

COUNTRY LIVING



D I G E S T

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1. LOG HOME DESIGNS - BASIC CONCEPTS

Log home designs can be divided in several ways. Understanding log home designs and basic concepts can help you select the design that is best for you. As you are getting involved in the design process, consider these basic concepts as they apply to your design:



- **Shape of Log Used** - the logs used in your log home can be shaped in various ways. They can be full round, D-shaped, square shaped, rectangular shaped or Swedish cope style. D-shaped logs will have one side of the log flat with the other three sides being rounded. The Swedish cope style has a portion of the bottom of the log cut out so that the log rests more securely on the log beneath it in the wall.
- **Type of Log Wood** - there are many wood species commonly used in log home designs. There is no such thing as a "best" wood to use, rather, each species has advantages and disadvantages. Wood types include cedar, cypress, Douglas fir, hemlock, lodge pole pine, oak, spruce, white pine and yellow pine. If log home designs, construction and maintenance are done properly, any of these woods will provide many decades of enjoyable log home living. If not designed, built and maintained properly, none of the woods will hold up very well.
- **Peeled or Milled Logs** - peeled logs used in log home designs will have the bark and outer sapwood removed. This can be accomplished by hand or by the mill's machinery. Milled logs are run through machines that will create the desired log shape when finished. The log surfaces will be more smooth and uniform in milled logs.
- **Corner Systems Used** - here are the four main corner systems used in log home designs:
 1. **Butt-and-Pass** - these corners are formed when one log stops where it meets the intersecting log, and the other log extends past the corner. There are many variations involving the shape of the area where the logs butt. Usually the passing logs have a cutout into which the butt log fits.
 2. **Dovetail Corners** - these corners are used mostly with square or rectangular logs. The end of each log is cut in such a way that produces a fan-shaped wedge. As the logs are stacked, the ends of one wall's logs will be locked into the perpendicular logs.
 3. **Notched** - notched corners are also known as saddle-notch. A saddle-shaped notch is cut into the bottom of each round log so that this notch on the bottom of the top log straddles the top of the log coming from the perpendicular wall. Both logs then extend past the corner. The saddle-notch is one of the most

traditional corner intersections used in log home designs and is favored by many handcrafters. These type of corners are very strong, but they do require more construction time. Notched corners are also easier to seal and hold corner logs better than butt-and-pass.

4. Post Corners - the log ends are cut off perpendicular to the length of the log and joined at the corners using what amounts to vertical posts. This type of construction is not as labor intensive. This corner style sacrifices some of the traditional log cabin or log home look. Using post corners will require a different engineering treatment than other log corners, because the vertical posts do not settle with the horizontal logs.

One of the best ways to learn more about log home designs is to view log home plans that have been successfully built. Every plan that you examine can give you design ideas that you had not thought of. Trying to create brand new plans from scratch can be time-consuming and expensive. You can save considerably if you can find great plans that exist that you like. Just be sure the plans service can make changes to the plans so they become exactly what you want. That way, you really can create the log home design that will provide you many years of enjoyment.

2. TEN COMMON MYTHS ABOUT LOG HOMES

1) Log homes are not energy efficient

Most of these rumors have been started by individuals who have never lived in a log home or are "concerned" relatives giving free advice to other relatives who are considering building a log home. Now let me say that the log home that I am talking about is one that is well designed, manufactured to modern standards and built by someone who knows what they are doing.

Most building codes only recognize "R" factor which does not take into account the tightness of a well built log home. It does not take in the mass of wood which holds the heat far better than a flimsy stud home. Recently a client of ours finished his log home manufactured of dry, Western red cedar logs. At that time he needed to get an air-tightness test from the county. It came in as the second tightest home they have ever tested....most of them being stud homes.

In the late 90's it got down to minus 27 degrees F in Pueblo, Co. We did not have any heat on in our 3,000 sq. ft. model home. The next morning I went in at 10 AM and there wasn't a problem. The next morning it was minus 10 degrees and on Monday morning it was zero. The model was totally unheated for the whole weekend as we did not work over the weekend. The model had 9 tropical plants in it, including a fern in the window. I lost two African violets which are very sensitive to temperature. The fern in the bay window had no damage what-so-ever.

In short, there is still a reason why log homes are still being built in very cold climates such as Canada and Alaska!

2) Termites and other wood boring insects will be attracted to log homes and set about devouring them.

Wood boring insects are not attracted to large quantities of wood. If the logs are constructed of green, unseasoned logs with the bark still on the logs, then some wood boring insects can become established under the bark during the summer and live there for several years. Once the wood is dry these insects are not attracted to the logs. In all my 35 plus years in the log home industry, I have never seen termites in a log home!

3) Log homes are more expensive than a conventional home

First of all, what is a "conventional" home? Is it a double wide or a modular? Is it a 2x4 framed home with vinyl siding? Is it a Tudor home with field stone exterior?

Of course a custom log home with 8 or 10-inch logs will cost more for the logs than a pile of 2x4's and vinyl siding. But the logs will go up faster saving labor. I have also noted over the years that people who build a log home don't finish it off with cheap carpeting, sheet rock, and fixtures. As the exterior walls are the least expensive of

any home, the amenities installed within (wood flooring and ceilings, a fireplace, a solid wood paneling on the walls) can boost the price of the home substantially.

One of our clients told me many years ago that after the house was closed in from the weather, they felt that they were nearly done with the large expenditures for the construction of the home. They started buying better materials and upgrading the cabinets, carpet, etc. It wasn't long before they realized that they were going to be running short of money to complete the home.

In short, a log home is comparable to a standard home, if you compare the same apples-to-apples.

4) Log homes are a fire hazard

Again this is an argument that goes against common sense and logic. When you start a fire in the fireplace or build a campfire, you start with small pieces of wood....not large solid logs. When a fire gets into the walls of a frame home, a chimney is formed in the walls and the spread is rapid. A solid log wall is very resistant to heat due to its mass. I have put a propane torch against a log wall until I got tired of holding the torch and the log wall would not hold a flame and burn of its own. When a log home burns, the sub floor, interior walls and the conventional roofing is the first to go. The log walls would be last.

5) Insurance rates are higher for log homes

This could be a case of some insurance companies as I have not called all of them. However, in my 35 plus years in the industry I have not been contacted by anyone who had trouble getting insurance. Our insurance company didn't even frown on the fact that we have a cedar shake roof with a wood stove in one part of the building!

6) Banks will not make a loan on a log home

Of course there are banks that do not want to make a loan on a home that they know nothing about. The banks that we have dealt with get comparables in the area in which the home is being built so that they know how much they can loan to the client for construction of the home. They will make a \$500,000 loan on a log home if comparable homes in the area sell for \$350,000! In short, have our clients had trouble getting loans on their log home? The answer is NO!

7) Log homes will rot easily

Yes, wood does rot, but only between the moisture content of 30% to 60%. There is no such thing as dry rot as wood must be quite moist to rot. So a properly designed log home (or any home for that matter) with adequate roof overhangs, rain gutters, down spouts and periodic maintenance will endure of generations.

Whenever I get a call from someone with a rotting problem, it is due to the fact they have defied basic logic and common sense. Furthermore they spend 4 hours each weekend on their lawn but never seem to be concerned about the home itself. The proof in the pudding is seeing the log structures in Europe (and the United States) that are in great shape after hundreds of years.

8) Log Homes require more time to build than a conventional stud home

The log walls go up quickly by those who are knowledgeable about log construction. If the weekend do-it-yourself family does it, it takes quite a bit longer. Here is the secret to log construction...when you place a log you have the interior of your home, the exterior of the home, the structural component and the insulation all in one component. After the log walls are up, you are done with the exterior of the home except the interior and exterior stain or finish.

A frame home has many steps; stud walls, exterior plywood, exterior roofer's felt, and siding. For the interior the home is insulated, a vapor barrier installed sheet rock with its taping, sanding, taping, sanding, and finally the paint. Whew!

9) Most contractors cannot build a log home.

This is not true. If they do not want to build it, it is not because the system is too complex but rather they are like the old dog that doesn't want to learn new tricks! In my many years of experience I have found that a first time contractor can build a log home. The final product will depend on his willingness to put the same degree of craftsmanship into the log home as he does the frame home that he has built in the past.

10) The log home is hard to maintain.

In our present age of "space age" materials the public has been swamped with claims of low maintenance. When motor vehicles used to have the oil changed at 1,500 miles the claim of the sales person is to change the oil at 6,000 miles. Counter tops, siding, windows and roofing all give the claim of longevity and low maintenance. Well, to use an old adage, if it is worth owning it is worth taking care of. The first step in the maintenance of the log home is proper design (The Complete Guide to Log Homes). The next step is periodic maintenance with a good stain purchased from a company that specializes in log home products and not something off the shelf of a local discount store. The exterior of the home is the main area of maintenance that must be taken care of during the life of the home. The interior stained or varnished walls will never need to be redone to any normal failure. If little Johnny smears the walls with marker or crayon, then drastic steps must be taken to bring the walls back to their original condition. Always remember that conventional homes with an exterior of paint must be refurbished periodically as well. There is no free lunch and there is no such thing as minimal or extended maintenance.

3. WHAT IS AN OFF GRID SYSTEM?

An Off grid system refers to a house or building being independent from the conventional electricity supply line by generating the electricity it needs using its own electricity generators. Off grid systems are particularly common among those who live in remote areas where connecting to the main supply line is expensive. Nowadays, they are also being used on suburban houses that have the option to opt out of the local electricity supply line.



There are few different factors that motivate people to have an off grid system. One important reason is the money they end up saving over a certain period of time by not having to pay the local electricity supplier. Another reason is the rate in which it reduces the carbon footprint. Having your own electricity system to power up all your electric needs would mean that you end up saving tons of green house gas that would have been generated if you were to use the local electricity supply.

In most cases, houses use solar panels and wind turbines as generating systems to get their house off the grid. Assembling these systems cannot be done in a few days and sometimes would take months to accomplish. Solar panels and wind turbines can be purchased for reasonable prices. A notable new trend among those who go off grid is that they build their own solar panels and wind turbines. One could go DIY for their generators if they have some very basic building or electrical skills.

Batteries play a huge role in an off grid system as they are used as the primary storage device. Using deep cycle batteries is considered best as they allow reaching the deeper levels of storage which is a feature that may come in handy when using electricity at night. Choosing the right electricity inverter is also important as they are the primary unit that converts electricity to its usable form. They should also have the capacity to work with the additional solar panels or wind turbines that you may decide to connect over time.

Having other renewable energy systems such as solar hot water systems and dirt batteries would also largely benefit an off grid system as this could be used to power up water heating and outdoor lighting which consume a fair amount of electricity on their own part.

The energy efficiency of your entire house is very important when opting for an off grid system. This would mean using energy-efficient electric equipment, keeping your house free of any leakages, having proper insulation, installing a grey water management system and following various other energy-saving activities on a daily basis. Of course, going off grid as a family should very much be a combined effort. Each individual may have to play their own part in conserving electricity and should take equal responsibility in doing so.

Opting for an off grid system would mean that you would no longer need to depend on conventional electricity and would have a great positive impact on the environment from your part since the electricity that you would use will be one hundred percent green.

4. GREAT WOODWORKING PLANS FOR HOME PROJECTS

Woodworking is an acquired skill that develops into an art and as with everything you seek to achieve in life, practice makes perfect. If you are interested in getting started with woodworking then there are some great products with great woodworking plans. In this article, I am going to provide you with some additional information on a product with great woodworking plans. This product is called Teds Woodworking Plans and is considered to be the best overall collection of woodworking blueprints on the Internet.

A Brief Review of Teds Woodworking Plans

Teds Woodworking Plans is a set of great woodworking plans! Ted McGrath created this product and he has over 35 years of woodworking experience. Ted created this product in order to produce some really good woodworking blueprints that anyone can follow. These plans have been designed to be step-by-step and are suitable for beginners as well as experts. This woodworking package comes with over 16,000 different woodworking plans and these plans are grouped into over 100 different categories that include categories with lots of designs for birdhouses, furniture, tables, cabinets, and much more. Basically, you can find wooden plans for anything that you want to make with this product. In addition, this product also comes with several other great features to help its users be as successful as possible with woodworking.

Four Great Bonuses

Some of you may be interested in getting into woodworking for an additional hobby where as other people may want to turn their passion for working with wood into a career. The great thing about Teds Woodworking Plans is that this product is suitable for people who are interested in both of these areas. This product comes with four bonus features, which includes a CAD software program, premium woodworking videos, a guide that teaches you how to start a woodworking business, and a 200-page guide called the "The Complete Woodworking Carpentry Guide." The CAD software program is a really awesome feature because it allows people to modify and develop their own woodworking blueprints in addition to analyzing and editing the woodworking blueprints already in this product. Out of all of the products with great woodworking plans that I have reviewed, Teds Woodworking is the only product that has this type of software program available at an affordable price. There are other professional software programs available to people interested in carpentry but cost several hundred dollars. Ted had this program developed so that it would provide new students and experienced students with a super valuable tool at an affordable price. A couple of other bonuses that this package offers its users are customer support and 60 days that you can use money back guarantee. Overall, this is by far the most comprehensive and detailed woodworking product with great woodworking blueprints. In addition to all of the positive remarks about the Teds Woodworking product, there are some negative remarks that need to be mentioned as well.

Negative Remarks

One of the biggest negative remarks that I have found with the product called Teds Woodworking plans is that it cost \$67 dollars where as its closest competitors are priced at \$37 and \$49 dollars. These two competitors are My Shed Plans Elite and Woodworking 4 Home. One of the reasons that these competitors are available at lower prices is because they do not have a CAD software included in their product. Based on how much these CAD software programs cost separately, I personally think the CAD software is definitely worth the extra \$20 or so dollars.

Overall Review:

The plans in Teds woodworking plans have great woodworking blueprints for its users to use and grow with. These plans are suitable for beginners and advanced woodworkers. This package has the largest collection of woodworking blueprints and provides its users with several great bonuses to help them become the best carpenter that they can be.

5. THE REALITIES OF HOMESTEADING TODAY

Is homesteading still a possibility for those desiring a simpler, more natural life? The answer is YES, with some qualifications. Find out the realities of homesteading today in this article.

Homesteading today is unlikely to begin with finding free property. There are no national programs that provide land in exchange for developing it. The programs that do exist are local, and tend to be in remote areas of the country.

This means that most likely you will be buying your homestead property, and possibly acquiring a mortgage to do so. Even if you are able to acquire the land and build on it mortgage-free, there will still be property taxes. Therefore homesteading today will require more cash money than in pioneer days.

This means you will need a plan to support yourself, with one or more work from home businesses, or a job off -homestead job. It is possible to run your homestead as a mini farm, raising vegetable crops and livestock to feed yourself, with a surplus for sale.

However, don't underestimate the learning curve required to be successful at these endeavors; it can take several seasons to learn how to reliably and efficiently produce most crops. And if you are depending on your mini farm for cash flow, you will need to focus on crops that provide a quick turnaround.

This would rule out starting an orchard for example, as most tree fruit will take several years to bear a crop. Even most small fruit will produce nothing the first season. One business that does provide relatively quick cash flow is a market garden.

The start-up cost for this homestead business can be quite low, if you start smart. You could begin by growing vegetables for yourself and perhaps a few friends and neighbours. You could even solicit some cash from them to help with the start-up costs, and pay them back with vegetables from your garden

Market gardening is easily scalable; that is, you can start small, then as your skills and confidence grow, you can expand to the limits of your property (and your ambition). This fulfills one of the requirements of homesteading today.

Raising meat chickens and weaner pigs are two more possibilities for the modern homesteader. Day-old meat chicks will be roaster size and ready for sale in 10 to 12 weeks; weaner pigs will reach market weight in about 4-5 months. This means that, in most areas, these livestock animals can be raised in a summer season. Raising your livestock in warm weather only means low start-up costs.

These are great starter farm businesses, and the whole family can help out. Kids can get involved looking after the animals, and learn where their food really comes from.

These three homestead businesses have the potential to provide you food and folding money. But before you jump in, you need to ask yourself if you are ready for the realities

of homesteading today. Needless to say there will be hard work, but beyond this successful homesteading requires a mindset of self-reliance.

You are 100 percent responsible for the success of your homestead; you need to value function over form, have a tolerance for setbacks, and have a genuine love for going your own way. Your life partner better have these characteristics, too, or it will be an unhappy little homestead.

So if you are immune to stress, treat every problem like a learning opportunity, and believe that the only real security is what you can carve out for yourself, you may be ready for homesteading today.

6. POWER YOUR CAR WITH GREEN DIY ENERGY

Did you know that it is possible to power your vehicle with green DIY energy? Often we think that sustainable energy that is produced at home is only for electricity, however, sustainable fuels can also be made for the automobile. Gasoline burning vehicles can be powered by ethanol and diesel powered vehicles can be powered by biodiesel that is made from a number of sources.



Ethanol is produced from many different fruits and vegetables. Since this is also drinking alcohol, you will need special permits to produce your own fuel. Yeast is added to the fruit and vegetable sugars to convert the sugar to alcohol. Low temperature vacuum fermentation and distillation allows the producer to get the most out of the sugar from the vegetable matter that is being fermented. If the alcohol is blended with normal gasoline, it can be used in a vehicle with no adjustments to the engine and without harm. Although the alcohol will burn straight in the engine, this could cause damage to your vehicle.

Biodiesel can come from many sources. If you have a supply of waste grease and oils from restaurants you will be able to recycle this oil into biodiesel. In addition, any vegetable oil producing crop can be used in the production. Biodiesel contains less sulfur than petroleum products and is cleaner burning.

If you produce your own vehicle fuel, you may need to have room for growing the crops used to produce ethanol or biodiesel. This may require a few acres of land as well as the equipment to process the fuel from your crops.

Some areas may have cooperatives where the equipment for producing the fuel from the crops can be shared and cut down on the expense of producing your own fuel.

One of the easiest ways to produce your own fuel is if you happen to own an electric vehicle. Then you can use conventional green energy in the form of solar or wind energy to keep the vehicle charged at no cost and use renewable energy.

All of these methods of producing energy are both green and sustainable. There are few to no pollutants created in the process and some may actually work to improve the environment while producing fuel for you vehicle. You may be able to recycle products normally thrown to landfills.

Green DIY energy is possible for both your home and for your vehicle. You can have the transportation that you need and help to improve the environment.

7. HOW A TINY HOUSE CAN FIT ANY LIFESTYLE

Do a search on the internet for "Tiny House" and you'll find a lot of information. It seems this tiny trend is catching on all across the world. Individuals, couples and small families are choosing to downsize their lives to live in much smaller spaces that are usually much less expensive than conventional houses. Small houses like this can range in size from less than 100 square feet to up to 900 hundred square feet. So, you're interested in knowing more about the Tiny House movement? Before going through the process of building or buying you own, this information can help you narrow down your small living choices.

Tiny Houses are often on wheels, but not always. One of the leaders of the small living movement, Jay Shafer of the Tumbleweed Tiny House Company, suggests building the little houses on trailers so they can be moved easily. This also helps get around some of the laws surrounding such small homes. Many municipalities have codes that don't allow people to live in spaces under a certain square footage. By building a house on a trailer, it is no longer a house and it becomes an RV. Not everyone builds these small homes on wheels. Check your local codes to see if a small house might classify as a "building of no consequence" before starting your project

Tiny houses are often sustainable, but not always. The small home movement and environmentalism seem to go hand in hand. Many builders use sustainable building products and create environmentally friendly systems in their homes. It is not unusual to find a small home built with all reclaimed wood. Sometimes it is difficult to build a conventional home using these items, but the scale these houses allows the builder to use much less of the product making it effectively cheaper. Many small homes are also off the grid using solar energy or rain catchment systems for water use.

Tiny houses are built with all the necessities of a conventional house. There will typically be a seating area, a dining area, a kitchen, a bathroom and a sleeping area which is most often a loft. The beauty about the tiny house movement is that the each owner and builder can customize the space to work best with their own lives.

If you're interested in considering your own small home there is a wealth of resources available online. It is also a very tight online community and you can often find individual blogs from tiny house enthusiasts from all over the world. Tap into these resources, talk to some other tiny house builders and learn just what kind of space will be good for you and your needs.

8. THE ADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN TINY HOUSES

Recent economic difficulties have forced everyone to make some hard choices when it comes to the household budget. Many people are downsizing everything in their lives from the cars they drive to the homes they live in. For some, the movement toward tiny houses is about saving money but for others, the opportunity to live a simpler life is just as big a draw.

The average size of a tiny house is between 100 square feet and 400 square feet. By comparison, the average size of new houses built in the United States in 2013 was approximately 2,600 square feet. A compact living space is attractive to individuals of all ages, including college graduates, newlyweds, and retirees.

One of the most obvious advantages of a home this small is the owner does not need a huge plot of land. The house is portable enough to move virtually anywhere. Manufacturing costs are low because builders do not need as much material and it takes fewer hours to assemble. That translates in a significantly smaller price tag making it affordable to more consumers. Tiny house owners do not have to worry about signing a 30-year mortgage just to have a roof over their heads.

The savings continue long after moving into this type of house. They are much less expensive to heat and cool than a house that covers a couple thousand square feet. Miniaturized appliances cost less to purchase and require fewer resources to operate.

New construction traditionally puts a strain on the Earth's natural resources. Moving into a tiny house is especially attractive to those people who want to reduce their carbon footprint. Because of their size, many of these homes are constructed with recycled materials. After they are built, they are energy efficient and produce less waste.

Tiny house designs make the maximum use of the space available. Concealed storage closets and cubbyholes take advantage of areas that are typically wasted. Without extra space, occupants are less inclined to accumulate possessions that they do not really need. Without the clutter, the rooms appear and feel bigger than they actually are. Cutting down on purchasing impulse items means less waste, less money spent, and more money saved.

Many people realize that they lead a higher quality of life after they have eliminated unnecessary possessions. They lose the desire to buy status items just to keep up with their peers. They feel less stressed and receive more happiness out of the little things in life that are more important in the grand scheme of things.

A smaller home means less time spent on maintenance and cleaning. Instead of taking hours to dust, vacuum, and wash windows, it takes just a few minutes to clean the entire house from top to bottom. This means more time spent with family and enjoying life.

Despite all the benefits, living this type of lifestyle is not for every. Before making the commitment to living in a tiny home, individuals should weigh their options and consider the disadvantages of downsizing to just a few hundred square feet of living space. One of the biggest problems is likely to be deciding which possessions to keep

and which to sell, donate, or discard. As difficult as it may be, many people find this process to be liberating once they make it through.

Living in smaller quarters requires a high level of organization. A little bit of clutter goes a long way in a small space. Someone who cannot stay organized will become quickly overwhelmed. The home will look more like a storage closet and will lose all of its appeal.

Someone who loves to entertain guests at home will have a hard time following this lifestyle. Accommodating any extra people indoors will be challenging if not impossible. Depending on the climate and the time of year, homeowners can consider entertaining guests outdoors. Creative use of outdoor space is an effective way to increase the amount of usable space available. A porch or deck provides a comfortable place to barbecue, dine, or just kick back and relax whenever the weather permits.

The reasons people choose to move to smaller homes are personal but many are looking for a simple life and a way to escape living from pay check to pay check. The satisfaction of being self-sufficient is something else that people gain when they downsize their living space. Moving into a tiny home can be the ideal solution for someone who wants to achieve financial freedom while living a lifestyle that is friendly to the environment.

9. BASIC ELEMENTS OF COUNTRY LIVING ROOM FURNITURE

Country living room furniture can actually make your home look good, but only if you know which pieces to pick and when to stop collecting knick knacks. If you go overboard, you may end up looking like a store for a country home rather than a chic home that is inspired by country living.



The Shopping Guide

Homes may differ in terms of style, but recreating the country feel with country living room furniture is quite easy. First, you need to know what should go into your shopping guide. Before you worry about the cost, the list is quite small. Furniture necessary in creating a country living feel usually includes a beautiful wooden coffee table with a nice, deep finish and some accents. When you already have a wooden coffee table, there is no need to match your sofa by buying an all-wood one. This creates a log cabin feel, which is something that you do not want. The country living essence is easier to achieve and more reasonable when you only have a few elements.

After the wooden coffee table, you can also scout around for wooden side tables for both ends of your living room sofa. It is best that you try to buy these things within the same color hue for an all-over coordinated look. So now you have the wooden coffee table, the wooden side tables - the last thing that you need is a cozy-looking rocking chair that you can dress up to make it look less grandma-ish and more modern home with a comfy country feel. This brings the furniture list to an end, so you can now move on to identifying the other stuff you need to get to enhance the country feel in your living room.

Accents to Invest In

Plushy throw pillow in interesting patterns and cheerful designs are necessary. Buy different throw pillow cases and do not be afraid to mix and match various patterns because on a plain beige sofa, they will get along quite merrily. To accent your wooden coffee table, try to look for a simple centerpiece such as hand blown glass or a wrought iron decorative item to contrast with the table. A total opposite of what you might expect will further highlight the appreciative factor of your coffee table because the things do not blend in so much.

Other accents include low-lighting table lamps and candle holders you can strategically place around the living room to create that cozy feel. That is usually what most people are after anyway - to inject the homey feel of a country living room into their home by way of furniture and accents. To further amp up the "warmth", add to the busyness of the room by stacking together an interesting assortment of coffee table books onto one side of the living room set up. It is a more laid-back way of displaying books rather than keeping them on a shelf, and the colors one can spy on the spine of such books add to

the playful vibe of your country living-inspired room without making things look too dowdy.

10. HOW TO USE A COOKING RECIPE

A cooking recipe is a series of instructions on how to prepare a meal. It will list down the ingredients required as well as preparation instruction and other useful information to make your cooking a success. By following the instructions the cooking recipe, you will be able to come up with new dishes. Cooking recipes are used not only by novice but by professional chefs around the world.

In order to take full advantage of the cooking recipe, it got to be used in the right way. Many people do not know how to use a cooking recipe correctly. They usually jump right in and before you know it, faces problem with their cooking.

Browse Through the Cooking Recipe

The right way is to browse through the cooking recipe briefly from the beginning to the end. Familiarize yourself with the methods or processes involved and try to visualize it in your mind. After you have understood what is needed out of you do you start it. By taking this initial step, you will save yourself from trouble because you can give the recipe a miss if it's too difficult to cook. It will spare you the embarrassment of failure. You will also be able to plan what to buy before actually starting to cook. Therefore it is important to browse through your cooking recipe before you actually begin cooking.

Preparing the Ingredients

After the preliminary reading of the cooking recipe you will have a general idea of how the dish is cooked and what ingredients to buy. Make sure that all the ingredients are ready before you begin your cooking adventure. It is very frustrating to realize that you have run out of the ingredients half-way through your cooking. You will loose all the momentum and enthusiasm once this happen.

You will also need to have the right type of ingredients. For example, if the cooking recipe says prepared mustard, do not assume that you can substitute it with dried mustard. They are two completely different ingredients and substituting one for the other will have disastrous effect on your cooking. Another thing worth mentioning is make sure you have enough of the ingredients. Double check to ensure that you have enough of everything before you starts to cook. Imagine what will happen if you don't have enough flour when baking a sponge cake!

Have the Equipment/Utensil Ready

Just as important and often overlooked is to have all the equipment and utensils ready before cooking. If you do not have the equipment or utensil, try borrowing them from your friends. You might only need to use the utensil mentioned in the cooking recipe once and so it is cheaper to borrow. If your friends do not have the items you are looking for or if you foresee that you are going to use it more than once, then buy it. Also, check that the equipment or utensil is in working order before starting your cooking.

Conclusion

Cooking is great fun for many people. It can foster relationships and improve family bonding. In order cook great dishes, you must make sure that you have followed the cooking recipe closely.

11. MODERN LOST CREEK CABIN WITH PRIMITIVE INTERIOR



Ellis Nunn & Associates is a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the National Council of Architects Registration Board (NCARB). Established in 1978, the firm has looked toward the future and maintained the position of long term client relations. The firm has an experienced professional staff composed of architects and technical personnel. Their combined experiences range from residential and commercial to historic preservation, timeless styles and mountain modern design. We strive to give each client our personal attention from the schematic design concept throughout construction documents to ultimately final completion. We look forward to working with you to create a home for your family and friends or just a small cabin in the woods. We can do it all.

Both Ellis and Sharon grew up in the Spokane, Washington and Coeur'dAlene, Idaho area of the Pacific Northwest. Keeping with their love of mountains and lakes took them back to the mountain region for their practice. Experience in high-end mountain-style, log and timber frame architecture has positioned Ellis Nunn & Associates as a leader in the field throughout the Rocky Mountain region as well as the entire United States. Many of the firm's projects have been featured in Log Homes Illustrated, Log Home Design Ideas, Log Home Living, The Log Home Book, Luxury Log Homes and Timber Frame, Timber Homes Illustrated, Country's Best Vacation Log Homes, Big Sky Journal, Homestead Magazine, and the recently published coffee table book Leading Residential Architects. Ellis' homes have been featured on the Travel Channel in a special on Luxurious Log Homes. The Destination Channel is currently running a special called "Epic Log Homes" that features Thunder Ridge, a custom 25,000 square foot plus hybrid log home we designed in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Ellis Nunn & Associates staff has kept up-to-date with the best energy efficient home technology and takes pride in providing the service our clients expect to receive. Please review some of our Testimonials that show the strong architect/client relationships we have attained through the years.

More Photos & Information Found At: [Ellis Nunn & Associates Architecture](#)

12. THE PERFECT MODERN RUSTIC CABIN HYBRID



Named after Vernon Swaback of Swaback Partners, Studio V is considered one of Arizona's most innovative full service interior design firms.

As a full service interior design firm based in Scottsdale, Arizona, Studio V specializes in high end hospitality projects, including hotels, resort properties, restaurants, and clubhouses, in addition to luxury custom homes. Studio V has successfully partnered with builder/developers on semi-custom single-family residences and fractional ownership properties for interior design specifications in addition to model home merchandising.

Studio V's approach to each interior design project focuses on authenticity and a genuine sense of place, infused with bold fresh expressions and elements of surprise. Their work spans the United States, Mexico, and abroad and reflects a highly specialized and multi-faceted interior design capability coupled with unparalleled attention to

More Photos & Information Found At: [Studio LLC Interior Design](#)

13. FOREST FABULOUS LOG HOME



Log home living is a wonderful experience, and if you're in the mind to buy or build a new home, you might just take a moment to consider the benefits of living in a log cabin of your very own. Here are seven major reasons why log home life is the life for you...

#1 - History;

Perhaps your ancestors lived in a log cabin in the old days? This type of iconic home was built and enjoyed by many settlers and pioneers of different new lands, and some still stand today. Some log-built structures in Northern and Eastern Europe are still standing today and have stood for many centuries, even since the 14th century.

#2 - Individuality;

Would you want the same-old, simple, just-like-all-the-others home? Or would you rather stand out from the masses with something as rustic and stately as a log home? Living in such a unique home adds a wholesome and historic feel to your life, filled with the age-old pioneer spirit, as well as to the whole neighborhood.

#3 - Glamorous Beauty;

Obviously, the rustic beauty of a log home is alluring enough to almost pull you into it by force. There's just something timeless about such construction, and the natural beauty outshines homes built in the more modern, conventional way. Finding a beautifully well-built log cabin amid other hum-drum style homes is like finding a unicorn amid a herd of wild mustangs. And the beauty isn't only just "skin-deep" - such natural rustic beauty is on the inside as well.

#4 - Contentment and Satisfaction;

You can have any kind of home that you'd like, and make it comfortable, but log home living is the coziest you can experience. Picture having your family over for the holidays,

and sitting all gathered around at the fireplace after an evening meal. Imagine how cool the interior would be in the summertime, and how warm it would be in the wintertime. Imagine waking up and opening your eyes to log-constructed walls and hopping over to the kitchen for hotcakes and maple syrup for breakfast with your family in your log cabin home - ah, yes... that's the life!

#5 - Environmental Issues;

The insulative properties of log houses are perfect for keeping the interior cool in the summer heat, and warm in the winter cold. Not much energy is required at all for this, due to the log construction. Also, many log cabins and log homes kits are milled from reclaimed timbers so that there is no cutting down of forest resources.

#6 - Insects;

Termite damage, winter-nesting bees, ants, spiders and so forth can infest any modern conventionally built home... but whereas most log homes are constructed of types of wood such as cedar, this would never be a problem. Cedar and other aromatic type woods of a similar kind, have natural insect repellent in the oils which naturally permeate such woods. Much like a cedar chest is used to stow away woolen things to keep moths from consuming them.

#7 - Expense;

In the case of log homes kits, which by the way is how most log-built structures are made today, the expense of both time and money is drastically reduced. Construction time used to take many months, perhaps more than a year - but with pre-milled logs shaped to precise specifications in a factory setting, parts numbered in the order of construction, and all delivered to the construction site with most of the work done for you, building it can now take a mere few short weeks. Due to the way such pre-milled logs are produced, it also creates the situation of the lowest per-log cost there can possibly be. This is why log cabin kits are the most sought after means of achieving log home living today.

More Photos & Information Found At: [Newton Log homes](#)

14. LOVE THIS LOOK - OWL DITCH RANCH "BARN"



Carney Logan Burke Architects was established as Carney Architects in 1992 in Jackson, Wyoming. The firm maintains a commitment to enhance mountain communities through thoughtful, innovative design and to create a legacy of buildings in tune with the region's natural beauty.

Since its inception the studio has grown to accommodate a staff of 30 led by founding principal John Carney and partners, Eric Logan, Kevin Burke and Andy Ankeny. The organization maintains an informal and collegial atmosphere that encourages individual creativity and teamwork in an open, collaborative environment.

The work of the office spans a wide variety of project types in Wyoming and the greater west. Community facilities, commercial buildings, resorts, and mixed-use complexes make up the public side of the practice, while affordable housing and residential architecture allows the firm to apply a broad range of materials and technologies. In both institutional and residential projects the firm's commitment to sustainable design and sense of place has resulted in numerous awards and publications.

More Photos & Information Found At: [Carney Logan Burke Architects](http://CarneyLoganBurkeArchitects.com)

15. MAINE LAKESIDE RETREAT



Katahdin Cedar Log Homes has more than three decades experience designing fine cedar log homes. Through our network of certified and trained Katahdin Dealers and Builders, we can meet and surpass your expectations for a home that embodies the values of Maine craftsmanship, integrity and common sense.

Learn more about our leadership

At Katahdin Cedar Log Homes, we believe it is essential to lead in our community, in our industry and in our commitment to customer service. We're making news in Maine and around the country, and we invite you to learn about our current projects.

A commitment to the environment

As residents of one of the most beautiful and unspoiled states in the country, we Mainers keep a close watch on how our actions affect our surrounding environment. Our business is dependent on nature and the sustainable harvest of cedar trees from Maine forests. And, we feel it's important to support the active outdoors lifestyles embraced by so many of our customers. As a result we continue our mission to make smart decisions about energy and our surroundings.

Using the whole tree and nothing but the tree

One of the ways we've discovered to maximize our cedar logs is to make other useful items from the portions that don't make the grade for log walls. Tops and other waste pieces are milled into beautiful cedar fencing, gates and other elements that unify your Katahdin Cedar Log Home with its surroundings.

An open invitation

Many of our customers spend some vacation time in Maine, enjoying our beautiful parks, wildlife and our vibrant cities and coastal villages. We're always glad to give you a tour of the mill facilities to show you just how we do it! We also hold regular seminars over the course of the year at our facility in Oakfield, Maine. So consider yourself invited.

More Photos & Information Found At: [Katahdin Cedar Log Homes](#)

16. SIMPLE BUT DIFFERENT LOG CABIN



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For More photos and Information, Visit: [NICK NOYES ARCHITECTURE](#)

17. JUST WOW GRAND ARCHWAY OF TETON CASCADE



Teton Heritage Builders was established in 1996 as an innovative full service builder in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. With 17 years of successful projects, Teton Heritage Builders is now a regional general contractor with offices in Jackson Hole and Bozeman, Montana.

Teton Heritage Builders prides itself on providing architects and clients superior service and quality. THB's concept is to enter into a partnership with clients and our Open Book Policy promotes trusting, comfortable and effective working relationships which allow us to pursue our clients' interests in quality, schedule and budget.

We are proud of our team and invite you to learn more about our staff, who are dedicated to craftsmanship, open communication and a pleasurable building experience for our clients.

Teton Heritage Builders' Mission Statement – Teton Heritage Builders is a premier construction company in the Western United States providing our clients buildings of exceptional quality, character, and value. Teton Heritage Builders utilizes technically sophisticated systems, unique human resources, high levels of organization, and strong teamwork. We create a safe environment that fosters mutually beneficial relationships for all stakeholders based on respect, honesty and integrity.

For More photos and Information, Visit: [Teton Heritage Builders](#)

18. LEGENDARY FOXTAIL LOG CABIN. THAT'S AWESOME!



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For More photos and Information, Visit: [Teton Heritage Builders](#)

19. JAW-DROPPING: AMERICAN RANCH LOG HOME



Kimberly Foresta McClain assoc. IIDA ASID allied and the team at Bella Home Furnishings and The Sylvan Collection, Ltd. have been in operation for more than 32 years. We are Prescott's oldest award winning design firm. They bring their love for design to Bella Home Furnishings, a 6,000-square-foot historic building in the heart of downtown Prescott. Bella Home is one block north of the courthouse square at 115 West Willis Street in Prescott. A trip to Bella Home Furnishings is a colorful, textural treat full of items handpicked by our owner on her travels across the country and Europe.

Since 1985 Bella Home Furnishings is Prescott's premier location for furniture, antiques, gifts, artwork, jewelry, dishware, lamps, accessories, bath and body, gourmet foods, collectibles, custom and readymade bedding, draperies, rugs, wallpaper, fabric and floral arrangements.

With our ever-changing venue of beautiful furnishings a trip to Bella Home is always appropriate even when you are not doing a design project....Our Gourmet foods and gift departments, our special holiday event, the first week in November is something not to be missed. The entire store is decorated to welcome this special time of year.

Read More at: [Bella Home Furnishings](#)

20. HANDCRAFTED LOG HOME



M.T.N Design is an award winning home design firm with over 20 years experience. We have created homes in almost every state, throughout Canada, and internationally in locations such as Japan, Eastern Europe and Australia.

We believe that a seamless approach to building, from design through construction, ensures continuity and is the best way to control costs.

Mission Statement. Our primary focus is to understand your project as a whole and create a design which takes each variable into account including: location, efficiency, aesthetics, layout, lifestyle and budget.

Moving beyond the initial design, we care about the consistency of your architectural concept and project scope. Feel confident that your final home will reflect the beauty of your original design concept.

Designing for Our Home Brands. Each home we design uses the quality materials and building technology from one of our custom home brands –Precision Craft, Riverbend, or Point Zero.

Through our home brands we can ensure a smooth transition from the design stage to construction. Our in-house staffs therefore design for material they are intimately familiar with. They know how log walls work, they understand timber frame connections and they are trained to design energy efficient homes.

Read More at: [M.T.N Design](#)