cook your turkey

Professional chefs cook their turkey at an oven temperature range 325 F to 350 F (170 C to 180 C).

As a guide, if you are cooking a 12 pounds weight fresh or thawed frozen turkey without stuffing using a conventional oven operating at a temperature of 325 F, the likely cooking time would be 3 Hours. When stuffing is placed within the turkey it will take a little longer to cook through so the cooking time must be increased. Refer to a good turkey cook book for full instructions.

Testing temperature when cooking your turkey

The old school method for testing when your turkey is cooked is to use a clean metal skewer. When the approximate cooking time is up, you take the turkey out of the oven and carefully pierce the thickest part of the leg with the skewer. Remove the skewer and press against the leg to see if the juices run out clear without any trace of pink - if the juices are clear then the turkey should be cooked.

There are more accurate methods available using modern technology, more suited to the amateur or newbie chef:

- Use a temperature probe food thermometer designed to be inserted directly into the turkey during the cooking process, as directed by manufacturers instructions. This continuously monitors the internal cooking temperature so you can be certain that the correct minimum temperature is achieved.
- Use a thermometer (designed for the specific purpose) to register the internal temperature of your oven so as to check the accuracy of your ovens temperature controls.
- When the turkey has cooked and has been removed from the oven, use an "instant read" probe food thermometer to check the internal temperature of various parts

of the turkey e.g. legs, inner thigh, breast, internal cavity stuffing. The turkey should be allowed to rest for approximately 30 minutes after cooking and the internal temperature must be at least 165 F to ensure that the meat is cooked sufficiently well and safe to eat.

Turkey cooking tips

1. Some professional chefs suggest pre heating your oven to a much hotter initial temperature of 425 F (220 C). Place your turkey in the oven and leave for approximately 15 minutes. Then reduce the temperature down to the correct range selected e.g. 325 F for the remaining time. The idea here is to give the turkey a good blast of heat which penetrates right into the meat and any stuffing.
2. Consider cooking stuffing outside the turkey in a casserole.
3. To protect the turkey breast from over-cooking and drying out, consider placing stuffing under the breast skin. You should carefully peel back the skin and work your fingers and then your hand under the skin to free it from the meat. Spoon the stuffing into the cavity and then replace the skin and secure down to avoid anything leaking out.

Enjoy your turkey dinner celebration!

10. HOW MANY DIFFERENT WAYS CAN YOU COOK A CHICKEN?

The often asked question to cooks all over is "how to cook". It challenges me to ask myself how many methods of cooking are there out there that can be applied to a main ingredient. Let's try this with the ever so famous chicken. And mind you, every part of the chicken can be turned into a dish. Have you heard of chicken feet as a specialty?



I will go in alphabetical order so that we can add-on if we find more.

1. Bake - there are many recipes to bake a chicken; either whole (a.k.a. roasting) or chicken pieces/breasts. We can also bake lovely chicken pies.

2. Blanche - you can put the chicken into boiling water first, and then into ice cold water, before grilling the meat. That way you get to lock the juices in. Also the water used for boiling can be used as chicken stock.

3. Boil - boiling chicken either gets you a nice chicken soup or chicken can be boiled before shredding and served as garnishing for noodles soup dishes. Also boiling the chicken before grilling shortens the cooking time.

You can also double boil a chicken; this is slow cooking over a few hours, requiring you to cook the chicken in a pot placed into another pot of boiling water. It is cooked using indirect heat for a more even cooking. Delicious but you have to be patient for the end result.

4. Braise - this is like stewing; you add liquid just enough to cover the meats (dark soy sauce or just water) and let the chicken cook slowly. This is usually done for tough chicken pieces, like the "ayam kampung" (the tough free range chicken).

5. Broil - this is like grilling chicken; we moisten the chicken pieces with some gravy, put them on a baking pan and cook them for a few minutes. These are lovely for sandwiches or salads.

6. Ferment - yes you can ferment chicken and bake it thereafter. Sounds like a specialty.

7. Freeze - freezing is arguably a method of cooking; cooking without heat. Works for ice creams, sherbets and yogurts, but don't think you should try it on chicken though.

8. Fry - this is common in Asian recipes. There are many delicious recipes for deep frying chicken. We use a "kuali" or wok for this for best results. The other is stir frying. Again, best results are produced using the wok. This is quick and shallow frying on high heat. Juices are locked in and the chicken is cooked in small pieces for quick cooking.

Best served hot. You can cook simple one-dish meals, like fried koay teow, using this method. Yummy!

9. Grill - one of the more common methods of cooking chicken is to grill or barbecue.

10. Microwave - is that a cooking method? You can add some spices and seasoning and microwave the chicken. What cooking method is it then if not microwaving?

11. Pickle - yes there are pickled chicken recipes. However, this is best eaten with something mild tasting like fresh salad and plain rice given the strong pickled flavor.

12. Poach - gently cook the chicken in some water over low heat.

13. Roast - this is another famous method of cooking chicken, and there are just so many lovely roasted chicken recipes that we can try.

14. Sauté - sautéed chicken is a very simple recipe. It takes just a few minutes to sauté chicken with a little oil and herbs/a light sauce. Delicious!

15. Scald - this is the first process to clean the chicken; scalding with boiling water to remove the feathers.

16. Scramble - cooking scrambled chicken is like cooking scrambled eggs; cook shredded chicken or small chicken pieces in a light seasoning. In fact, we can cook scrambled eggs with chicken. How about that. Then eat it with rice or as a sandwich.

17. Sear - searing chicken gives it a nice brown crispy exterior while leaving it soft on the inside, just like browning. It is accomplished through applying high temperature quickly to the chicken pieces.

18. Simmer - gently boil the chicken; the gravy thereafter can be used as a sauce.

19. Smoke - smoked chicken is not the easiest way to cook a chicken, but if done right, the result can be a deliciously aromatic, tender and juicy smoked chicken. Yum!

20. Steam - steaming is a very simple and healthy alternative of cooking chicken. Simply add ginger and or mushroom.

21. Stew - chicken stew needs no introduction. This is a slow cooking process that is worth the wait; we put some water, vegetables etc and leave to boil to heavy gravy.

22. Sweat - this is a term that I have just heard as a cooking method; you can cook chicken in low heat over a little oil.

23. Tan door - you'll need to have this large clay oven for this method of cooking, but worth the while if you have one. This is chicken marinated in yogurt and spices, and grilled in this special clay oven over a charcoal fire. Hmm.. heavenly!

24. Toast - Toasting is another form of grilling. Perhaps we can mix cooked chicken meat with sauces and spread this on some bread to toast.

So there you are... all the various methods of cooking chicken. Never knew we have so many ways of cooking them. Happy cooking. Bon appetite!

11. AMAZING LOG HOME INTERIORS PHOTO GALLERY



Beautiful and inspiring homes are being built all the time, but it's wonderful to see them being built out of beautiful natural materials found in nature. This fabulous log stairway from the portfolio of projects done by Murray Arnott Design Ltd., is a truly amazing piece of craftsmanship.

It is most likely challenging enough to build a stair case like this with curves and spirals, over a straight up and down typical stair case. It's probably challenging enough to build a stair case like this one with pre-cut specialty wood, but think about how much time and effort went into building this epic winding stair case with random pieces of wood! With all the knots and curves, it would be like trying to fit together the pieces of an impossible puzzle! But the people at Murray Arnott Design Ltd. are obviously up for a creative challenge and they rose to the challenge and created this amazing stair case that just looks incredible and will last for years and years to come.

The intricate, polished tree stumps and branches seem like they just all naturally fit together to effortlessly, although I am sure it took a lot of planning out and a lot of patience to get each one in the right position. The stairway is often the feature of a home, so you might as well make it a be a statement piece, a piece of art in it's own right. This stairway is that and more. The steps as you will see, are even made out of cut up tree stumps that are flattened out just enough to make a flat surface to walk on. The people at Murray Arnott Design Ltd. seem to always put so much creative effort into their projects.

Head over to the 'Murray Arnott Design' website by following the link in the description below for more!

More Photos & Information Found At: [Murray Arnott Design Ltd.](#)

12. LITTLE LOG FURNITURE



Log furniture can conjure up the typical image of lumberjacks, plaid jackets and remote workers felling trees. Contemporary and traditional log furniture has been given a modern twist. The Modern log furniture look is completely different, invoking elegant designs with a unique and environmental flair to ornament any room. The logs used can come in a vast array of sizes and shapes which maintains the uniqueness of the modern log furniture. As the logs are asymmetrical, it adds a custom bespoke 'personality' to the crafted items. The organic design elements, as well as the earthy wooden colors, are a great combination to interior decor and can transform rooms with the addition of select furniture pieces.

Modern log furniture can be comfortable, cool and contemporary. Handmade products with salvaged materials are eco-friendly and are luxuriously rustic. Soft curves compliment bold design and create elegant centerpieces for your favorite room. Tree logs transformed rooms by becoming beds, tables, chairs, and benches - instantly turning rooms into stylish masterpieces to rival any interior decorating magazine. The best thing about this beautiful and exclusive style, this nature inspired esthetic is comfortable, and custom made. Elegantly simple, yet bold design enhances and showcases the logs natural beauty, and the rustic style is replicated in award winning designs around the globe. People from all nationalities enjoy the subtle organic ornament modern log furniture brings to elegant decor.

Modern log furniture pieces are eco-friendly products that are both eye-catching and chic, and always turn into great conversation topics. People love the look and feel of soft wood and they will be drawn to your wooden pieces. If you enjoy bringing a bit of the outdoors into your home, check out the Lus Home link to Little Log Furniture below. It is a wonderful way to give you some ideas to add log furniture to your home today!

More Photos & Information Found At: [Lus Home](#)

13. DIY TURNER LIFT TOP COFFEE TABLE



We all love to conveniently store our odds and ends out of sight when they are not being used, which is what makes the 'lift top' table a very handy coffee table. It is a great place to put magazines, laptops or coloring books. In this day and age of DIYs spreading on the internet, here is a fun little DIY for this style of lift top table.

Speaking of fun and easy wood DIY's for the summer, the new trend this summer is using environmentally sourced resources and eliminating materials that end up in our garbage, landfills or dumps. A salvageable material that comes to mind is that of the humble yet versatile wooden shipping pallet. These pallets are used in large quantities in the shipping industry and are available basically for free at shipyards and auctions. These simple materials can be assembled into many different things and even broken down and used for flooring or shelving on their tour. Frequently they are used as coffee tables or benches in the backyard, garage or tool rooms. They can be used as a staircase and the materials can be used for both indoors and out and add a bit of shabby-chic to any decor motif. As these pallets are made from a variety of wood, no two patinas or finishes are the same, thus lending to the custom and unique appeal of this medium. As they are fairly simple, you can customize the color or design and shapes to your personal preference and liking.

Cheap but versatile, and effortlessly converted into anything your mind can imagine. We have seen wine rack and shoe holders, day-beds and sofas and benches, swing and tables that belong even in luxury furnishing stores, all made from this delightful and repurposeful material. A few pieces can be made into a frame, or a shelf, or sanded down and the wood re-used. The instructions are even kid friendly so it can be adapted into a family friendly fun project where everyone can enjoy the fruits of their labor in their home. Even the great art masters needed a muse or inspiration so check out ours via Goods Home Design for a different adaptation of wooden coffee tables that would be great in any home. As you progress in your abilities with wood working, you can take on bigger projects and get amazing results!

For the full step by step instructions on how to build this handy Turner Lift Top Coffee Table, check out the link via the INSTRUCTABLES website and don't forget to share your creations!

More Photos & Information Found At: [Instructables](#)

14. COUNTRY RUSTIC LOG BED



Many people have fond thoughts and experiences when it comes to log home living. If you are in a time of your life that you are considering building or buying a home, you should take the time to learn some of the main reasons why people love 'em.

1. History - Log home living has been around since the first tools were available to cut and carve logs. It was a natural progression take fallen logs (and eventually cut down the trees) in order to live in a beautiful home like this.

2. Individuality - There is something unique about each home that is built because of the rough nature and character of the logs that are used. Each log is marked with its own unique spots and there is nothing quite like it out there that is similar on the market.

3. Weather proof - Log Homes are highly resistant to most kinds of weather including extreme heat, extreme cold, and even hurricane (if they are built right). With this in mind you will find that your overall energy bills can be lower because of the natural insulation properties of the logs themselves.

For more great reasons on why to build a log home, check out the link below to the 'Nordanlid Rustik' website.

More Photos & Information Found At: [Nordanlids Rustik](#)

15. DIY: BED TURNED INTO BENCH



I always think of the headboard bench as the ultimate recycle project. Everyone loves an old-fashioned, shabby chic, cottage garden! It's a great way to showcase those perfect treasures found in antique stores, flea-markets or good will. A perfect way to incorporate your finds is to Repurpose / Reuse / Recycle them into your garden landscape and use your new salvaged pieces to add charm to your outdoor garden and make your own personalized haven!

Examples of up-cycling have included: taking old birdcages and painting them red or blue and using them as planters. Hanging mirrors and window frames in the garden to add depth and interest points. Mason jars make great vases and an old door can be used for an arbor or table for the garden. I have even hung an old chandelier from a tree in my backyard. Using old wine boxes as interesting planter shelves, and using an old bed to re-purpose to a garden bench or a potters bench.

All the projects were family friendly with the most complicated being the wood bed to bench conversion. I started with a twin maple wood frame, sanded it down and cut the foot-board exactly in half. Next was to pre-drill a few strategic holes and attach the sides to the back of the bench with some strong wood glue. Some leftover wood pallet gets nailed down to form the "seating part" of the bench. Once everything is dried and attached together, it is time to paint! Finish this project by making a couple cushions to bring outside and to use on your very own shabby-chic up cycled garden bench!

If you follow the below link to Goods Home Design it will provide you with inspiration and directions of ways you can add some salvaged and vintage finds - to repurpose in your garden!

More Photos & Information Found At: [Goods Home Design](#)

16. FREE 30 DIFFERENT SETS OF CABIN BUILD PLANS



If you are looking to build your own home or cabin than this post is just for you! Check out Free 30 Different Sets of Cabin Build Plans all with photos and descriptions for you to see! How awesome is that? You could even just book mark it for the future, just to have on hand. You are sure to find a house of cabin that you like in here, with over 30 plans to choose from, you have so many different options. The plan is a crucial part of the building process, and if you have a good plan like one of these that has been used to build a house or cabin already, than you are pretty much good to go. All you need to do is buy the materials and get to work on building it, either yourself or with friends and family volunteers or hire a contractor to get it done the best it possibly can be.

You can print out all the plans you need for contractors, to get building permits and for anything else you may need them for! I personally like the 460 square foot Lookout Cabin; I think that would be a great sized space, and it is probably really well laid out too. There are even plans for chicken coops and sheds, even for garages, studios, guest houses, storage units or even green houses. All of which would be awesome to have on your own land! The people at Todays Plans have done a wonderful job of compiling all of these free plans and putting them in one spot so that you have a one stop place for all your house planning needs!

Head over to 'Todays Plans' by following the link in the description below for access to all the incredible plans and more!

For More photos and Information, Visit: [Todays Plans](#)

17. \$180K LOG CABIN KIT LOOKS LIKE, STUNNING



A great log homes, proudly built, this log home has a distinction in the beautiful Valley. The log home builders specialized in creating innovative, elegant custom log homes with designs that dovetail originality and practicality in some of the finest location.

The finest custom log homes are built by people with integrity, whose values and principles are reflected not only in the building process but throughout their own lives. Our company blends experienced project management with skilled craftsmanship creating a lasting reflection of your personality and taste. Creating a unique log homes can enhance your quality of life and become the centerpiece of your family where memories are made and traditions established.

Head over to 'Coventry Log Homes' by following the link in the description below for more photos!

For More photos and Information, Visit: [Coventry Log Homes](#)

18. CHECK OUT THIS AWESOME LOG CABIN FLOOR PLAN



Here is a great site to find all sorts of plans for log home building! Check out this Awesome Log Cabin Floor plan on Real Log Homes. From the photo, the cabin looks quite small; you might be shocked to find out that there are three bedrooms and two bathrooms in this place! I was surprised to find that out myself when I looked at the plans. There is even two storage areas included on the top floor! At 1586 square feet, it should be able to have that much space, but looking at the photo of it, it really doesn't seem like it could be that large. Real Log Homes supplies the plans for your log cabin building needs as well as assists in the building and manufacturing of the cabin.

Real Log Homes has been in business since the 1960s, so they have had over 50 years of experience in this field of expertise. They have many plans that you can choose from, and if you want to tailor one more to you and your family's preferences, you can ask them about modifying one for you! They love to work with their clientele to get the desired results they want and strive for excellence in all of their operations. They mainly operate out of Claremont, New Hampshire, but they also have representatives all across the country to help you in whatever area you live in!

You can check out plans and photos of homes previously designed and built by the Real Log Homes team. There are even photos that were submitted by happy clients wanting to share their satisfaction with the work they did. It's wonderful to see a strong business like this and very interesting to look through all the different possibilities for a log home plan!

Head over to 'Real Log Homes 'by following the link in the description below for more!

For More photos and Information, Visit: [Real Log Homes](#)

19. THE CADILLAC OF TINY HOMES



Tiny houses, tiny houses, Oh the miracle of tiny houses! It never ceases to amaze - what can be done with just a small amount of space, and the moment you think you've seen every possible tiny house design, a new one comes along and knocks your socks right off again. Like this one! Located in La Conner, Washington, and built as a sweet little getaway in the Maple trees, Hope Cottage is described as a wee B&B on wheels with all the fine luxuries of home.

With multiple, well-placed windows illuminating its gorgeous, all-natural wood surfaces, Hope Cottage boasts a simple, efficient kitchen space, a warm cozy living area, and a sizeable sleeping loft at the top of the stairs. The bathroom includes a toilet, sink, shower, and what's more – it also comes with a FAR infrared sauna with the works, for all of your rejuvenating pleasure! We've seen a lot of things in our time here on Earth, but this is the first tiny house we've seen with a bona fide sauna. Wow, when can we visit? Or even better – when can we move in?

If you like, there's also wi-fi access, a BOSE sound system, and a television with Chromecast to keep the kids occupied while you're taking it easy. Ingenious space management turns the sturdy, accessible loft stairs and the waterproof sauna bench into hideaway storage areas. Space, space, and more space – just what will we do with it all?

And Hope Cottage is indeed on wheels – it can be toted and planted by the beach or in a campground or just about anywhere you like, but for now it's nestled in the trees near the garden shed, waiting for its next guests to replenish themselves there.

To learn more, please visit the Tiny House for Us website below.

Read More at: [Tiny House For Us](#)

20. DUMPTRUCK & CLEVER GIRL'S TINY HOUSE



Tiny House Living explores the idea of living in uber small spaces. Clever Girl's Tiny House is a meager 8 feet by 18 feet or about the same as the footprint of a full-size SUV. Complete with a kitchen, dining/living room, bathroom and also a loft space that accommodates a bedroom and storage area. The only source of heat is a wood burning stove which exudes charm and that nostalgic feeling.

How do you organize such a tiny home? You begin with keeping it simple, a simplistic minimalist approach is vital to your well being in a small space. Next key component is that you go up, using all the vertical space you can!

Where do Tiny Homes exist? Just about anywhere you'd like them to exist. Perhaps you find a piece of property where you'd like to escape to once in awhile. Drop a Tiny Home on there and voila you have the perfect weekend getaway!

Appliances are small scale and typically we don't see the addition of a full range. Rather you'd expect that a "beer fridge" and microwave would be present.

Beginning to research tiny home living can be interesting and rewarding because you're propelled into the realization that you can do so much with so little. In a time when major corporations have the population believing that we need stuff all around us, it's truly refreshing to delve into the minimalist lifestyle.

Such a change in lifestyle will bring challenges. For instance, how do you entertain guests in such a small space? Is there room to stretch out and relax? Ironically, you will grow into your new space and solutions will begin to happen in a rather organic manner. Using outdoor spaces becomes the norm, furniture that is functional and comfortable is the answer.

So dive in and live big in a tiny house and check out more at 'Tiny House Living' below.

Read More at: [Tiny House Living](#)