

TINY HOUSE

FOR MICRO, TINY, SMALL, AND UNCONVENTIONAL HOUSE ENTHUSIASTS



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FEATURED

Budget Friendly Tiny House Design Tips

Tiny houser Laura LaVoie is back to share some tips on designing a functional tiny house.

Mind Blowing

This tiny house is every bit of mind blowing and owner Christo Morehead, a musician, takes THOW to new levels.

Exploring The Tiny House Revolution

Content Editor Andrew Odom and former tiny houser have some thoughts on how the movement shook up the housing market.

It's All A True Story

Alexi Eileen is a nurse and a van lifer and has embraced the life of an explorer while learning about the fragility of our humanity.

LIVING IN A TINY HOUSE OR SPACE REQUIRES A MINIMALIST MINDSET. Life has to become more intentional and you need to focus on what matters and is most important.

From the initial design of your tiny house, being budget-conscious and doing a lot of the work yourself can save you money in the long run. In Laura's article, she shares five timely tips to help you plan your designs along these lines.

Contessa shares how you need to change your mindset by not comparing yourself to your peers and thinking you need the latest devices, etc. You just don't!

To minimize you have to pair down your life to what you need and nothing else. Your priorities will change. Family and time together become more important. Experiences instead of things take priority.

The advantage of living tiny can open up opportunities to save money and invest. By choosing to live simply you don't spend as much and can choose to change your financial future.

Living tiny can also open up travel opportunities. If you are living in a camper or travel trailer you can take your home and often your work with you.

With technology like Starlink Internet, you can work from almost anywhere in the world!

These are just a few of the advantages of minimization and living tiny. I hope you enjoy this month's issue.



Kent

Kent Griswold, Editor in Chief





BUDGET-FRIENDLY TINY HOUSE DESIGN TIPS

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS IN 120 SQ.FT.

Embarking on our tiny house journey in 2008 and breaking ground in 2009, we quickly realized the scarcity of resources to guide us. Often, we relied on our creativity to navigate the challenges of maximizing our minimal living space. Today's tiny house market, brimming with luxury options, was beyond our imagination then. However, for DIY enthusiasts looking to economize, we've gathered several cost-effective strategies that could address some of your space-saving concerns.

Integrating Wall Shelves

In the inherently limited space of a tiny home, interior walls are scarce yet valuable. If your design includes a few walls that don't need to be insulated, consider incorporating built-in shelves during the framing stage. This can create recessed shelving perfect for storing various items in your main living area or a built-in medicine cabinet in your



bathroom. We've successfully implemented both in our space, proving its utility and space efficiency.

Choosing Open Kitchen Shelving

In the planning stages, we opted for open shelving in our kitchen to keep our small space bright and unobstructed. The challenge was finding the proper hardware to bring our vision to life. We stumbled upon ideal shelving brackets at The Container Store, which allowed us to customize the wood size and secure them directly to the wall studs. This solution was perfect for us, though crafting similar supports is also feasible for those inclined to DIY.

Repurposing Director's Chairs

Our combined dining and work area had to be compact due to our limited square footage. Standard chairs were too bulky, but we found a workaround with the director's chairs we already owned. By removing the armrests, we utilized them solely for seating, and their foldable design meant we could easily store them away to free up space as needed. This hack underscores the value of reimagining items you already possess for your tiny living needs.





Innovative Bathroom Door Solution

One of our top space-saving achievements was our unique bathroom door solution. Positioned adjacent to the kitchen, a traditional door would have restricted access. Installing a pocket door was beyond our skill set, and our layout couldn't accommodate a barn door. Our solution? Crafting double doors with simple hinges, which met our needs without compromising kitchen accessibility.

Utilizing Closet Curtains

We installed curtain rods and curtains for our front closets on either side of our entrance to avoid the bulk of traditional closet doors. This saved space and offered a chance to inject color and personality into our home. Opting for curtains is a straightforward and flexible way to conceal storage without sacrificing style or accessibility.

These practical, budget-conscious tips from our tiny house adventure are shared to inspire and assist others in the tiny house community. Whether you're a seasoned builder or just starting, remember that creativity and resourcefulness are your best tools in maximizing your tiny living space.

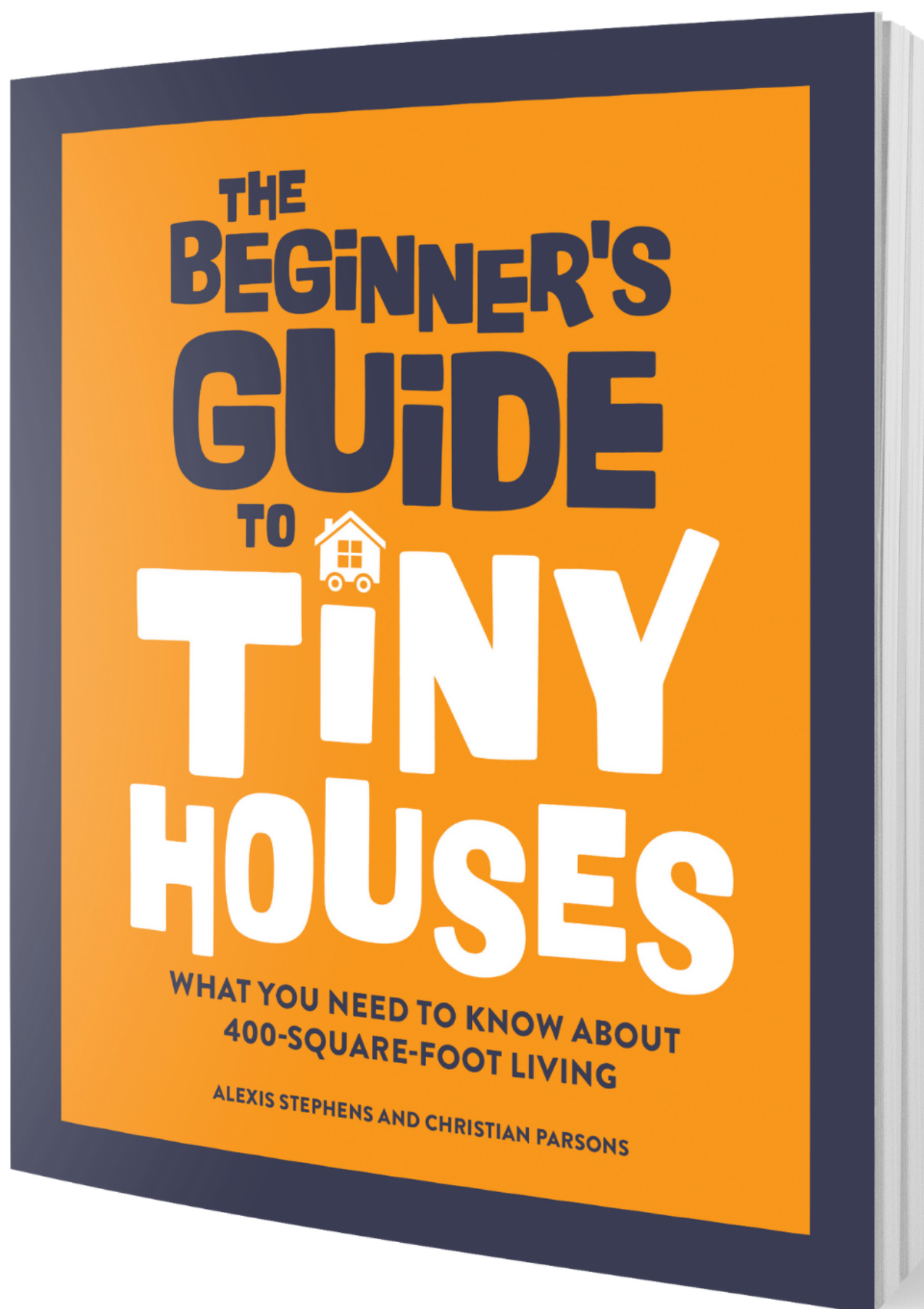


For DIY enthusiasts looking to economize, we've gathered several cost-effective strategies that could address some of your space-saving concerns.



"Your thorough guide to tiny house living, full of time-tested advice from legendary tiny house dwellers and travelers."

—Ethan Waldman, host of the Tiny House Lifestyle Podcast





TinyFest

Inspiring A Tiny Living Movement

Written By Jess Stiles

Since its inception, TinyFest has been at the forefront of the alternative living industry. The first TinyFest Event was held in 2017 near Des Moines, Iowa. Over time, we've seen the focus shift from DIY van conversions and fully custom tiny homes, to a scalable commercial industry with affordable options being produced with high-end finishes. In tandem, alternative living advocates have influenced legislation and community regulations to allow for ADU and backyard studio options. The tiny home industry is no longer a cute fad, but a revolutionary movement that's here to stay.

This year, TinyFest is back for its fifth year at the Del Mar Fairgrounds in Southern California, with a wide variety of display options. As affordable

housing becomes an increasing concern for many, one of the most exciting new developments is the competitive pricing from several companies. For example, **Pacifica Tiny Homes** just lowered all of their prices, and models are starting at \$47,500. In addition, **Clever Tiny Homes** is coming in a close second with their 26-foot tiny home starting at just under \$65,000. For those looking to add a rental income or mother-in-law housing to their property, these options are becoming more financially accessible than ever before.

Attendees interested in a custom van conversion can tour over two dozen different professionally built display models, or one of the many DIY builds in the Nomad Village. There is a large spectrum of



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van styles are available when it comes to layout, design options, and finishes, and TinyFest has more variety than any other event! Each conversion company has its own ethos, bringing a different value to its buyers. It's truly impressive how much beauty and functionality can be incorporated into eighty square feet. From modular and compact to luxurious and innovative, these vans will impress even the biggest skeptics!

But TinyFest is not just about housing options, design finishes, and prices. Beneath it all, lies a powerful undercurrent of innovation, determination, and commitment to a movement that improves the quality of life for so many. The people behind this movement are the true heroes of the event. Speakers include Dan Fitzpatrick, president of the Tiny House Industry Association and the driving force behind most of the legislative changes in Southern California that enable property owners to build tiny homes and ADUs. In addition, attendees can hear Matt Henry speak about his terminal brain cancer diagnosis, and his resulting decision to build a school bus for



his family of eight to travel full time.

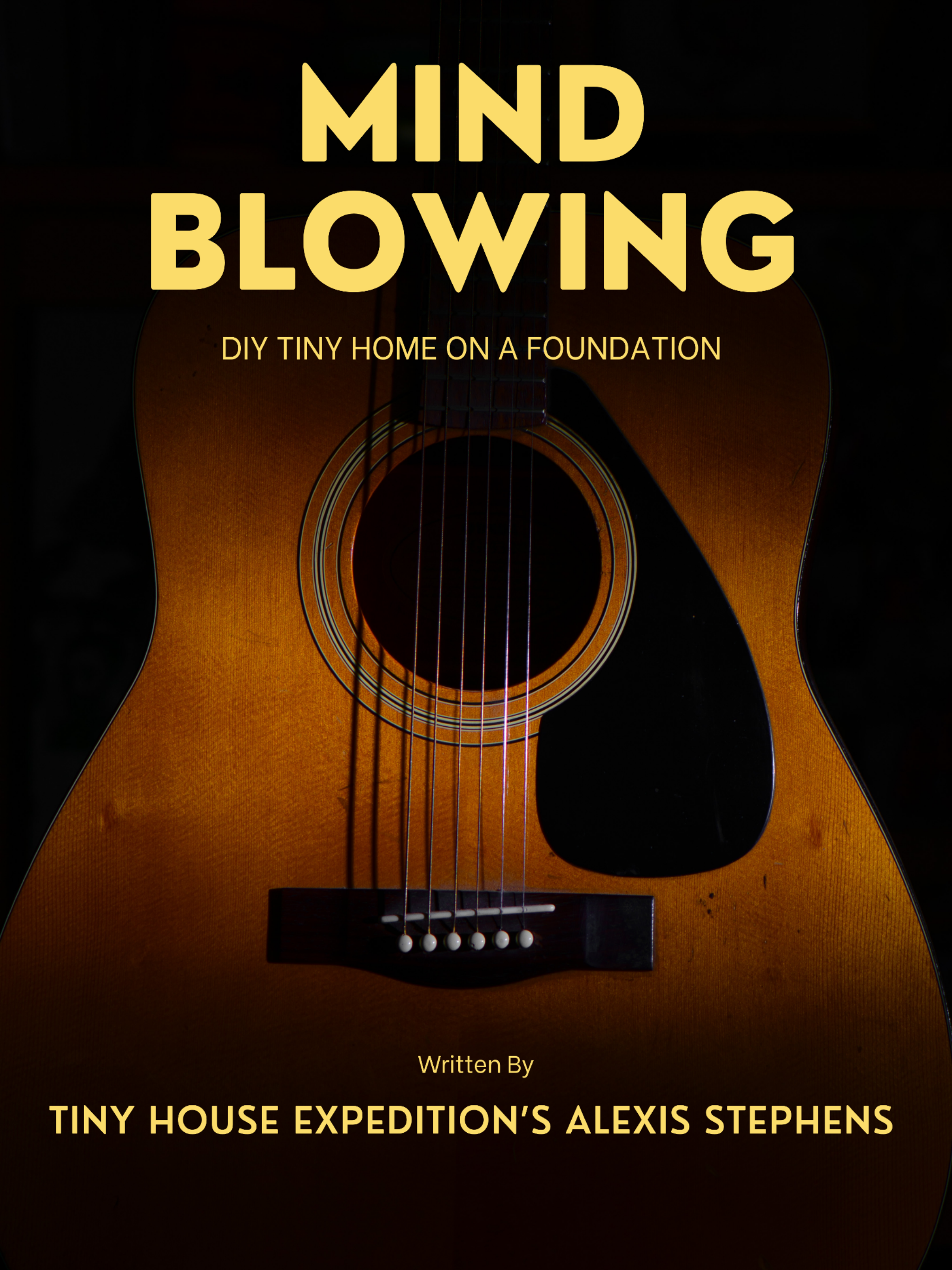
When walking through the Nomad Village, each traveler has a unique story to tell. From working full-time on the road to unique ways of building their conversions themselves, this resourceful group of people is happy to share their lifestyle with others. Justin Inabette, a Marine Combat Veteran, was feeling lost and couldn't figure out where he belonged. He brought himself out of homelessness by learning woodworking from a fellow veteran and completely reconstructing a fifth-wheel trailer. Justin, and everyone else in the Nomad Village, are willing to mentor and inspire others who wish to do the same.

The TinyFest Event is here to show you what's possible and inspiration is around every corner. There are so many reasons why people are making

the transition to tiny living. Whether you are looking for housing options that will help eliminate debt, considering a rental income, hoping to build your van conversion, or any reason in between, TinyFest has examples of tangible options for you.

Our theme this year is The Time is Now. With this concept, we are providing knowledge and resources to implement changes, both big and small, in your life right now that will help you work towards your tiny living goals. When you commit to going tiny, know that this community is here for you and welcomes you with open arms!

Learn more on our website at tinyfest.events and find us on Instagram at [@tinyfest.events](https://www.instagram.com/tinyfest.events).



MIND BLOWING

DIY TINY HOME ON A FOUNDATION

Written By

TINY HOUSE EXPEDITION'S ALEXIS STEPHENS

Meet Christo, a musician and DIY builder extraordinaire. He built a truly mind-blowing tiny home on a foundation mainly using reclaimed wood and salvaged & recycled materials. Initially, he planned to build on wheels but pivoted when the zoning of his land changed. This allowed him to build wider & taller, so he added an epic recording studio!

"In my search for land in the area to be closer to family, I was mostly looking for open-use lots. And what that basically means is that you don't necessarily need permits or variances for most structures. So you can freely build things.

However, things quickly changed almost within a couple of weeks of me getting my camper here.

I figured that the best way to buck having to pay rent was just to park the camper on my open-use lot, and then I could just build away.

But the city council decided to change the zoning up here. They changed it to R3 zoning, which is residential zoning. It allows you up to three structures. However, you need to get permits.

No trailer builds, so I decided to take the opportunity, take the lemons, and make lemon meringue pie. And I decided I'd build it on a foundation."

-Christo Morehead, [Tall Small House](#)





Christo's tiny home on a foundation is about 384 square feet, not including the two lofts. With the lofts, it comes to approximately 480 square feet. The dimensions come to 32 feet long and 12 feet wide. At the highest peak, the ceiling is 15 feet tall, which creates a sense of spaciousness, making it hard to believe the house isn't bigger.



Christo's extreme attention to detail in every design aspect makes his tiny home truly impressive. For instance, he emphasized practical storage right where you need it, like the clothes storage next to the washer/dryer in the bathroom. His eye for symmetry also showcases this. As an illustration, the Juliet balconies in each loft have a beautifully symmetrical placement, shape, and decorative elements.

About 80% of Christo's tiny home uses reclaimed & recycled materials.

Many of these could be considered trash. However, you'd never guess because of Christo's impeccable execution of the alternative materials. He used paper bags, for example, as a kind of wallpaper for the hallway and entry closet. It gives the illusion that it is somewhere between marble and leather.

While it's exceptionally inexpensive, it's also very time-consuming.

Basically, you take pieces of a paper bag and crumple them up. Then, you use a mixture of half glue/half water. Next, apply it and sand it down. Add a stain. Finish with a coat of varnish or armor seal. Check out this [how-to guide](#) with more details.

He used flooring scraps as another excellent thrifty material choice to create a striking wall paneling. As Christo shares, many people bring their remaining flooring to Lowe's, thinking they will get their money back. But since they can't resell, it can be given away. Christo used various types of hardwood flooring. Then, he painstakingly laid it all out to achieve a beautiful mosaic.

Christo admits that his tiny home design began with a simple idea: how to make a more creative staircase.

He just wanted to make something with a small footprint that maximizes all available floor space. As a result, the entire house was designed around alternating tread stairs—a cross between a ladder and a staircase.

As you walk up, each foot has a separate cadence as it steps on the alternating boxes that comprise the entire structure. The backside creates cubby spaces. Christo utilized the stair-backs in the kitchen and bathroom for loads of storage.

One of the most unbelievable features of Christo's tiny house is the recording studio with a full-size piano! It's a great example of how he turned lemons into lemon meringue pie. By pivoting from his plan to build a home on wheels to a foundation-based one, Christo expanded the width and height of his design to accommodate this room. Otherwise, he planned to build a separate structure that he'd have to power and heat.

How Christo approached the design of his lofted music studio:

"Because I'm in such a small space, I needed to come up with a workflow, which would allow me to move around in a circle and to be able to record, mix, and play instruments very quickly and in a short period be able to return back to my main recording workstation.

That's how I got my start.

The biggest problem you have in any recording studio, especially one this small, is slapback and reverberation from all of the acoustics that are going on.

So the way you manage this is through two techniques. One is called absorption. It is usually handled through foam, which I have these up for.

Then, with the scraps and triangles that were cut off of the leftover framing from the house, I was able to make a reflector.

Basically, if you think a sound is kind of like water, you're able to distribute it and have it splash in other areas. Then, it controls a lot of echoes and feedback, cone filters, and things of that nature.

It's worked so far with both live instrumentations and for listening when I'm doing mixed sounds for songs.

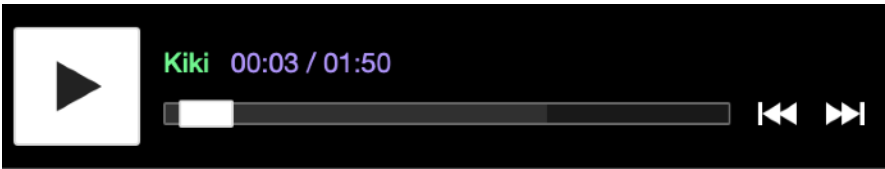
But I put them on giant command strip Velcro in case I needed to move things around if it didn't work out."







WATCH THE YOUTUBE TOUR HERE

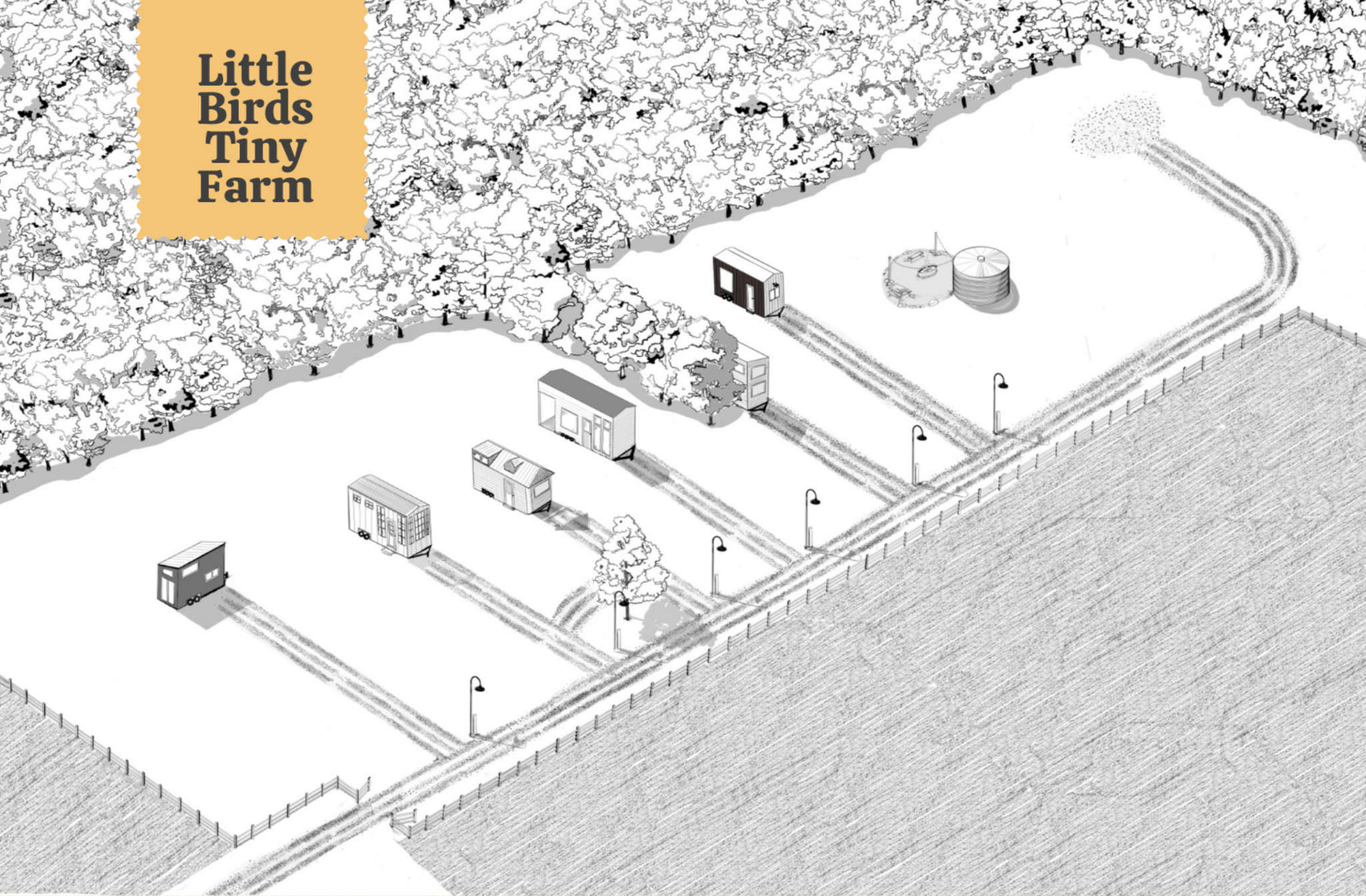


Listen to **Christo's Original Music**





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EXPLORING THE TINY HOUSE REVOLUTION



A SIMPLER REVOLUTION

In recent years, a quiet revolution has been taking place across the globe. Seasoned tiny houser **Andrew Odom** explores how this revolution has challenged conventional notions of homeownership and subtly redefined the meaning of a fulfilling life.

At the heart of the modern tiny house movement lies a trend that has not only inspired individuals to downsize their living spaces but has also catalyzed a broader shift towards simpler, more sustainable lifestyles. From urban centers to remote countryside retreats, the tiny house movement has captured the imaginations of countless individuals seeking to break free from the shackles of consumerism and embrace a life of minimalism.

The roots of the tiny house movement can be traced back to the early 2000s when a growing number of individuals began to question the necessity of large, energy-intensive homes. Faced with skyrocketing housing costs and an increasingly volatile economy, many people began to seek out alternative housing solutions that offered greater affordability, flexibility, and freedom. Thus, the tiny house was born - a compact, ingeniously designed dwelling

that prioritizes functionality and efficiency over excess space.

In this era where the dream of homeownership often seems elusive due to soaring real estate prices, the tiny house movement has emerged as a beacon of hope for those seeking a more affordable and sustainable alternative. As traditional homes become increasingly expensive and out of reach for many, tiny houses have become a symbol of financial freedom and a

EXPLORING THE TINY HOUSE REVOLUTION

practical solution for those looking to escape the shackles of exorbitant mortgages.

The skyrocketing costs of traditional homeownership have led many individuals to question the value of large, space-consuming dwellings. The tiny house phenomenon, born out of a desire for economic liberation, offers a viable option for those seeking to achieve homeownership without being burdened by decades of mortgage payments. The affordability of tiny houses is a game-changer, allowing individuals to invest in a home that meets their needs without succumbing to the financial strain associated with conventional real estate.

Tiny houses, typically ranging from 100 to 400 square feet, require fewer materials and resources during construction, resulting in a significantly lower overall cost compared to their larger counterparts. This affordability not only makes homeownership more accessible but also provides an avenue for financial flexibility, allowing individuals to allocate resources to other aspects of their lives, such as education, travel, or personal pursuits.

The tiny house movement challenges the prevailing narrative that a home's value is synonymous with its size and opulence. Instead, it promotes the idea that a home's worth is derived from its functionality, sustainability, and the quality of life it affords its inhabitants. This shift in perspective has resonated with a generation burdened by student loans, economic uncertainty, and the ever-growing gap between income and housing costs.

Whether it's traveling the world, starting a business, or simply enjoying more leisure time, tiny houses offer a pathway to a more intentional and fulfilling way of life.

The tiny house movement is not just about housing; it's about challenging the prevailing notion that bigger is always better. In a society obsessed with material wealth and consumption, tiny houses represent a radical departure from the status quo, advocating for a simpler, more minimalist lifestyle. By embracing the principles of minimalism and sustainability, tiny house dwellers are not only reducing their environmental impact but also reclaiming their autonomy and independence.

While the tiny house movement is often associated with off-grid living, it's important to note that not all tiny house dwellers choose to live off the grid. Many opt to connect to municipal utilities or live in designated tiny house communities, enjoying the benefits of community living while still reaping the rewards of downsized living. The beauty of the tiny house movement lies in its flexibility and adaptability, allowing individuals to customize their living arrangements to suit their unique needs and preferences.

As the tiny house movement continues to gain momentum, it serves as a powerful reminder that homeownership doesn't have to be synonymous with debt and financial strain. By offering a more affordable and sustainable alternative to traditional housing, tiny houses are revolutionizing the way we think about homeownership and paving the way for a more equitable and inclusive housing market. In a world where the cost of living seems to be ever-increasing, the tiny house movement offers a ray of hope for those seeking a simpler, more affordable, and more fulfilling way of life.

A Lifetime



Of Adventure

Written By Abigail Cornell

ON THE COVER

Abigail and Brent Cornell are college sweethearts who met hours from home but grew up in the same Ohio suburb. After college, both working full-time as a nurse and engineer, they quickly fell in love with hiking and backpacking in their free time, which led them to their future aspirations. Although some of their ideas seemed a bit far-fetched, they chased this one regardless of others' opinions... "Let's build a tiny house on wheels."

We came up with the tiny house idea in 2018 when we lived in our first apartment. We wanted to live tiny while we were young, have the flexibility to explore, and get a better idea of where we may want to settle someday.

To start, we bought our "big" house in 2020 and completely renovated it. Our "big" house was 1,000 sq ft. We needed a place to live, a little construction practice, and a spot to build. We lived on 1 acre, nestled between two tree lines, which was perfect for our future plan! We knew this was only a stepping stone...





ON THE COVER



ON THE COVER

In 2021, after 3 years of communication and design prep, our nonrefundable, custom trailer was delivered to our backyard and we began the tiny house build! In the same year, we planned our wedding and got hitched!!

We both knew that 9-5 jobs was not the lifestyle that we wanted so Brent quit his job to build our home! Our tiny house build took 1.5 years, although a bit longer than anticipated, everything panned out as we hoped, even the budget. We outsourced the trailer, stud walls, spray foam insulation, and countertops and we did the rest!!

Our tiny house is 28ft long with a 7ft gooseneck, which is our living room space. We have a modular sectional couch; the pieces move to make a full-size bed for us to accommodate 2 guests. Our bedroom is lofted above the bathroom. Our bedroom has a two-foot wide landing, which gives us the optimal space to dress without feeling crouched or cramped; this was a must for us! Our bedroom floor landing also gives us access to the “basement” and hamper. Our hamper empties into the bathroom, which is where we have a washer and dryer combo unit. Every space in our home is used and everything in our home has a place. Our living space is 275sq ft. Our home is 13.5ft tall and 8.5ft wide all to maintain legal road limits. We also have solar panels along with a 100-gallon water storage tank and composting toilet to allow for off-grid living!

The “garage,” which is accessed from the outside, gives us additional storage for our bikes, skis, tools, and many other things! Our fold-up deck and fold-down awning extend our living space to the outdoors, making our trailer feel more like a home!

As it stands, we have been living full-time tiny for 1.5 years. We’ve accomplished our goal of living in our home for as long as the build took. Throughout our travels, we’ve made lifelong memories, met new people, and have gathered more thought as to

where we may want to settle down someday. Although we plan to continue tiny house living, we’re beginning to plant roots in hopes of growing our family!

If you’d like to follow along or learn more about our home, you can **find us on Instagram** [**@itsthecornells**](https://www.instagram.com/itsthecornells).









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A-Frame Tiny House Plans

Alexis

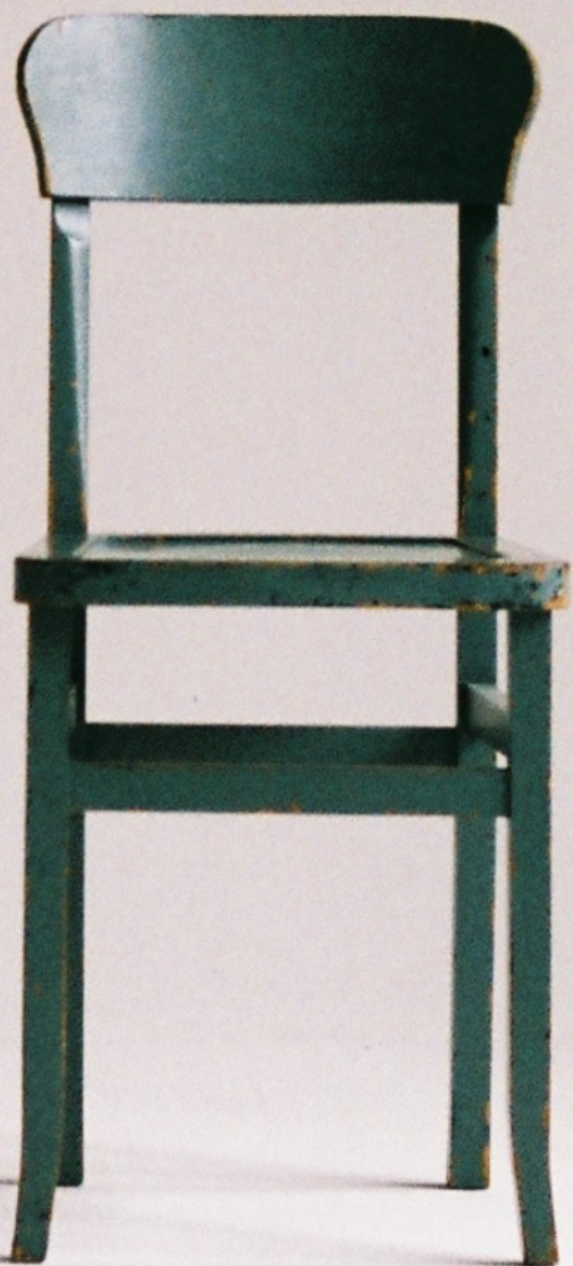
[Click Here](#)



Becoming a minimalist can transform our lives.

Intentionally owning less frees us from the confines of consumerism and enables us to focus on what truly matters. And when we **devote our entire selves to things we are passionate about**, we accomplish more than we ever imagined.

With that in mind, the further we push into minimalism, the more freedom we find. It is possible, of course, to minimize so many possessions that it becomes a burden to the life we want to live. But in almost every case that I know personally, the greatest opportunity of life is still found in owning even less.



10

Written By Joshua Becker

QUESTIONS TO PUSH YOUR MINIMALISM FURTHER

Especially after **the initial purge**, there's often room to dive deeper into the minimalist journey.

If you look around your home and believe more possessions can be removed but are struggling to get there, I wrote this article to help.

Here are 10 thought-provoking questions that can guide you to further refine your relationship with possessions and redefine what's essential.

1

What Am I Holding Onto Out Of Fear?

Often, we cling to items because of the fear of scarcity, loss, or “**just in case**” scenarios. Reflect on whether your possessions are safety nets or unnecessary burdens. Also, ask yourself if the physical possession you are keeping is helping you overcome the fear you hold.

2

Does Everything I Own Align With My Current Values And Goals?

Our lives are continuously evolving, and so are our values and aspirations. Evaluate whether each item in your home supports the life you aspire to live now, not the life you lived in the past. Because if an item isn't promoting your greatest value and good, it's distracting from it.

3

How Much Good Could I Do With My Money If I Bought Even Less?

Consider the positive impact your resources could have if redirected from acquiring to contributing. Could buying less mean **giving more** to causes that resonate with you?

4

Are There Possessions I Keep Purely To Impress Others?

Examine whether your possessions are for your joy and utility or if they serve as trophies for **external validation**. Authentic living doesn't require approval. Consider not just symbols of success that you are holding onto, but purchases you made to keep up with current trends and fads.

5

Are There Unused Items That Could Benefit Someone Else Right Now?

Think about items gathering dust in your space that could fulfill a need or bring joy to someone else. Letting go can be an act of generosity. And **generosity** is WAY more fulfilling than a dusty item on your shelf.

6

Have I Explored Owning Less In Every Area Of My Home?

Challenge yourself to look into spaces you might have overlooked. Sometimes, we unconsciously declare certain areas off-limits to decluttering. Other times, we just get caught up in other things and forget to make progress in every room.

7

Are My Possessions Still Dictating How I Spend My Time?

Assess if cleaning, organizing, or managing your stuff is still consuming more of your time and life than it should. If so, that might be a great sign that there is more progress to be made. And if there is more progress to be made, there is more freedom to be found.

8

Can I Draw Inspiration From Those Living Happily With Less?

Look to **examples of individuals** or cultures thriving with minimal possessions. What lessons can their contentment and simplicity teach you? And how can their example challenge you?

9

Did I Ever Live Happily With Less Than I Own Now?

Reflect on periods of your life with fewer belongings. Often, we find that our happiest memories are not tied to what we own but to experiences and relationships. If you owned less and survived just fine in the past, can that fact help you overcome the lifestyle creep that has become your new norm?

10

What's The Worst That Could Happen If I Let Go Of More?

Confronting this question can demystify the fears associated with letting go. More often than not, we discover the hypothetical losses are far outweighed by the gains in freedom and clarity.

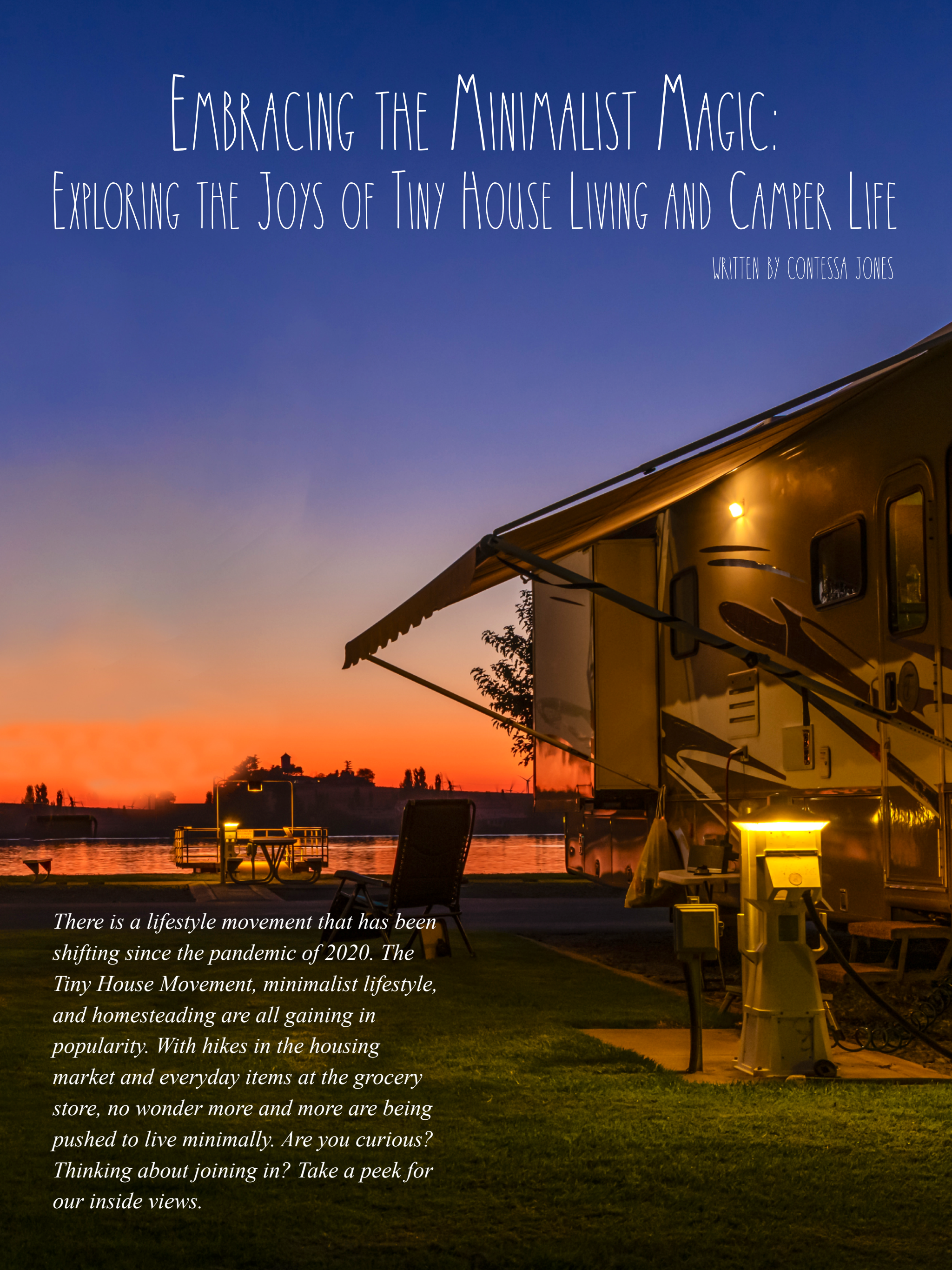
This deeper layer of decluttering is not about removing things from your space but about reclaiming your time, energy, and essence for what's genuinely enriching, and often requires us to ask the right questions.

I hope these ten help you find the answers you are looking for.



EMBRACING THE MINIMALIST MAGIC: EXPLORING THE JOYS OF TINY HOUSE LIVING AND CAMPER LIFE

WRITTEN BY CONTESSA JONES

A photograph of a tiny house on wheels parked on a grassy area next to a body of water at sunset. The house is illuminated from within, and its awning is extended. A small table and chairs are set up outside. In the background, a small boat is visible on the water, and a lighthouse is visible on the distant shore. The sky is a mix of orange and blue.

There is a lifestyle movement that has been shifting since the pandemic of 2020. The Tiny House Movement, minimalist lifestyle, and homesteading are all gaining in popularity. With hikes in the housing market and everyday items at the grocery store, no wonder more and more are being pushed to live minimally. Are you curious? Thinking about joining in? Take a peek for our inside views.

If you read our [Who We Are Blog](#), then you may already know our history. We got married in October 2013. We bought an older park model camper from a friend to set up to live in. We lived in it for seven and a half years. At first, I didn't necessarily like the idea. At that time being in my 20s we lived in an age of bigger is better. What will everyone think? I very quickly fell in love with the old camper because we made it our home. It was our space. A huge porch, flowers, lights, ferns, a swing, and just a great outdoor space made it heaven! At one point we even had a hot tub! (Tyler never liked it, however.) Life was simple. Just the two of us, some farm animals, the dogs, and our tiny home. No internet the first year. No TV for years. Just simple!



Reason to Go Tiny: Minimalist Mindset

Living a minimalist mindset is a conscious choice to prioritize simplicity intentionally in all aspects of life. Decluttering physical spaces and letting go of distractions so that you can focus on what truly matters. It's about quality over quantity. Stop worrying about what your peers may think. It's such a marketing scheme to need the newest and latest item. Whether it's the latest gadget, newest vehicle, latest gaming system, lots of name-brand clothes, or toys for your kids. Guess what? You don't need it! They don't need it! Our son Beckham lived in the camper til he was 1.5 years old. We learned you don't need much. We had simple toys, books, and his pack-and-play, and most items were compact like a highchair or swing. I stored diapers under the bed and came up with creative storage. Life was simple. We enjoyed our yard and a big porch. We enjoy each other's company and quality family time. We had pigs, chickens, quail, ducks, and of course the dogs. We gardened and I canned. (We still do, just on a smaller scale for the time being) We didn't spend hours cleaning and dusting all those knick-knacks. Having a minimalist mindset helps free your life of clutter. Whether in your house physically or mentally. We are not meant to live in stress, confusion, and chaos. Kids can also learn so much with free play raising animals, gardening, and being outside. We are all kind of like plants. We need that sunshine, a little water, and fresh, warm air!

We now live in our 2 bed, 2 bath timber frame home we built. It's just under 1000 square feet of living space. It's uniquely designed for our needs. When we first got married, we had different house plans, needs, and wants and then it evolved after living tiny and realizing what you truly desire. Our bedroom is more like the family room....as in we are in the era of raising young kids and everyone sleeps in the same room. I love the refurbished wood in our home and after 3 years have still not hung up pictures or knick-knacks. The wood was from a home Tyler's Grandpa built. The home was to be burned and we were able to repurpose it as shiplap in our home. Most of our furniture is hand-me-downs and antiques passed down. I absolutely will take that any day over brand new and modern! We've

farm animals and the gardens currently because the lake takes a lot of time and maintenance to grow the business.

With the minimalist mindset family has always, and will always, be our number 1 priority. We value our time together eating as a family, working together, and homeschooling the kids. We are in our first year of homeschooling. We print materials offline as we need, we do kitchen classroom, and explore whatever subjects the kids are into that week. Nature walks, feeding animals, music, and arts are a huge part of our mornings.



Saving money

Numbers 2 and 3 can go hand in hand. You first have to be able to save money before you can begin to invest it. Many full-time Campers chose to, during the height of the pandemic. The rising prices of rent, mortgage interest rates, costs of living with groceries, and everything are on the rise. If you are fortunate enough to buy a camper outright or lower your mortgage payments by half or more with a camper or a tiny home, then you can begin to save money. You have options of renting a lot with utilities included, traveling, or parking on your own lot/family lot. It doesn't have to be a camper. The unique stays are on the rise. The Amish-styled sheds or shipping containers turned into Tiny houses can be found on Pinterest with tons of ideas to remodel and make your own. There are so many options out there pending what suits your lifestyle and your needs. Do you need

or want to be able to travel around or do you plan to be stationary?

Investing

Living in a Tiny home or camper can be a strategic way to save money and invest in the future. By downsizing, individuals can significantly reduce housing costs associated with a larger home. Stop spending money on unnecessary items. The money saved can then be allocated towards investments, savings accounts, or your personal financial goals. This allows for greater financial freedom in the long run.

Our personal story is that we purchased our camper in 2013 for \$6,000. We then spent probably around another \$6,000 to set up utilities, build a porch, and furnish it. We lived in it for 7.5 years. During that timeframe, we put a majority of our money into savings. Tyler was burned out in his job as a mechanic and decided to retire after about 9 years. We had no plans...but we were financially set for a few months to a year if he needed time to decide his next moves. Tyler's first crazy idea (that's what I thought at the time) was lets buy this foreclosure (a known drug house in our community) and make a rental. So with the money we were saving to build our house, we then invested it in our 1st rental property. We bought the 2nd one before we even finished the first one. We played the game of using the bank's money and investing until we purchased six rentals. We built our tiny, timber frame home around year seven. It's still a work in progress but it is ours! It's a cash flow game like playing Monopoly as a kid. Tyler is a huge risk-taker. So, with a huge risk, hopes, dreams, and prayers we made a bid on the lake. Three years later we are still steadily growing and relying on all those hopes, dreams, and prayers. None of this would have been possible if we had jumped out into huge debts as a young married couple. If we had listened to those

to those who did not understand and looked down on us for doing the rebellious, out-of-the-ordinary thing. If we had a mortgage on our dream home and new cars, we wouldn't have had the funds to save and invest for our future.



It's a sacrifice to set aside your own personal desires to dream big and save for your future. Dig deep and ask yourself what is it that you really want in life. Is it your dream house? A business? Land to raise a family and farm? Just the financial freedom to have time to do as you want? Travel? Really think about what is your WHY. Now don't get me wrong. We have debts and big ones! But it's different debts when it's business vs personal. What we pay on business debts we know some who are paying that for home mortgages and 2 brand new vehicles!

Travel

Living in a camper or tiny house on wheels offers a unique and liberating lifestyle. Waking up to ever-changing landscapes, the freedom to explore new places, and the simplicity of having all our essentials in a cozy space create a sense of adventure and flexibility. You can travel from the mountains to beaches, meet new people, and try something new whether it's an experience or food. Many Full-timers are choosing the traveling route as a major advantage with jobs choosing to go remote since the height of the pandemic in 2020. With technology like Starlink Internet, you can work from almost anywhere in the world!



If our camper was not a park model, I would have wanted to do more traveling. We did however have the savings funds to take annual trips to the Blue Ridge Mountains. We love all things outdoors and would hike the waterfalls, zip-line, explore antique shops, and splurge for dinner at The Chalet in Little Switzerland. (If you have never been we highly recommend) We would stop at all the overlooks and just gaze at God's country. Mount Mitchell is one of my favorite stops!



One of my favorite scriptures is Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you says the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, to give you a future and hope. God wants us to be successful in all areas of our lives. Success in our jobs, careers, and dreams. Being financially successful allows you to be able to help the community, those in need, and your family. He wants to see us successful in our marriages and wholesome families. God wants to see you be prosperous in your spirit, soul, and mind. Again, we aren't meant to live in chaos and stress all the time. The workplace and financial problems are the number one cause of life stress.

Our tiny cabin built at the lake is inspired by living tiny for so long. We enjoy staying in each cabin as often as we can and experiencing what our guests get to see. We have plans for several more unique cabins and stays. Each one is different from the one previous. We enjoy creating these unique stays and absolutely love tiny living. We look forward to hosting you and your many variations of tiny homes whether it's your vacation home, weekend tent, or you are a full-timer.





Written by Alexi Eileen

It's All A True Story

"I've always wanted to do something like that, but could never! What made you do it?" This is the response and one of the first questions I get when people find out I bought and converted a van into a tiny home. In August 2020, I bought a used RAM Promaster 136 WB and spent the next year and a half building it with my sister. At 24 years old with no previous experience with building, what gave me the nerve to take the risk and go for it?

As a nurse working in pediatric oncology, I find myself often reminded about the fragility of this life we have to live. A lot of my patients spend months in the hospital, sometimes isolated in one room with only re-circulated hospital air. I am reminded daily to be grateful for my good health and have seen



seen firsthand that life can be too short. My patients inspire me to live my life to the fullest and try not to take life for granted. So, when I was getting a little stir-crazy from covid lockdown and my wanderlust was bursting at the seams I saw a video about tiny homes and thought - why not?

So, I went out on a whim and bought a van, worrying about the details of how I would actually build it out after the purchase. At the time I was somewhat blissfully unaware of the enormous endeavor I was undertaking. Throughout the build when the project would get overwhelming, I would do my best to hold onto the perspective that at the end of the day this project was an adventure and more serious things happen in life than cutting through a harness of wires under the floor (true story). In hindsight, there were many lessons to be learned from the venture.



One lesson I learned the harder way was to not expect anything to be easy. Instagram versus reality is a dangerous game and there are many realities missed on social media. You might be thinking, “Well duh,” but I would be lying if I did not credit some of my blissful ignorance,

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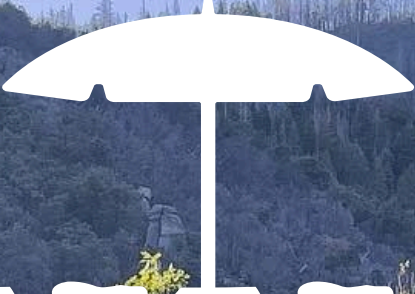
as I mentioned above, to help me just go for it. Don't worry though, the reality eventually caught up to me. The build process at times was slow and frustrating, but it got done with patience and perseverance. Traveling and sleeping in the van required more planning than anticipated, but made the moments of spontaneity, when I opened the backdoors to a sunset, well worth it. If you are signing up for the highs, written in the fine print you are willing to take on the lows.

The highs and lows are all part of it, which taught me to be open to where the journey leads. When I originally bought the van I was working full-time as a nurse in New York. By the time I finished the van, I left my job to pursue travel nursing. I had this idea of what life could look like being a nurse and traveling in my van on my days off. I got a job in California and never planned to live full-time in the van, so I rented an apartment and used the van on my days off to take trips. The reality was I mostly worked and lived a normal life, sometimes too tired on my days off to adventure out, but like I said before the reality makes the highlights that much sweeter. One of my favorite adventures was a road trip through Big Sur, California that I took with a friend who was also a travel nurse. The road trip was one we had only daydreamed about a year prior. We picked up some coffee for the drive and drove along the coast awestruck by the views out the window. Those moments were what all the work was for.

Sometimes I feel a little bit like a fraud, can I really say I "did van life?" That is my biggest lesson though, there is no right or wrong way of doing it. At the end of the day, it is the story you write and we cannot always control what happens in our life, but we do have the ability to write some of our story. So, "What made me do it?" I wanted it to be a chapter in my story, so I went out and did it, and you can too.







SUMMER DREAMIN'

**Cowboy Pools are the one-stop shop
for building a backyard oasis**



By Christina Nellesmann / Photos Courtesy of Cowboy Pools



Even if you are mired deep in snow (hello Lake Tahoe), it's never too late to start planning for summer.

The best part of the warmest months of the year is the ability to sit outside your tiny (or traditional) house and enjoy the outdoors. If the days get too warm, having a dipping pool to cool down in is even better.

Gone are the days of the cheap blow-up or plastic pool. Stock tank pools are all the rage

now and make a lot of sense. They are durable and relatively affordable compared to an in-ground pool.

Years ago I featured my own stock tank pool in [Issue #19 of the Tiny House Magazine](#). It was a fairly simple project, but finding the right equipment to keep the water fresh and a cover to keep dirt and leaves out was a challenge.



Cowboy Pools of Austin, Texas has fulfilled a much-needed niche in the stock tank pool project. Not only do they sell affordable above-ground pools, but they also supply filters, pumps, maintenance kits, covers, and delivery and installation. The company offers several sizes of pools with the largest fitting six to eight people.

These plug-n-play pools not only offer a way to splash around in your own backyard, but they can also become a centerpiece of a garden... they are that attractive.

The prices are also attractive. “The OG” Cowboy Pool Package 6-foot pool is only

\$1,850 (as of March 2024) and includes the stock tank by Black Label Hastings, filter pump, chlorine dispenser and tablets, maintenance kit, automatic timer, and delivery and installation.

Cowboy Pools delivers their products around the U.S. They also offer a DIY Kit for those you don’t mind tackling their own backyard pool project.

Amanda Shaftel of Cowboy Pools was so kind to give us more information on their summertime tubs.



COWBOY  POOLS



What do you think is the appeal of cowboy pools?

People want and need a way to cool off in the summer, and a traditional pool just isn't an option for most people. They're quite expensive to buy (at \$90,000+ in Austin, TX) and maintain, lead times are long and they're a hassle. A Cowboy Pool is a stylish and affordable pool solution that is practical for the modern home and it offers similar benefits for a tiny fraction of the price.

What type of research and development did you need to do to create your cowboy pools?

There was a LOT of trial and error that went into learning how to build the ideal Cowboy Pool. Pretty early on, we hired a certified CPO with years of experience in pools who helped us refine our process. But honestly, the learning never ends. We're constantly learning from our experiences and our customers.

What are some of your most popular sellers? What do customers request the most?

Since we released The Honcho, our patent-pending lined and insulated Cowboy Pool, this has by far surpassed the "OG" Cowboy Pool in popularity. Our other most popular product is our patent-pending inflatable hardcovers. An ingenious solution to the issues that face pools: leaves and debris, kids, and critters entering the pool.

What are some ways the pools are being used? Do you have some fun customer stories?

We've seen our pools being used as hot tubs and cold plunges, which we offer accessories and add-ons for both, so they're used all year long. They're used by some as family pools as safer solutions for their kids. Others use these for pool parties or intimate time for couples.

What is your favorite way to set up a cowboy pool?

Since our pools are so affordable, people tend to invest more in their yards and build around the cowboy pool which tends to be a centerpiece. These might include landscaping, decks, patios, etc.





COWBOY  POOLS



Learn more about Cowboy Pools at cowboypools.com



The content of a traditional print magazine with the convenience of one easy download!

