

About Genera® Adobe House Plans

The current shortfall in the Earthbuilding trades is the availability of house plans, or working drawings to build from. At a time when custom drafting ranges in price from \$.75- \$3.50 per sq. ft. of drafted area, and when drafts folk who know Adobe or Rammed Earth are hard to locate, we will begin to offer Stock House Plans, based on about .06¢ per sq. ft. of drafted area. Our first house plan to be offered is [Solar Adobe House Plan 1560](#). As of June 2003, we now have 4 plan sets available from this site, including our newest plan - [Rammed Earth Studio House Plan 1342](#).

Yes, the price is low, but keep in mind that stock house plans, by nature, are not custom-drafted just for you.

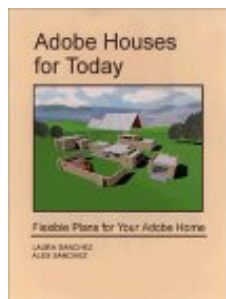
Stock house plans are purchased for three main reasons:

- The buyer happens to like the house plan and sees that few modifications are necessary.
- To learn how these homes are drafted (as an educational aide).
- As a base to trace from or modify.

Stock house plans save money, get you into the process and get you started, but often are changed. That has to do with human nature and local code requirements. But as any custom drafter would tell you, custom house plans get changed also.

We encourage those with questions about a particular house plan to email us at adobebuilder@juno.com. However, if we discern that you are trying to generate a mini-course by email, we will refer you to the [BackPacs](#), [CDROM \(Earthbuilders' Encyclopedia\)](#) or [weekend classes](#) offered on this site. Even if you already have construction experience, you are on a learning curve when it comes to Earthbuilding. Do not wait until the last minute to submit plans for a permit. Start early in knowing the local codes, working with your subs and building inspection department about the plan. Evaluate time and materials. We often suggest to owner-builders that they start the plans/materials evaluation process two to three years before breaking ground.

Books to Help You Decorate, Plan and Build

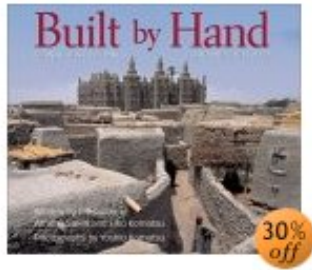


owner-builder or small contractor.

Also, we'd like to suggest a new book that will greatly help you in the planning of your Adobe home, and that has expandable house plan sets available at low cost. The book is [Adobe Houses for Today- Flexible Plans for Your Adobe Home](#), by Laura and Alex Sánchez. It is published by Sunstone Press, PO Box 2321, Santa Fe, NM 87504-2321. The ISBN is 0-86534-320-9. It retails in softcover for \$18.95 (available for only \$13.26 from [this link](#)). Laura Sánchez's excellent isometric drawings, rendered in her special auto-cad technique, accompany some of the best floor plans we've seen. This book is long overdue and is a boon to the

Genera Plans®

- [Adobe House Plan 1248](#)
- [Rammed Earth Studio House Plan 1342](#)
- [Solar Adobe House Plan 1560](#)
- [Solar Adobe House Plan 1576](#)
- [Rammed Earth Solar House Plan 1680](#)
- [Solar Adobe House Plan 1930](#)



For the builder, designer or decorator who needs a good visual reference of vernacular buildings worldwide, we couldn't suggest a better title than "**Built by Hand**" by Bill Steen, Athena Steen and Eiko Komatsu, and with color pictures by photographer Yoshio Komatsu. The Steens are Arizona authors who have worked with sustainable housing at home and in neighboring México for years. They have combined talents with the Komatsus to create this comprehensive 467 page "document" of building arts that still prevail in many world areas. It's about people

building their shelter owner-builder style to ancient, empirical standards, rather than the analytical, restrictive codes typical in developed countries. But we have to reflect that all of American society's earlier architecture was more empirical and "naturally green" than what we typically build today. The book evokes a quiet challenge to the reader: "how can we return to capture some of the sustainable, distinctive and well-built pattern and craftwork from the past, codify it for safety, and then reintroduce it to refresh ourselves?"

The building techniques documented display Adobe, Bamboo, Rammed Earth, Stone, Terrón, Thatch, Timber Frame, and various Plant Fibers. Rooftop shots of adobe villages, interior shots with the dwellers and on-site shots with the family or crew working show that Komatsu took the time to think out his composition, along with the color and details he wanted to capture. Komatsu's friendly approach is reflected in the smiles and natural postures of the subjects. It's a great visual of the natural materials, colors, textures and patterns that an architect, designer or decorator might wish to access, and it covers most major world regions- Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin America, India, with several entries from the U.S. Of the 19 chapters, several are devoted to storage, street layout and community planning at the village level. Others cover natural plasters and mud slips, often with their traditional embellishments and décor.

The book measures 9 ¾" X 8 ½" X 1 ½" thick. Printed on a satin-finish paper. Published by Gibbs Smith, POB 667, Layton, UT 84041. It retails in hardcover for \$50.00 (available for only \$35.00 from [this link](#)). ISBN 1-58685-237-X

Other Recommended Hardcover Books for your Adobe Home:



Casa Adobe

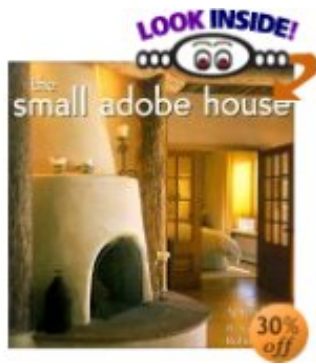
Written by Karen Witynski and Joe P. Carr

The book measures 11.24" x 8.89" x 0.86" thick. 192 pages
Published by Gibbs Smith, POB 667, Layton, UT 84041
(September 2001).

It retails in hardcover for \$39.95

Available for only \$27.97 from [this link](#).

ISBN: 1586850318



[The Small Adobe House](#)

Written by Agnesa Reeve, Robert Reck (Photographer)

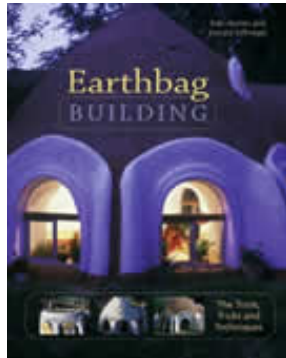
List Price: \$21.95

Available for only \$15.37 from [this link](#).

Hardcover: 96 pages ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.63 x 8.46 x 8.18

Publisher: Gibbs Smith Publisher; (August 2001)

ISBN: 1586850652



[Earthbag Building: The Tools, Tricks and Techniques](#)

Among the most popular of recent "alternative" ways to raise earthen walls is 'Earthbag' construction, first developed in the 1980's by California architect Nader Kahlili as 'Superadobe'. The method entails filling the hollow sleeves of common fibrous plastic bagging with moistened earth, tamping it, tying it off and shaping it onto the wall. Barbed wire can be laid in between courses to add ductility. Kahlili was able to have the method tested for California's severe seismic conditions and it exceeded all expectations, including domed earthbag structures. Code officials participated in the monitoring and some notes about the tests are included in this book. Kahlili has gone on to conduct workshops teaching the method and has now spawned a generation of inspired Earthbaggers who have pushed the method into new environs. Authors Kaki Hunter and Donald Kiffmeyer are two of the more accomplished Earthbag practitioners in the Southwest today, and their book, **Earthbag Building: The Tools, Tricks and Techniques** is the first comprehensive, handbook on the topic.

It's a *Mother Earth News Wiser Living Series Book*, produced by New Society Publishers. Our paperback copy measures 8 x 10 inches by 5/8" thick (272 pages B&W, with color cover and back, ISBN 0-86571-507-6).

Earthbag is versatile in that the bags can be filled with a variety of soils and sands and shaped into different configurations on the wall. Drawings and photos throughout each chapter take the reader step-by-step through the process. Eighteen chapters cover Basic materials, Tools, Tricks, Foundations, Stabilization, Electrical, Lintels, Roof Systems, Arches, Domes, Plasters, Plumbing, and Floors. There's a Resource Guide, helping the beginner to procure some of the harder to find building materials and a good Index.

It's one thing to teach basic wall raising, but it really helps to also describe the "finish details" that make a home complete and inviting. Kaki and Donni had to pioneer solutions that work for Earthbag during projects. They are the first to share these finish details in book form. The duo is quite expert and creative with cob and lime plasters and recipes on natural paints, plasters and wall coverings make the book desirable for green builders. The chapter on earth or adobe floors is another example of the "value added" character of the book, replete with line drawings and photos.

Earthbag Construction is too new to be defined in building codes. Thus, a professional stamp is likely to be required on your plans. As an Earthbag enthusiast, your mission is to locate an interested, open-minded structural engineer who will run calcs and stamp your plans. Keep in mind that Earthbag lends itself to fairly arduous owner-builder sweat equity. Most contractors would not go for the

labor-intensive process of preparing the soil, filling and tamping the bags. But Earthbag can produce a solid, freeform wall. Listed at \$29.95 (paperback), **Earthbag Building** is available for only \$19.77 [from this link](#).

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