



8 Things to Keep in Mind When Considering a Tiny Home

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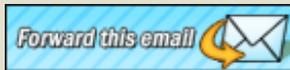
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When life seems too complicated, some people advocate the solution of moving into a *smaller* home to have a *bigger* life. For some, the tiny house movement has become a way of life, adjusting to a smaller space and fewer possessions, with a goal of saving money and focusing on relationships and experiences.

Below are 8 factors to consider before you build or buy a tiny house:



1. Know where you'll put it BEFORE you build

You might be able to build a cottage as an accessory unit on a lot with a larger home or in a rural area with a liberal zoning code. Or, you might need to build it on wheels and keep it in an RV park.

2. Decide on foundation or house on wheels

A traditional home will have to conform to the building codes for stick-built homes. A mobile home should meet the standards of the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association if you want to tow it or put it in an RV park.

3. Consider your family size and lifestyle

Estimate that you will need at least 100 square feet per person living in the home, and don't forget to allocate space for pets.

4. Try before you buy

Consider renting vacation cabins of various sizes and designs to see how you like living in a small space. Camping is another way to determine what you really need to get by.

5. Remember outdoor space is important

Porches, decks and room to roam outdoors become more important when your indoor space is limited.

6. Plan for utilities

If you park your tiny house in an RV campground, you will likely have access to electricity, running water and sewage disposal. If you build or park on your own land, you need to determine how you will handle sewage disposal, water, power and Internet access. Many municipalities have rules about required utilities, so consider the cost of incorporating them into your home when crunching the numbers on housing expenses.

7. Build to standards

Building codes exist for a reason, as do the codes for recreational vehicles. Any home you create will need to stand up to hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes or the stress (and cost) of towing it on the highway. Find out what codes are required in your area and build to those.

8. Consider your goals

If your motivation is strictly to save money, investigate other alternatives as well. In some areas, buying or renting an existing house or apartment may be cheaper. Before you commit to living in a tiny home, know it's a financially sound decision and you're doing it for the right reasons.

Source: www.livingonthecheap.com

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