

Jamison and Jennifer Hiner

Basic Stats:

- What is(are) your name(s)?
Jamison and Jennifer Hiner
- What do you do for a living?
I am web designer/developer
- How many people do you/will be living in your tiny house?
- **There will be 4 of us in the tiny house, however we will not be using it full time. It will be used as a guest room when parked, and then a custom RV for traveling and camping**
- What part of the country do you live in?
We live in Omaha Nebraska.
- How many square feet is your house?
140 sq foot down stairs, with a sleeping loft of 64 sq feet
- When did you start your build?
In a section of our backyard
- Is your house complete?
Not completely, still have a lot of little things to do. (trim, painting ,bathroom walls and cabinet woodworking)
- Have you been documenting your tiny house build and if so, where can people find that information?
Yes they can see all the steps on my website for the tiny house @ <http://www.tinymidwest.com>

Background:

- Why did you decide to build?
I have always enjoyed working with my hands and building things, and I have had a dream of building some tiny cabins a few years back so when I came across tiny houses on wheels I thought this would be a great solution of of having my tiny cabin but the ability to take it to different places, instead of just one place forever
- What was your life like before your tiny house? Were you fairly active, have you always had 'projects' going on? Were you fairly sedentary and looking for a change? Did you tend to work too much? (This question is an effort at trying to figure out WHO gravitates to the tiny house lifestyle)
I have always had some sort of project going on. I'm pretty sure it drives my wife crazy, but it's almost a form of therapy for me. I work all day at a desk on a computer so being able to get away and build things and then stand back and look at what I have been able to accomplish makes me feel so good inside.
- How did you come to hear about the movement, figure out it was right for you and and get started?
I think I fell upon the movement when I was pinning some houses and cabins to my "Little houses on the prairie" (<http://pinterest.com/jhiner1978/little-houses-on-the-prairie/>) pinterest board and my fascination grew from there
- What is/was your design inspiration?
I think it started with the tumbleweed weebee, and I designed the house on sketchup, but as I started and along the way depending on material I was able to find. Ideas I found or thought of along the way. The plans changed and evolved as the project grew

Technical:

- How do/did you find the time to work on your house with a job, kid(s), relationships, AND building a house? Did you do anything special to keep the balance?
If I had my way I would work on the house full time. I was able to get a head start over the summer when the days were longer but now that its fall and winter I don't have the luxury after work of any sunlight to help with. My wife has been very supportive of the the tiny house and has allowed me to work on it. I have two daughters and I have also tried to incorporate their help where I can. Everly (2 years old) likes to vacuum, and Rachel (8) has been able to help me hand things when my hands are full. Now that its coming to an end, I won't have as many long days of working on it
- Have you run into any problems with your local codes? How did you solve them?
I have not, but then again no one has turned me in. I have talked to all my neighbors about it and they all think its pretty cool, plus its kinda tucked in the backyard behind a fence and its pretty so its not an eyesore
- Where did you get the tools that you use? Were they yours, borrowed, rented etc.?
Most of the tools are mine from past projects, but a few items needed to be upgraded
- How long did (are you expecting) construction to take?
So far it has taken me about 4-5 months, but everything has been done by me
- Have you/were you able to stay on schedule?
There has not been a set in stone schedule
- What is/was the most time consuming portion of your build?
I think I'm in that mode now, the trim the painting, the cocking all the little things takes up most of my time
- What is/was the most limiting factor for your build?
Nothing has limited me to much. A few things have been hard to do by myself but I been able to get it done
- Is your house on a trailer? If yes, how do you attach to the trailer? How do you move your tiny house? (Do you have a truck, do you hire it done?)
I found an old travel trailer on craigslist that was converted to a utility trailer.I attached the house using lots of lag bolts that go all the way through the wall base down through the floor and into the trailer. I did do it in a way that if I ever wanted to take the house off the trailer I would only need to undo the lag bolts from underneath the trailer lift/jack it off the trailer and set it down on a foundation. One of the cool things I thought about as I was building. I do have a truck that I found over the summer, its a ford F250 with a v10. The only drawback is that it has a lot of miles on it but its not a daily driver and has been great so far.
- Do you have accessory houses/dwellings that you use to supplement storage/working/living?
Just or main house
- Where did you get your plans?
Designed them myself
- Have you consulted any 'professionals'? (structural, mechanical, plumbing, design etc.)?
Nope just lots of online research and know-how
- Are you insuring your house? With who?
I will look into this when complete, I might try and add it to my homeowners
- Have you been using any sponsorships to help fund your house? How do you go about finding that sponsorship?
I wish, but then again I didn't try and find anyone

Specifics:

- What sort of items do you have for cooking?
Looking for an old alcohol stove
- Are you tied to the power grid or are you off grid?
Both, I have designed the power system to be like an RV, plugged in when I have power but solar and batteries when I don't
- Are you going to have a washer and/or dryer?
I was thinking of adding a small washer but have decided on a hand crank one at first then upgrading as I go. Line drying the clothes after that. Using the grey water from the shower
- Where does your water come from?
Hose for when I can get one plus I have installed a 30 gallon tank for off grid
- What kind of toilet are you going to have?
Composting, loveable loo style
- What do you use for a heat source if anything?
At the moment I'm using a oil filled space heated but I want to install a dickson marine or sardine in the future when I can afford it
- What are some of the space savings tricks you used?
Fold up seating, that houses the storage and acts as a large bed for the girls
- What do you have for insulation?
Just basic R13 nothing special work so far so good
- Where are you planning to park your tiny house?
In our backyard and then RV parks and KOAs when traveling

Personal:

- How much will/did your tiny house cost?
My goal has been under \$5,000. So far I been able to stay under that budget
- What is/was the most expensive part of your house?
In the future when I add a new heating source that will be the most expensive but till then it has been the cedar siding and the trailer
- 'Best' injury story (worst injury)?
Nothing so far, just a few hundred splinters lol, knock on wood
- What has been your biggest accomplishment with your tiny house?
Everything! But some of the small things I have enjoyed are the couch/storage/bed, the plumbing and the kitchen cabinets
- What is/will be the biggest benefit to living in a tiny house?
A vacation on wheels
- Is there anything you'll miss about living in a standard house? What will you miss the most?
Does not apply
- What has been the scariest part about building your own house?
When I was on the roof... Kinda steep
- If you could change one thing about your house what would it be?
I think my trailer will work fine but, a heavier duty trailer would have been better. I skimped on a few things to cut down on weight like the sheathing and the floor thickness. However I think it will all be fine
- Did you have cash in hand to complete your build, pay as you go or take out a loan to construct your house?
Both cash in hand and as we go

- Have friends and family been skeptical or supportive of your ideas?
For the most part they have been supportive but I can see the look on some of their faces of skepticism.
- Is there anything else you would want other people to know about your house and build?
Nope just keep coming back to see the final result and if anyone is interested in me building one for themselves I would be happy to entertain the idea.