



How to Design and Build Your Own House

Lupe DiDonno, Phyllis Sperling

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This book guides you systematically through the whole process of designing and building your own house. It offers practical assistance from the moment you begin thinking about the kind of house you want. It helps you focus your ideas and translate them into working plans. It shows you how to estimate costs. Then, step by step, it shows you how to construct the house -- explaining and illustrating every step systematically so that you can proceed confidently from beginning to end.

Here are complete, clear instructions on everything you need to know, including:

- How to decide what you want the house to be like -- inside and outside, and in relation to the environment and neighborhood
- How to translate your ideas and decisions into working drawings
- How to deal with all the components of a house: structural (roof, floor, walls, columns, foundations), mechanical (plumbing and heating), electrical, interior and exterior finishing materials
- How to establish the exact dimensions of everything, how to decide and specify where components go (from windows, heating ducts, and electrical outlets to toilets and showers)
- How to choose and specify those parts of the house (windows, doors, furnace, hardware) that can be purchased prefabricated and ready to install
- How to estimate costs of everything specified
- How to incorporate the latest energy-conserving materials and equipment
- Step-by-step directions on how to build the house section by section, from excavation and foundations to floors, walls, and roof; fireplaces, chimneys, and stairs; plumbing, heating, and electricity; wood shingles, gutters, and waterproofing; how to lay brick and principles of brick construction...everything!

Practical information is provided on purchasing materials and tools. And, throughout the book (exactly where needed) are pertinent instructions on basic techniques such as how to mix and work concrete, build forms, lay block, toe-in a nail, install a lockset, cut gypsum board and tile. Tables are included for calculating heat loss, loads, distances between structural elements, and so on. And the 748 line drawings illustrate every aspect of design and construction.

With its clarity and authority -- and its extraordinary wealth of specific, detailed instruction -- this is the single most comprehensive and useful book ever published on how to design and build your own house.

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