

COUNTRY LIVING

A modern, multi-story house at night. The house features a prominent red vertical stripe on the left side and several large, illuminated windows. A man and a child are walking away from the house on a path. The sky is dark with a few birds flying.

D I G E S T

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1. LOG HOME CONSTRUCTION: WHICH WOOD IS BEST?

Which Wood is best for Log Home Construction?

Much has been written about which wood species is best for log home construction. In this article I will draw on fifteen years experience to explain the pros and cons of some of the common wood species used commercially for log cabin construction.

Lodge pole pine is probably one of the most common and widely used wood species for log wall construction. It tends to be straight with low taper due to the slow growth associated with the dry climate where it is found. It is moderately strong and has low to moderate shrinkage during the seasoning process. Lodge pole Pine offers only moderate to low bug and decay resistance and great care must be take to ensure that the logs are treated for insects and decay.

Spruce is another species that is commonly used in log construction. Spruce is widely used in the Interior of British Columbia when many of North America's log homes come from. Spruce usually grows straight with very little taper making it a good candidate for log construction. However, it is common for Spruce to grow with a spiral grain. Spiral



grain logs should not be used in construction and doing so can have disastrous results. Spruce, like Pine is moderately strong and has moderate shrinkage during the seasoning process; and like Pine it offers only

low insect and decay resistance. Spruce logs tend to need more maintenance than some of the other species especially Douglas fir and Western Red Cedar.

Douglas fir is a great choice for log shell construction as it grows straight with low taper and is very strong. However, Douglas fir, like Spruce, can grow with a spiral grain. Spiral grain logs should not be used in log wall construction if possible. Douglas fir logs are very strong and are well suited for beams and purlins. Douglas fir has moderate shrinkage and moderate to high insect and decay resistance. Douglas fir log home tend to look more uniform than others because of the low taper.

Western Red Cedar (WRC) is the final and in my opinion the best choice for log home construction. Quality WRC logs have low to moderate taper and low moisture content. WRC logs will shrink the least of all species of wood during the seasoning process. WRC is almost always straight grained and offers high natural insect and decay resistance. WRC is moderately strong and thus ideal for log wall construction. WRC is also the only species that grows with the "butt flares" that are becoming increasing popular in log homes. The flares offer the customer a way of making their home unique and give it a

more rustic and "hand-crafted" look that differentiates it from the cookie-cutter style of log homes found in many areas.

Before choosing the logs for your home, you should do some investigation into what is available in your area. The logs I mention above are by far the most widely used logs today but some may not be available in your area. Having said that, I recommend that you buy the best logs available for your home even if you have to have them shipped to you because remember "the logs are the only portion of your new home that you cannot upgrade later".

2. THINKING ABOUT BUYING A LOG HOME?

On a special note there are a few facts which you already know; Log Homes have that unique warm and comfy majestic appearance as well as a charm no other home can declare. Not only are log houses captivating they are very rugged and impressive, energy-efficient and they also have very good resale value.



As a certified home inspector I want to bring out a few facts about buying and living in a log home. For those who are looking over this and live in any type of log home, use this information and facts to take care of your home, but if you happen to be in the process of buying a log house think about these facts when you are looking and you are ready to make an offer to buy.

I've had the privilege of looking at and inspecting log homes which are more than one hundred years old and are generally in good shape simply because they happen to have been well maintained, although I've also looked at fifteen yr old log houses that already have critical failure around the wood logs mainly because of inferior engineering and maintenance.

This information is regarding log homes that are less than 30 years of age. There are many different kinds of logs and styles and designs but a majority of the actual water troubles and maintenance really are basically the exact same. Let me reveal the top 10 listing of things to look for if you are buying a log home

1. Hire a local home inspector to check out your home that has experience with log properties
2. Look and see if you can find any timber decay or any type of water damage and mold on the top of the house logs especially in all the ends and corners on the house logs. You may need to make use of a ladder to examine a majority of these areas
3. Check all of the logs for wide cracks between the home logs as well as chinking, a little bit of splitting of your house logs is to be expected
4. Look to see if you can find any damage from insects; Look along the bottom for termite or pest problems. Always look across the outside walls in addition to all of the gables and overhanging edges and trim for tiny round holes created by carpenter bees

5. Check the decks and porches to be certain they've been connected and flashed properly; it is extremely common to find water damage underneath decks
6. Check the ground clearance, 10 in. is actually recommended; but do not accept any of the logs touching the earth
7. Log structures will likely shrink with time, check all of the interior as well as the exterior doors to be certain they close and open correctly
8. Make sure every one of the windows works correctly
9. Look for darkening logs, mould or possibly mildew on the log structure
10. Check all the accessible rafters as well as the framework specifically where the roofing surface area sits over the logs and there needs to be at least an 18" or more overhang over every log house

Log homes are extremely energy efficient; the actual thermal mass within the logs happens to be the primary factor. The logs really have excellent insulation efficiency which allows the Heating and cooling unit/ units to keep the comfort level inside of the house.

3. LIVING OFF GRID

Are you sick of increasing monthly electricity bills and you want to see them disappear by living off grid? Many people dream of living off grid but are very skeptical to believe that it will work for them. Some of the most talked about ways to live off grid is to use solar and wind powered systems to free oneself from having to draw electricity from the power companies. Do these methods really work or are they just a myth?



1. Is Living Off Grid with Solar Energy Practical?

This method of powering a home is 100% practical. I know because I have been able to make it work for myself. The solar system would work best in an environment with lots of sunlight, but is still very well worth building in areas with less sunlight. A solar power system will require a small amount of cost per month to maintain, but is very well worth the money and effort to do so.

2. How to Use Solar Energy Systems and Keep It Up and Running

It is highly recommended that all solar powered systems be built with a backup battery system. It will come in very handy in times when the weather is not favorable for it, e.g. Rain and thick clouds. Without sufficient sunlight, the system can still continue to function and supply electricity to the house by drawing from the battery system which has been storing the excessively produced electrical power when there was abundant sunlight.

3. Selling Excessively Produced Electricity Back to the Power Company

When your renewable energy systems have generated excess power that your home does not require, you can even sell it back to the grid as long as the supplier provides net metering services. This situation can happen very frequently to households that stay in areas that receive a lot of sunlight exposure during the day.

4. HOW TO UTILIZE OFF-GRID POWER

With the rising cost of energy and the worsening economy, many homeowners are looking at ways of generating their own off grid power. There are a few alternatives for power generation and selecting the one that works best for you and your home takes a little consideration before you start the project.



Wind turbine and solar cell systems are excellent ways to generate power, but you will need to do some planning before starting an installation project.

Solar power technology has been in use for decades and is a great choice for many homeowners. They are very easy to maintain because they have no moving parts, and they will give you off grid power for many years. Once installed the solar panel system will enable you to provide off grid power for your electricity needs as long as the sun is shining.

The thought process is that you generate more power than you can use during the day and any excess can be sold back to the local utility. If you size this systems right you should break even and not have to pay for any of your electricity.

Another alternative to solar panels for off grid power is a wind turbine. Advancements in technology have allowed the latest models to be smaller and lighter than previous ones are quite easy to install.

All you need to do is install the wind turbine high enough to catch a consistent wind to generate your own off grid power. A wind turbine can be used in conjunction with a solar panel system or it can be used alone. If you're using a wind turbine the principle of switching between power sources also applies.

Another thing to consider is that there are incentive programs you can apply to that will help you finance an off grid power system. There are low interest loans and grants available through federal and local programs that can help you reduce the cost of your installation.

5. WOODWORKING MADE EASY

Woodworking, a favorite pastime of many people, is a great profession. This profession or pastime needs a significant amount of craftsmanship and dedication. It is important because in the first place, it is where people find an interesting project to dedicate their time on. In addition, it challenges and develops their creativity and resourcefulness. What is woodwork by the way?



Woodwork refers to an object that is made out of wood. Woodworking includes doors or windowsills, furniture, panels, constructed structures and the like. Such woodworking are used for industrial and residential purposes. For people who observe austerity, woodworking is a very good way to save money because they can fix the old furniture at their own home. Through woodworking, people can repair scratched wood, fix shaky chairs. On the other hand, people can build cabinets, new shelves and a bookcase through this craft.

Anyone can become competent at woodworking but maybe not everyone can do awesome woodwork products. You do not need to have a diploma or certificate in order to undertake such kind of work. If you are really interested in the craft of woodworking, then you should possess the passion to pursue it even you experience failure for how many times. If you have the passion, you will try your best to accomplish your work systematically. There are so many things entailed in picking the right woodwork that will suit the taste of an individual. There are many considerations in order to proceed with woodworking activity. However, the most important thing to bear in mind is to make plans first.

Using a woodwork plan is a crucial factor in attaining an excellent woodwork. Even experts use plans so no one is exempted. Without plans, you are just like throwing your resources and expel energy without any attainment. Doing woodworking without plans implies voluntarily opening your door to disaster. Thus, before starting any woodwork project, the very first thing to do is to formulate plans.

There are many woodwork plans that you can access if you are a beginner in woodworking. There are many resources you can refer from for whatever project you will do. There are many books and magazines that cater your need. The internet also provides different types of woodwork plans. Furthermore, there are videos that will show you exactly what you need to know about woodworking including some measurements.

6. GETTING STARTED WITH URBAN HOMESTEADING

The term homesteading is usually associated with the Homesteading Act that allowed certain Americans to claim land before the law was done away with in the 1970s. However homesteading as an activity is alive and well and moving into the cities and suburbs of America and many other countries.

Homesteading goes by many other names; simple living, country living, getting back to basics and self-sufficient living. No matter what you call it, it boils down to doing more for yourself and relying less on consumer goods and services. Urban homesteading is simply homesteading without the benefit of a large amount of land, such as in the city. Some of the ways people practice urban homesteading is by container gardening, sewing their own clothes, finding alternative sources of energy, and conserving water through the use of rainwater collection and grey water use. The first thing you should do if you are interested in homesteading (urban or not) is plan. Plan, plan and then plan some more. The last thing you want is to be stuck not knowing what to do and wasting all your previous efforts. Following are four questions you should ask yourself after you have decided to try your hand at urban homesteading.

What Do You Want To Accomplish With Your Homestead?

Are you interested in just growing fresh herbs and vegetables or do you want to go as far as creating your own clothes, furniture and home furnishings as well as grown your own food? The answers to these questions will have a lot to do with the amount of time and effort you want to, and can, dedicate to homesteading as well as the amount of space and resources available to you. The best idea might be to write a list of your ultimate goals and then start by working towards one at a time.

What Supplies Do I Need To Get Started?

What you need to begin is going to depend largely on what you want to accomplish. To start container gardening you will need at least some large containers (they do not have to be flower pots, any container will do), some potting soil, seeds, and fertilizer if you decide to use a commercial product instead of going organic. Coffee grounds make a decent organic fertilizer if you do not want to but a commercial product.

If you are going to making your own clothes, obviously you will need a sewing machine, fabric, and other sewing supplies. Soap making has its own supplies as does candle making, canning, drying, etc.

What Types Of Alternative Energy Are Possible For Me?

If you own your home, you may be able to go whole hog and install solar panels. If you live in a small apartment or any residence that you do not own, you may have to settle for a small solar generator, or only a solar oven. You can usually hang your clothes outside to dry rather than using a dryer but some areas do not allow clotheslines to be

hung so you have to check the local laws. Collecting rainwater is a good way to save water for watering your garden but you need to be careful that your rainwater bins have lids otherwise you will attract mosquitoes. To get started go to your local library and research some alternative energy methods, do not be afraid to think outside the box (the breaker box that is) and commit to whatever you decide.

How Will I Deal With Criticism?

Simple living is not looked upon highly by most people in our consumer goods driven society. Odds are you will have friends and family members that will think what you are doing is pointless and over the top. Consider how you will deal with people criticizing the changes you are making, even going so far as to say that homemade goods are not safe or as good as those bought in a store. Above all, stick to your guns and do not let naysayers make you doubt that you are doing the right thing.

7. EXACTLY WHAT GREEN DIY ENERGY IS

Green DIY Energy is one of many DIY solar panel guides that are available for purchase and instant download online. It costs \$50, and comes with a money-back guarantee. The purpose of the Green DIY Energy guide is to show you exactly how to build your own renewable energy system for your home. You can build a solar energy system or a wind turbine system, both are outlined in the guide and will produce renewable energy for you home.



Several guides actually come with it, there a couple on various aspects of building solar panels, plus one about building your own wind turbine. Another feature of the guide is the video series. There are 6 videos that are meant to be tutorial videos that the customers can watch as they build their panels.

The videos are simply a recording of one man as he builds his solar panel. He talks as he is building and narrates the whole process so it is easy to follow at home.

Green DIY Energy claims that you can build your renewable energy system for under \$200. They show you the exact parts and tools you need and tell you how much they will cost and where you can purchase them.

And that is the run-down on green DIY Energy!

Now why would someone want to go through the trouble of building their own energy system? Why not just purchase some panels and have them professionally installed? Well, that would be a good option for people who have a lot of money and don't mind shelling out a couple thousand dollars. But if you don't have a couple thousand sitting around, building your own panels is an extremely cheap DIY project that actually is relatively easy.

I would highly recommend building your own renewable energy system if you are looking for a way to cut back on your energy costs. Solar panels are a nice option because they aren't that hard to build and are practically maintenance free. Once they're up on your roof they're going to be saving you money month after month, just install them and forget about it!

Build your DIY solar panels today!

8. TINY HOUSES, BIG CHANGES

Tiny houses serve as a renewed concept in real estate. After decades of building bigger and bigger homes, a few people are recognizing the impact of large houses on the environment. Instead, they are opting for these miniature homes that provide much needed freedom. Now there are companies that build these homes, sell floor plans, rent or sell them. Despite the similarity to RV or camper, these homes



offer an alternative living style. With a size under 500 square feet, it's not a lifestyle accepted by the majority, but the popularity is rising. As a form of permanent residence, these tiny homes have their own unique set of benefits and challenges.

First and foremost, smaller homes offer financial freedom that most Americans could only dream of. Image a life without worrying about mortgage payments. What would you do with that extra money? Image not having to work so hard to pay the mortgage, what would you do with your time? These tiny houses also have much smaller utility bills. Some of these homes have plumbing and electricity just like a regular house, only on a much smaller scale that leads to much smaller utility bills. The more eco-conscious residents may install a solar panel and use propane for heat during the winter. Some choose to use composting toilets that turns human excretion into compost. In this case, no septic system is necessary.

There is also geographical freedom. Considering how many people make long commutes daily because the sizable home they can afford is so far away, small homes present the geographic flexibility as they take up so little land. Previous research evidence showed there was a link between long commute and poor health. Those who drive long distances to work tend to be less physically active and suffer from hypertension. Tiny homes are easy to move as the owner relocates, saving relocation expenses. Smaller residence also forces the owner to expand their living area onto a deck, garden, and surrounding area. This works for those loving the outdoors and connecting with nature.

What attracts people to a small home is more than its size; it's the lifestyle behind it. Limited space forces people to cut down on unnecessary possessions. In the land of excess, most people own way more than they need. When designed efficiently, these tiny homes can serve all functions of regular sized homes.

There are plenty of challenges to living in a house the size of a walk-in closet. Small space can easily get cluttered if one gets away from the minimalist mindset. It also may lead to cabin fever during days of inclement weather.

Not all neighborhoods welcome miniature houses. Some have building codes that specify a range of home sizes. Neighbors may despise them in fear of a drop in real estate value. On top of that, how different do you want to be from your friends or colleagues? Our residence is a display of our status, wealth, and success.

After all, it takes a special kind of mindset, personality, and motivation to choose tiny homes over gigantic mansions. On one hand, there's freedom from financial and geographical restraints. On the other hand, there's a great social norm to conform to in order to fit in. Could you live in a tiny house?

9. COUNTRY LIVING WITH WOOD CONSOLE TABLES

The wooden console table often forms the centerpiece of 'country living' as I am sure that most of you would already know. Wooden furniture and similar furniture often form the backdrop of most of the country style houses. Plastic do not come into play at these settings. Wooden



furniture is generally used to a large extent in most of the country houses as there is a need for furniture to be sturdy and one that does not break at the slightest sign of pressure or stress. Take for example, the wooden console table, as it is the console table would also at times form the function of the side tray and there are times when it would be required to carry a heavy load on it. One cannot expect a plastic table to carry the same load without buckling under due pressure. Which is why the wooden console table as well as other similar wooden furniture form the main backbone as far as 'country living' goes by.

The neat thing about wooden console tables is that one can get them with any engravings that one wants or just get them plain. In addition, such console tables, chairs and dining tables can all be color coordinated to the room according to the drapes and the color of the room. Of course, one can paint over the furniture, but it is always a good idea to keep the natural color of such furniture and you can vary between the light and the dark tones of the wood and use that for color co-ordination. The thing about the wooden furniture is that in spite of all the protection that one has to provide them to protect them from water damage and all that, they certainly bring this old world charm and none more so than the console table. Of all the furniture settings that one can adapt to most of the natural decors, the wooden console table is one of the best. It can literally adapt to any of the settings no matter what time period the room is made out in, be it Victorian theme or anything else.

Naturally where there is wood, there is always the danger of termites, but this can easily be handled with the right amount of protection. With wooden furniture especially console tables, it is always a good idea to use the varnish as the varnish literally can make the console table and other furniture glow with an inner light and in addition offer then the much needed protection from water damage. The wooden furniture and the console table performs the perfect setting to ones home and they often are the best furniture that one can choose if one wants ones room or ones house to be in a 'country living' style

10. WATERLESS COOKING

Have you heard of the waterless cooking method? It is a relatively new method of cooking that has many advantages. In the past, a lot of household cooking has involved cooking food with water. When



cooked in water, however, a lot of the food's nutritional value, not to mention the flavor, is taken away. Waterless cooking allows you to cook food in its own juices, retaining all the vitamins and minerals as well as most of the original flavor. There is no need to add water to foods (especially vegetables) because the natural moisture in the food is released and the steam created helps the cooking process. The steam is circulated throughout the pot and falls back into the food allowing it to stay moist and juicy.

So what are the advantages to waterless cooking? First of all, it is an easy way to cook. Many times you can use a one-pan cooking method so that all the food (meat, veggies and potatoes) is cooked together. This also allows for easier clean up with only one pan to wash up. And the new waterless cookware, with its superior heat distribution, tends to have less chance of food burning or sticking.

Waterless cooking also tends to cook food a lot faster. With the new waterless cookware available now the heat is evenly distributed along the bottom of the pot or pan. Because of this, there are no 'hot-spots' that may tend to burn your food. The lid of the pot forms a seal, which locks in the heat (as well as the moisture) so the cooking time is decreased.

As mentioned, waterless cooking is a healthy way to cook. None of the nutrients are lost during cooking, and you don't need to add oil to stop the food from sticking to the pan, which also makes it healthier. The natural color and texture of the food is also retained which makes the food more appealing. Foods that are supposed to be crisp tend to keep their crunchy texture as well.

The features of waterless cookware that allow this cooking method to work include a flat bottom on the pots and pans which allow the most efficient means of heat transfer. The flat bottom connects with your stove element better, whether it be the coils of an electric stove or a gas unit, so that the heat transfer is more efficient. The cookware also has an iron core and an aluminum or copper base plate built into it that helps to retain a continuous, constant cooking temperature even after the heating element has been turned off.

Waterless cookware is typically made of high-grade stainless steel, which is better than other traditional pans in a couple of different ways. The stainless steel does not allow the taste of the metal to transfer to your food, as may be the case with aluminum or

Teflon-coated cookware. Some companies use surgical stainless steel, which is the highest grade you can get for a real quality product. The stainless steel is easy to clean, durable (enabling it to last an extremely long time) and it allows you to keep your cookware sterilized.

One of the main features of waterless cookware is the special lid that keeps the natural moisture in the food from escaping. The lid forms a seal with the pot and lets the natural juices form into steam so the food cooks in its own natural juices, retaining all the nutrients and original flavors. There is a steam valve that whistles and tells you when you should turn off the heat (once the juices have created sufficient steam). In this way you save energy when cooking and the food is always cooked at a constant temperature.

Although it is referred to as waterless cooking, one thing you should do before cooking with this method is to rinse your food in water and then drain it before cooking. This ensures there will be enough water clinging to the food to create enough steam, mixed with foods natural juices, to cook it properly.

Cooking times with the waterless cooking method is generally a little less than traditional cooking times, depending on personal tastes for doneness. You should always cook your food at medium to low temperatures because the special waterless cookware construction allows the unit to conduct heat in the most efficient manner. You must also resist the urge to lift the lid during the cooking process as this will lengthen the cooking time and may even allow the food to dry out when the steam escapes.

The steam valve will tell you when you should turn off your stove element-when the correct temperature has been reached to allow the food to cook itself. When the steam valve whistles, turn off your stove, but do not lift the lid until the specified cooking time has elapsed-then you can open the lid and serve out your hot food. As a tip, put warm water into the unit after the food has been removed and let it sit while you eat so clean-up will be a snap afterwards.

Most recipes can be adapted (with a few alterations) to using the waterless cooking method as well. You will discover that old favorites will taste better and new recipes will be simple to master. The waterless cooking method is a new and healthier way to cook. It is more energy efficient, allows the food to retain its own juices, texture and color, and is an easy way to cook.

11. HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN LOG LOUNGER

Guys, do you fancy to lay and rest yourself down on a log lounge? If you do, you don't have to buy one! In fact not likely you would easily find this kind of lounge. What we are featuring here today is easy to make if you have the right tools! For supplies you



will need the logs, lag and deck screws, and brackets. If you have those, you can start and go! *winks* "Wait!" What is it? "Who created this brilliant project?" Oh, do you want to meet the creator of this log lounge? "Absolutely!" Well, here he is. Let's get inside the world of Homemade-Modern and the awesome guy behind it.

The smart and handsome man slash creator of log lounge is Ben Uyeda. He is a designer, lecturer, and entrepreneur, and he focuses on the field of affordable and sustainable design. Ben Uyeda is a graduate of B. Architecture at Cornell University. He also gets his Master of Architecture at the same university. In 2005, he is hired as a visiting lecturer at Cornell University where he creates an "original curriculum for teaching sustainable design, emphasizing the importance of critically understanding contemporary media and popular culture when trying to implement environmentally progressive technologies." Uyeda won the U.S. Green Building Council's Natural Talent Design Competition in 2010. In the competition, he creates an affordable green home designs for the New Orleans' Broad moor neighborhood. The designs are part of the rebuilding effort after the wrath of Hurricane Katrina.

He is also the person behind Homemade Modern. The goal of this website is to "introduce ideas that aren't just about acquiring objects but about managing resources in a way that's useful and accommodates changing lifestyles." It does not only provide affordable DIYs. Uyeda makes sure that the DIYs are sturdy. Homemade Modern also focuses on inspiring people. "We want to inspire and encourage people to create heirloom quality goods with naturally durable materials," stated in the website. It also aims to spread good design ideas and "not the mass production of value engineered objects."

So, you want to know how Ben Uyeda build this log lounge? Just click Homemade-Modern's website below and have fun DIYing!

Source: Homemade Modern

Link: [Homemade Modern](http://homemade-modern.com)

12. WONDERFUL CABIN DECKS

Guys, I want you to stare at the photo of this cabin deck. I'll give you a few moments to organize your thought then tell me what you think. *silence* "Is there a stronger word than 'exquisite'? That's how I can describe this cabin deck." I agree with you, pal! These cabin decks are simply... exquisite. Did you know that these cabin decks also require proper maintenance? The decks would not look like this if it were not maintained. If you have a cabin deck, I will tell you some of the ways to keep it looking great. *winks*



You have to thank James McFadden from Ezine for the ways. *winks* for the first step, of course, you have to clear your deck first. McFadden says, "Don't attempt to work around items such as outdoor furniture or the grill. The first step is to clear the grill of any and all such items from the deck. Keep in mind that they will not be returned for several days."

The second step is to sweep the deck and clear the cracks. It's time to unleash your 'sweeping skills' and turn your deck into a wonderful one. *winks* You must sweep away those leaves, dirt, and other debris. Do not finish the sweeping without paying attention to the spaces between the boards. "Leaves can sometimes come to rest in the cracks as they decompose. This can eventually rot the boards," says McFadden. How to clean this? Just use a putty knife to get into these gaps clean.

Thirdly, you must scrub the wood, ladies, and gents. In doing this, you may use bleach. Just dilute the bleach, half and half with warm water. Scrub the wood with a scrub brush and apply the bleach evenly. McFadden doesn't recommend the use of undiluted bleach in scrubbing your deck. Also, do not leave the bleach and water for too long. Rinse the deck thoroughly after a few minutes. If you have plants around, cover them with plastic to avoid contact with the cleaning solutions.

Fourthly, allow your deck to dry. "This is an important part of the process," shares McFadden. "Sealing the deck while wet may trap moisture in the wood severely decreasing the woods life expectancy," he adds. Make sure that the deck is completely dry. It is because the sealant is water repellent, and you will get an "uneven coat." Wait for at least two days depending on the weather.

Lastly, apply the sealer. You should buy a foam roller to apply the sealer to the entire deck surface. Before doing this, you must cover the bottom of your safety slats and rails. “This can protect them from ‘wicking’ water from snow drifts or water that puddles or seeps into cracks.”

That’s how you take care and seal your deck, people! *winks* Anyway, for more pictures of the wonderful cabin decks, visit the Highlands Log Structures website below. Enjoy!

Source: Highlands Log Structures

Link: [Highlands Log Structures](#)

13. NEATEST POOL TABLE EVER

Are you thinking of what to do the next time you hang out with your friends over the weekends? Well, if you run out of fun activities in mind, why not go play some good old billiards with them? This is a classic game where you could enjoy everyone's company by playing and the same time, catching up on each other's week. You can always go to some bar where pool tables are available for use or you can own one yourself. Make your home the place where your friends could party all you want.



There are many pool tables out there to choose from, but we suggest that yours would be something that people would talk about for days because they simply couldn't forget how cool it looks. You will be shocked at the many unique designs available out there. Of course, they don't come cheap but you can always customize yours and pick the design that you think would work in your place. There are about 18 cool pool tables that we found online and picked the ones that we think is the neatest! There is this one that is inspired by a car and also a pool table that looks so futuristic. But among all of them, we had to go for the one that looks like a real pool!

That's right! A real pool with water in it. But it's all an optical illusion. We thought it was really neat to see the balls of billiards roll on the table as if they are floating on water. You could also check out the one that is called the "Ice Pool Table." We have to say that it looks literally cool as well.

If you want to see the other pool tables that would make you drop your jaw, check out the website "WALYOU" below.

Source: WALYOU

Link: WALYOU

14. AMAZING LOG POOL TABLES

Amazing Log Pool Tables barely begins to describe these pieces of art.

Do you play pool? If yes, you'll probably appreciate this amazing log pool table. Even if you don't play pool but have a large home where a pool table can sit, you will enjoy this for its sheer beauty.



Everything you see is simply created by Aspen Rustic, a company from Austin.

According to the owner, "It goes without saying that each log is unique, each Burl is unique, and the artistic interpretation of our craftsmen is unique. There will be no two alike, ever! With the help of our design studio staff, together we can create an Aspen Rustic Billiard Table with just the right character and texture for your mountain or western lodge."

These amazing Pool Tables are made from logs from both Colorado and Wyoming. Fascinating and rustic. Each and every angle presents a different view of wood's unique character. Each log is vigilantly selected, sanded and finished resulting in a great quality and beauty.

And what about the game of pool itself? The seasoned pool player knows all but here is a little information for the beginner. In the game of pool, there are, in fact, different distinctions, terminology and strategies to learn in addition to just not getting the goal to get the ball into the pocket. There are three things you'll be using: the billiard table, a cue stick, and the pool balls.

First thing to consider is to pick a cue stick that is appropriate for your size. There are, in fact, three standard sizes that pool table has; it would be 7, 8, and 9 feet. As for the pool balls, it consists of even and odds, solids and stripes, the eight ball and the cue ball. In case you don't have any idea about what a cue ball is, it is the solid white ball and can be distinguished as a bit heavier. It is only the ball hit during the game. Interested in playing it? You may search the internet for steps on how to play it and it will be best if you have your pool table to practice.

To see more beautiful photographs of these pool tables please visit the 'Goods Home Design' website below.

Source: Goods Home Design

Link: [Goods Home Design](#)

15. PERFECT LIVING IN SYLVAN LAKE CABIN

Log houses date back in time and the houses built in the past accompanied a pioneers lifestyle. When you think of a log house, many envision a rustic dwelling built from natural materials. This house that Matt and Jeff Balmer built is a far cry from the rustic cabins of old



Log houses we have seen in old movies are mostly used as hunting cabins or quaint summer cottages. Those pioneer log homes were common in the western regions of Europe.

The log homes of today allow you to leave city life and create a lifestyle somewhere in a mountainous or woody areas but the difference is that you will still live an elegant lifestyle, surrounded by the warmth of the logs that make up the structure.

This modernized log house designed by these two architects will definitely steal your attention. Every corner of the house and its furniture are made with natural materials and high-quality logs.

Architects, Matt, and Jeff Balmer have been customizing log furniture, and building and designing beautiful houses for many years. Their designs will impress you when you. The log home shown in the photo welcomes you into its spacious but cozy living room, inviting you to explore further in the home. The entire home including the areas upstairs all are featuring elegant design and carefully crafted workmanship.

The luxury home offers old fashioned rustic combined with all the contemporary modern amenities. View outdoor life from its big windows and feel close to nature while you are relaxing.

This beautiful log house is located in Sylvan Lake, a beautiful City in Michigan. You will not only be impressed with the amenities in this beautiful house, but you will also fall in love with their community. For those living in this area, they can enjoy many outdoor activities, from Sylvan Lake fishing, rock climbing, mountain biking, and hiking, horseback riding to horseback riding.

Please visit the 'Goods Home Design' website to see photos and learn more.

Source: Good Home Design

Link: [Good Home Design](#)

16. THE CARIBOU CREEK RANCH

There are a lot of people these days that prefer having a vacation in the countryside. What do you think is their main reason? Likely they are looking for a quiet get-a-way from their busy lives. Whatever reason people have, one thing is for sure, and that is the fact that vacationing in the countryside is a worthwhile decision. Now the big question is, do you have your own place in the countryside where



you can have a great stay? If you do not have, then the best thing to do is to look for one that is open for rental. Since we are talking about a log home that is for rent here, then the ideal one to consider is The Caribou Creek Ranch.

It is undeniably a beautiful log home inside and out, perfect for a vacation escapade. It has a perfect location in Idaho. Its rustic ambiance will give you a great feeling of luxury and comfort. You are one with nature in this log home, offering luxury classiness and a feeling that you want will always be glad you are there.

If you are bringing your family with you, there is no need to worry because it is an ensemble of 4 homes. Hence, its wider space is perfect enough for your family. This house is a remodeled one. It was being remodeled in 2005. Some modern amenities were added in order to satisfy your contemporary living requirements even though you are in a secluded place for a vacation. It has larger rooms where you and your family can have a great rest. It has a handmade stone fireplace where you can enjoy a fire during colder days. Its master suite has a walk-out that will directly lead you towards the deck.

In addition, it has a large barn, allowing you to have a memorable horse riding experience. It even has a wide-spaced garage that can accommodate a maximum of 3 cars. Its wide backyard will also be a great playground for your children.

For more information and for you to see its amazing pictures, visit Goods Home Design website below.

Source: Good Home Design

Link: [Good Home Design](#)

17. GREAT SHIPPING CONTAINER HOMES

Shipping container homes are a fad these days. Who would have thought that a simple shipping container can now be used as a main material in constructing a house that will allow you a great living space? Owning a shipping container home indicates you are following the latest trend, you are also saving money since it will not cost you as much as a traditional home. Hence, people who have a smaller budget will be attracted to this housing possibility. With just \$2000 in your pocket, you can purchase a shipping container and begin.



In case you do not know, finished shipping container homes nowadays come with different designs, styles, and even sizes. This goes to show that the builders and designers are adapting to creating wonderful homes from this metal structure. If you are

looking for modern amenities and modern interiors, you will see that all this is possible.

Yes, it will mean being limited to the size of the containers, but the luxury you are always looking for can be there. Many shipping container houses are pre-made by several reliable property construction companies. Because of this, a considerable amount of your time, money, and effort can be saved. Even so, if you prefer constructing it on your own, then you can do it. Just make sure you know what you are doing, and you have enough background in building houses.

If you want to feel the rays of the sun and breathe the fresh air around, you can go for a shipping container house that has open space. There are also those blue container houses where you can incorporate several fixtures and interior and exterior decorations in order to improve its aesthetics. Whether you want a one-storey, two-storey, and so on and so forth, you can have it with shipping container homes.

In order for you to see the pictures and the full list and details of the 15 great shipping container homes, simply visit True Activist website below.

Source: True Activist

Link: [True Activist](#)

18. HOW TO LIVE DEBT FREE BY BUILDING A TINY HOUSE

How much is it going to cost you to build a tiny house? You will likely be surprised at the answer in this featured article. A quick answer would be costs are dependent on the style and design that you plan to use.



Factors will include if you are doing it yourself or hiring labor. Are you living in an area that requires permits? If so how much will that add on. Are you going to build your tiny house from brand new building materials or are you going to use reclaimed/recycled materials? What about the interior finishing's? Will you be going with an expensive finish for your countertops such as a granite top or will you be using a counter-top from recycle or even a more simple one from a building supply store?

What about the plumbing and the wiring. Who is going to do all of these things?

In the featured article, we have Beth, who built a 120 sq.ft. House on wheels. It has a porch and a sleeping loft. Beth used reclaimed materials and got them in like-new condition at great prices. Her interior also utilized windows, cabinets, sinks, countertop flooring and some furniture. She was very thrifty if her choices. Even with being mindful of her materials, she ended up spending about \$14,200 on materials which included a wagon chassis. She also spent \$7000 on labor costs. This place cost her about \$21,200.

The second house in this article was 348 sq.ft. So double the size and the cost wast \$8,270.

That you can see, that is a pretty big range in costs! What are the details on the larger place and how did it all compare? Visit the 'Homestead Honey' website below, you will get a better understanding of what went into each project.

Source: Homestead Honey

Link: [Homestead Honey](#)

19. DESIGNER LOG HOMES

Log homes are one of the best examples of architecture that will stand the test of time. If you are thinking of a good investment for you and your family's future, this is one of your best bets out there. Log homes are one of the current trends, and more people see the value in this type of architecture. If you are looking to find a great builder and a company to hire that will help you with all your log home needs, the featured company in this article is Heartwood Log & Timber Design.



This company will be able to bring out the vision you have for your own housing project. You can trust that they could deliver in great quality and good service with the projects that you will have them work on.

The experienced architects in Heartwood Log and Timber design have been in the industry for three decades now, so you can be assured that they have experience, and the designs are going to be top of the line. They can assist you with building the home that will suit your budget. You can be a part of the designing of your home as they value your ideas.

You will no doubt spend a lot of time in researching the perfect floor plan and theme you are expecting for your home, or perhaps you are looking for suggesting right and do not really have any preconceived ideas yet.

Working with experienced professionals will save you time and money, in the long run. The team at Heartwood Log & Timber Design are professionals and experts in this field of work.

There are lots of benefits of owning a home made of logs.

For more information please visit the "Heartwood Log and Timber Design" below. There are many sample plans and projects you can explore there.

Source: Heartwood Log and Timber Design

Link: [Heartwood Log and Timber Design](#)

20. PICTURESQUE LOG HOME DESIGN

Today we are featuring this stunning log guesthouse.

This log structure is a two-story house with its main floor measuring 1080 square feet. The main floor consists of a great room. There is a direct entry to this room where you will appreciate the bay window ensuring picture perfect views from this room. The house plan also provides a spot in the great room

for a fireplace that will give keep you warm and cozy during the chilly seasons.



There is an open kitchen and dining room area which will offer plenty of space for those family meals and get-togethers.

There is access to main floor bedroom with ensuite, and the stairways to the upper level. The second level measures 590 square feet. Here you will find the master suite, consisting of a beautifully designed vaulted log ceiling, a covered balcony, and a 4-piece en-suite bathroom. The second bedroom on the level also has its own bathroom.

The brilliant minds behind this picturesque cottage are from The Log Connection. This is an excellent performing log home company that is constantly providing satisfaction to all their clients. Its long years of existence in the industry can be a concrete evidence of its excellence. The company has managed to be on top in the industry for more than 24 years now. As a matter of fact, this log home company has records of being an award-winning choice thanks to their skilled professional craftsmen who are capable of producing round log post and beam, stacked log homes, and timber frames home packages.

Without a doubt, The Log Connection is the one that you should trust as far as log home is concerned.

If you want to see the amazing pictures and detailed floor plan of this picturesque log home design, simply take a tour on the 'Log Connection' website below.

Source: The Log Connection

Link: [The Log Connection](#)