

## **Section 1: Small House Living**

### **1. Larger Sized Houses**

Houses these days have grown too big. If you are like most people your house is at least 1,500 square feet, with the average newly built home in America having more than 2,600 square feet. It's common for many homes to have at least four bedrooms, and at least two bathrooms. It wasn't always this way, as American homes used to be a lot smaller.

As nice as it might be having all that space, living large does come with a cost. The average new home today costs more than double what the average new home cost half a century ago. Large homes also have higher energy bills too. The increase in mortgage costs and energy bills can take an enormous toll on every other part of your financial life. All too often larger houses make for wasted space, with a dining room that rarely gets used, guest room and extra bathroom that rarely get used. The extra space might be great when guests come to stay, but all those empty rooms don't come for free.

With more space, you will also need more stuff to fill the extra space. More stuff means more money, and more stuff means that you need more space to store all that stuff, it really is an endless cycle. More stuff and more space also mean more cleaning, repairs, and household chores. A bigger house means that there is more lawn to mow, more square footage to vacuum, and more to clean. All that cleaning and repairs take up a valuable commodity in your life and that is your time. Many of these large homes are often occupied by small-sized families, which means the modern family is usually spread out into different rooms, which limits interaction and socialization.

### **2. Small House Living**

Small house living isn't something new, as small homes have been around for thousands of years, think wood cabins, huts, igloos, and yurts. Small house living is taking an old idea and breathing new life into it, as a way to save money, work less and have less clutter in your life. Small house living has a variety of uses to include full-time living, guest houses, artist studios, playhouses, vacation homes and so much more. Designers keep coming up with more and more unique tiny house designs that have taken small house living to a whole new level.

Living in a tiny house has become somewhat of a social movement known as the tiny house movement. People are choosing to downsize their current living space, simplifying it, and then living with less. People are embracing the small house living philosophy and the freedom that goes with the tiny house lifestyle. The tiny house movement is about living more simply in a smaller space. There are different opinions on what constitutes a tiny house. Many will say that that a

tiny house is anything between 100 to 400 square feet, while others consider anything under 1,000 square feet to be a tiny house. Either way, downsizing your square footage can come with all sorts of benefits.

Tiny homes can be rented or owned. You may choose a tiny house on wheels or your small home may set on a foundation. Most tiny houses are independent structures, with some being parked on a piece of land with other buildings or a larger sized home, while other tiny houses are parked on their own lot. You'll find tiny houses designed and built by their owners, while others are purchased, adapted from trailers, or built from a tiny house kit.

### 3. Pros

Tiny houses come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and forms, but they all enable a simpler way of living in a smaller, more efficient space. There are several benefits to living in a smaller house to include spending more time outdoors, energy efficiency, less cleaning, and maintenance, save money, you can pick up and move, more cozy and intimate and more unique to name a few.

**More Time Outdoors.** One of the benefits of small house living is that smaller homes force people to go outside. If you live in a smaller home your kids will most likely be playing outside more often. Smaller homes help to encourage community because chances are if you live and stay in a tiny house, you are more likely to sit on your porch and talk to your neighbors. For some, this might not sound like a benefit, as people have gotten so comfortable living in their larger sized houses, and they can stay inside all day and not even think about going outdoors.

**Energy Efficient.** Smaller homes are typically more energy efficient because they have less space to heat and cool, which in turn means they have a lower ecological footprint.

**Less Cleaning and Maintenance.** Less space means less time spent on cleaning and home maintenance. This can be a huge benefit, especially for families as they can spend more time outdoors, doing the things they love.

**Save Money.** Tiny houses are less expensive to live in. A smaller house has a smaller mortgage if any at all, and it costs less to heat and cool.

**You Can Pick Up and Move.** This is true for tiny houses on wheels. If you want a change of scenery you can hitch your tiny house to a truck and move. This is also a great option if you are trying to benefit from the passive solar energy on your property, you can move your house depending on the season.

**Cozy and Intimate.** A small house has smaller rooms, which often lend to the feeling of coziness and intimacy that larger homes may lack.

**More Unique.** With larger sized houses you may be living in a neighborhood where all the houses are the same, there isn't always a lot of room of individuality. A tiny house gives you the freedom to choose the home that you want, with a price that allows for more flexibility both inside and out.

#### 4. Cons

While there are plenty of benefits to small house living there are also drawbacks some of which include less space for storage, organization is essential, you can't have it all, you'll need a truck to tow it and entertaining is challenging to name a few.

**Less Space.** In larger sized houses many people have bedrooms or closets that are larger than many tiny homes. For some, the thought of squeezing all of their worldly possessions into such a small space can be daunting.

**You'll Need to Clean More Often.** In a tiny house, you'll need to clean more often. Just a little disorganization in a tiny house can cause clutter when it comes to livability. While it will take you less time to clean, you will have to clean up more often in a tiny house. The good news is that it might mean you only need about an hour to two hours a week to tidy up and a few hours every other week for deep cleans.

**Organization Is Essential.** You need to have a plan in place for organizing your small space, otherwise, your tiny house will look and feel cluttered. A cluttered space will feel messy, and you won't want to spend time there.

**You Can't Have It All.** It can be difficult to decide what possessions you can take with you into a tiny house space. You might find it impossible to bring everything that you'd like. This can be especially difficult if you have a lot of family heirlooms.

**You'll Need a Truck to Tow.** This is true for tiny houses on wheels. If you want to move or travel (depending on the size of your tiny house), you'll need the right sized vehicle to tow it.

**Entertaining Is a Challenge.** Entertaining in a tiny house has its limits. In the warmer months, you can go outside, but in the colder winter months, you'll need to limit your guest list.

#### 5. Strategies for Small House Living

**Donate.** When it comes to small house living, there are some things you can do to make your life easier. For starters, it's a good rule that whenever you bring something new into your tiny house, something of equal size must be donated. If you bring something new into your tiny house, something of equal size should go. Keep a bin in a closet to make adding to the donation pile quick and easy. Figure out what works best for your lifestyle and space, and set it up.

**Spend Less.** As space in your tiny house will be limited you will most likely reduce your buying habits. As a result, your home will feel open and uncluttered, which is key to living comfortably in a tiny house

**Watch Less Television.** To curb the impulse to buy, you might cut down on watching television. You might cancel your cable subscription and try just watching movies or public television. The less television you watch, the fewer ads you will see, which means the less pressure you will feel to go out and buy new things all the time.

**Make Use of All Free Space.** Use furniture in your tiny house that has closed storage built-in. Nothing makes a tiny house look smaller than clutter. If you can keep it organized, your tiny house will look and feel a lot bigger.

**Work With Color.** People differ on whether bright paint colors make a small room look bigger, or whether darker colors actually make a room look large. White is a popular interior tiny house color as it is said to give the feeling of spaciousness. Whichever color you decide upon, if you don't like the color, the room is small enough so that repainting won't take all that long.

## 6. Conclusion

Living in a tiny house takes creativity, flexibility, and ingenuity. But overall, for many people, it's worth the effort. Like anything, it may take getting used to and is the ideal living situation for people across the world. Living small really forces you to carefully consider the things you own, and make choices about what you really need, as well as what you don't need. Although this might sound limiting, it can be quite liberating.