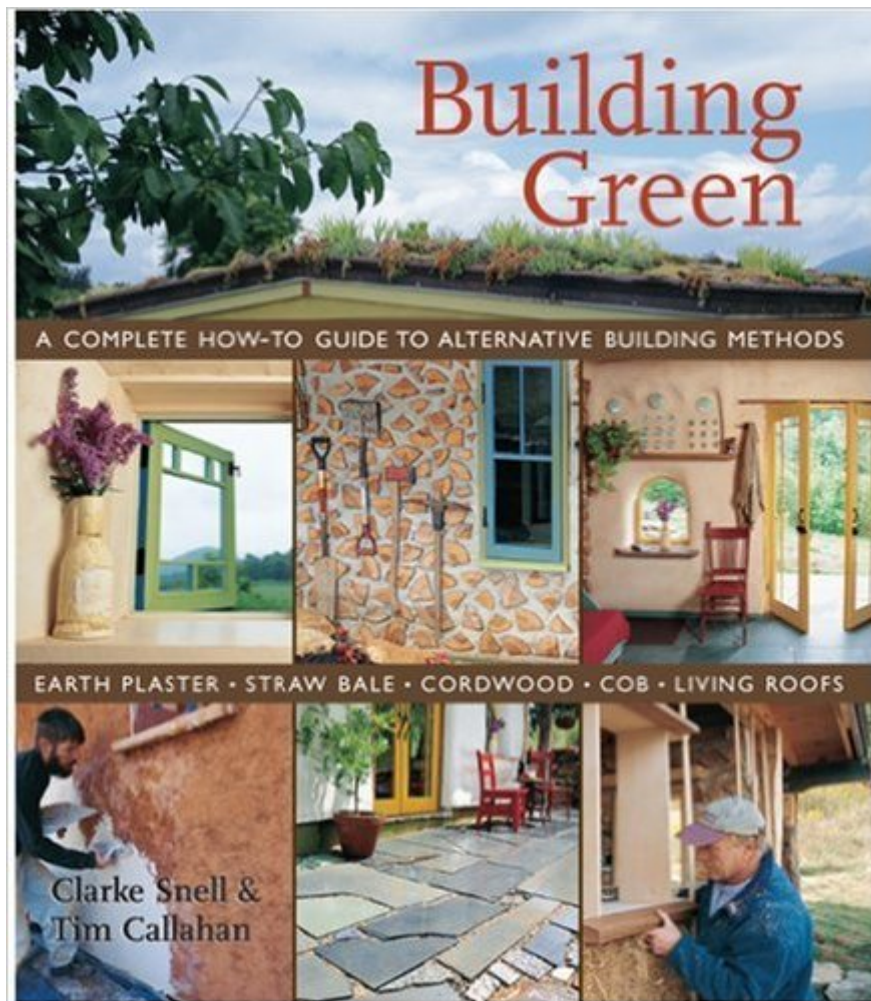


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# Building Green: A Complete How-To Guide To Alternative Building Methods Earth Plaster \* Straw Bale \* Cordwood \* Cob \* Living Roofs



## Synopsis

Clarke Snell and Timothy L. Callahan, whose popular Good House Book helped environmentally-minded readers create an earth-friendly home, have returned with a photo-packed, amazingly complete, start-to-finish guide to "green" housebuilding. This absolutely groundbreaking manual doesn't just talk about eco-friendly building techniques, but actually shows every step! More than 1,200 close-up photographs, along with in-depth descriptions, follow the real construction of an alternative house from site selection to the addition of final-touch interior details. Co-authors Clarke Snell and Timothy Callahan (a professional builder and contractor) provide thorough discussions of the fundamental concepts of construction, substitutes for conventional approaches, and planning a home that's not only comfortable and beautiful, but environmentally responsible. Then, they roll up their sleeves and get to work assembling a guest house that incorporates four different alternative building methods: straw bale, cob, cordwood, and modified stick frame. The images show every move: how the site is cleared, the basic structure put together, the cob wall sculpted, the bales and cordwood stacked, a living roof created, and more. Most important, the manual conveys real-world challenges and processes, and offers dozens of sidebars with invaluable advice. It's head and shoulders above all others in the field.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have been looking for a book that would educate me on exactly what green building is, whether it

is actually practical and what it would take to achieve it. This book answered all those questions. I think it has filled a void in the information market. So many people are not satisfied with current building practices especially in the US yet finding one comprehensive source for reliable answers is extremely difficult. There is lots of experience bound up in the very well-written, easy flowing text. The mass of photos is extremely instructive and attractive. This book is not clouds-in-the-sky, blindly pro-environment babble. Neither is it full of the marketing lies that exploit the "green" movement. It is useful for normal people who are interesting in trying to build earth-friendly but practical, efficient and affordable homes. The writers are very honest in their educated opinions and recommendations. And they actually built a small green building in order to write this book. So you get the useful, hands-on advice that they learned themselves the hard way even with their past, extensive building experience in the US. I appreciate their effort and book very much, and can't recommend it highly enough as one every non-expert should read if they have a possible interest in green building in the future or even in just building a marginally more efficient home.

At last - a comprehensive and attractive manual that clearly shows us how to employ 4 different natural building methods; cob, straw bale, cordwood and modified stick frame. The book is filled with full-color photos and clear explanations of the processes involved in constructing a small building from start to finish using all four techniques. That would be a worthy accomplishment in itself, but the authors go further, presenting vital information and concepts in a logical and engaging manner. The Building Fundamentals section discusses the workings of foundations and roofs as well as the effect of moisture and air quality on buildings (and their inhabitants) and more. The chapter on Design explains how to make the most of a particular site as well as how to properly orient your structure to account for climate, exposure, vegetation and terrain. The book does not attempt electrical or indoor plumbing instruction, subjects worthy of their own manual. The fact that one of the authors is a licensed building contractor lends more credibility to the entire process, not because the methods are not sound, but because owner-builders must often cope with restrictive building codes and uninitiated inspectors who also require some education in these techniques within a familiar context. It's worth noting that the diminutive size of the project (100 square feet) may exempt it from permitting requirements in many jurisdictions, if built as a potting shed or similar auxiliary structure. An extremely useful and enlightening read for novices and experts alike.

A very nicely presented 'survey' of several green building techniques with a practical and mainstream perspective. Less inspiring and holistic (in terms of presenting an overall philosophy of

building AND living) than the likes of The Hand-Sculpted House (Evans, Smiley and Smith), etc. but the beautiful photography and clear writing is a powerful tool to use in convincing the skeptical that green building is a legitimate and aesthetically pleasing option in construction. Really more of a 'complete introduction' than a 'complete how-to guide' in my estimation- if you are really going to build you'll need to supplement your knowledge with additional in depth books on the particular system(s) you choose to use, but this book will expose you to some of the options and provide you with an informational foundation to 'build' on (pun intended).

This is an excellent book that is easy to read and actual tells you step by step with over a 1000 beautiful photos how to build your own "Green" building. I am an inexperienced owner-builder and after reading this book I feel that each step of the process was described so clearly that I can use it as a guide for building my own house. None of the other books I've read on the subject have provided this level of clarity or detail - all in an upbeat, easy to read and sometimes humorous style. The first part of the book does a good survey of the different types of materials used in green building and the considerations of siting and design as well. The second part covers actually building the house and what to do or to avoid in the process.

Myself, being in the building industry, really appreciated that there was a believer and a skeptic to write this book and build the house using the thoughts they had. I like the honesty of the authors and how they worked thru to a common goal, and shared each step along the way. I even found it to be a great book on general engineering, helpful in reminding me of things I already know, and reinforcing them in less conventional ways. This is a very hands on book with loads of pictures and illustrations and for all of us with "pie in the sky" ideals, there is the balance of reality in time, costs, and functionality of green building.

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