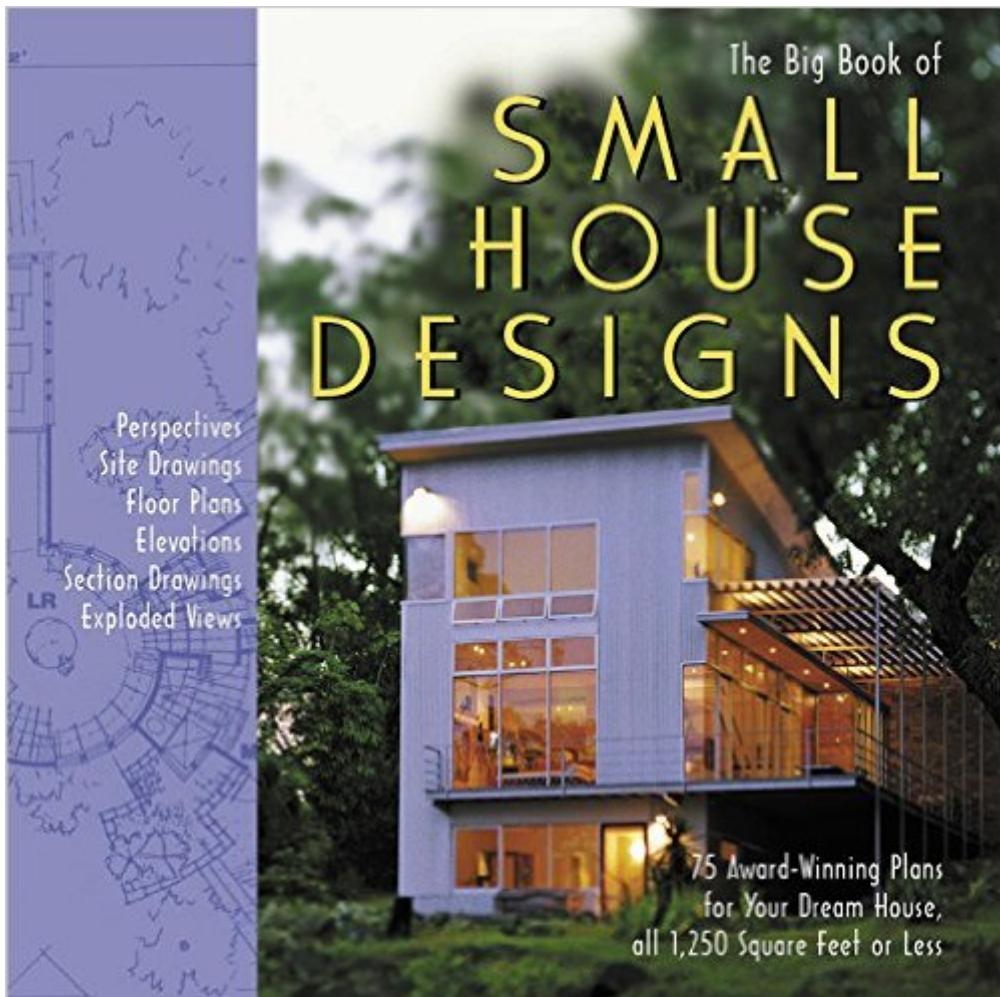


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# Big Book Of Small House Designs: 75 Award-Winning Plans For Your Dream House, All 1,250 Square Feet Or Less



## **Synopsis**

75 unique designs for attractive, efficient, environmentally friendly homes. Now available in paperback, this collection of 75 plans for small homes offers more than 500 usable blueprints and other illustrations for a variety of living spaces suitable for every environment and style, from a New England farmhouse to a sophisticated townhouse in the city to a Santa Fe ranch. The designs include site drawings, floor plans, elevation drawings, section drawings, perspective drawings, and exploded views. A brief introduction to each home describes its setting, the philosophy behind the design and its intended use, materials used, recommended landscaping, and more. Many of the homes come with money-saving and environmentally sound features such as solar panels and water heaters, wood stoves, ceiling fans, airlock entries, wind power alternatives, and natural gas heaters.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

As one of the putative "Authors" of this book, I'm dismayed at Black Dog and Leventhal's sloppy work and failure to involve -- or even notify me -- that they were publishing this thing back in 2004. They essentially scrambled houses from two books I'd previously done with Storey Publishing and presumably -- I've never met or spoken with the other four "authors" -- used their ideas as well. I received one modest check after the book was in production and haven't seen a cent since. Nasty business and a pretty useless book, I'd say. I'm ashamed to have my name on the cover. Don Metz

While containing a number of interesting plans for small homes, this book falls short on several accounts. First, there is almost no text save what is on the inside of the jacket. That's right: no introduction, no methodology. There is no explanation of which competitions the plans were taken from or what awards they won. (Amusingly, I went to show my neighbor one of the plans that I liked. He said he liked it too but that it was an old plan from a competition in the early 90's. And would you believe that he happened to have a copy of the competition from which the plan was taken!) Secondly, as to the plans themselves, dimensions are rarely marked and often unclearly. In the case of two or three of the plans this makes them nearly unintelligible. The lack of wall sections or descriptions of materials used for the majority of the plans makes it impossible to understand the particulars of what makes the houses energy efficient. In short, the book far from lives up to its description and isn't worth spending the money for a handful of plans since a person can look at plans all day long for free online.

The layout looks as if the home plans themselves were photocopied from elsewhere, often too small and without accompanying information about materials, why and how certain layouts work in the context, labels, etc; thus even as a catalogue of disparate houses that happen to win an architectural contest, this is not very useful. Further, despite being plans of 1250 sq ft or less, there was little in the way of explanation of how this space is designed to accommodate living. Because of the topic, I expected to see a variety of houses designed to fit various contexts (urban, rural, etc) and living situations within the 1250 sq ft. I'm sure there are better books out there on this topic; not being an architect I don't know if this book would be useful to help brainstorming ideas or whatnot.

A compilation of few interesting ideas and very hard to see illustrations. Poor quality reproductions. No measurements at all. Furthermore the contact information in the back was not cross-referenced with the designs & listed no phone or web contact, just mailing addresses. Seems like the authors took the cheap and easy way out with a good idea. Taunton Press's "The Cabin" is a much more inspiring & informational book. I do not recommend this book.

I knew the book wouldn't be a great resource but I thought it might have some reason for having been published other than the author and publisher just trying to cash in on the "not so big" / "green" trend. There is really no redeeming quality in this book. Most of the houses are severely outdated and are poorly proportioned. Except for one or two, they don't even look designed by an architect, they just look like run-of-the-mill cracker boxes, some with poorly planned additions. There's no

useful information on how to best economize space or anything. The "design" information is useless because the illustrations are so bad they are painful to look at. Some are so muddy, it looks as if the book were published using water damaged drawings and a broken Xerox machine. I apologize for not editing this review, but this book has already wasted enough of my time. If you're looking for something more current, try James Grayson Trulove's 25 Houses Under 1500 Square Feet. It's more design oriented, even if it does have a lot of filler. It's not a 5 star by any stretch of the imagination. At least his illustrations are legible and the photos make the book look produced by professionals that actually care about design and architecture.

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