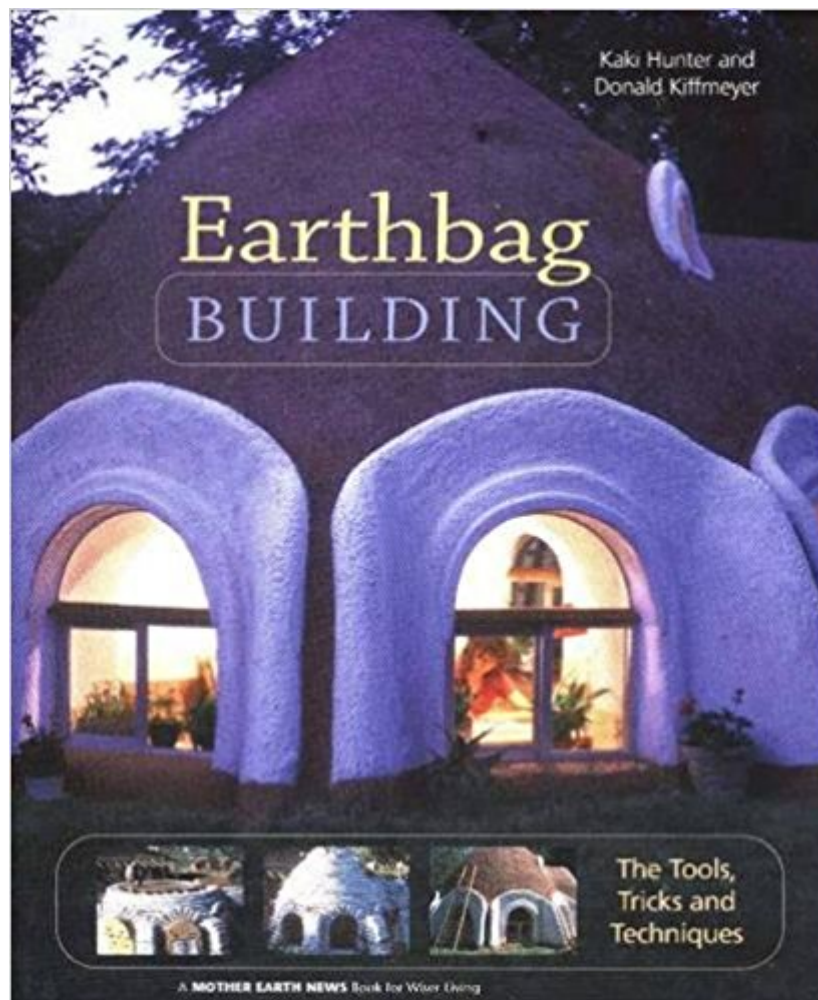




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# Earthbag Building: The Tools, Tricks And Techniques (Natural Building Series)



## Synopsis

Over 70 percent of Americans cannot afford to own a code-enforced, contractor-built home. This has led to widespread interest in using natural materials—straw, cob, and earth—for building homes and other buildings that are inexpensive, and that rely largely on labor rather than expensive and often environmentally-damaging outsourced materials. *Earthbag Building* is the first comprehensive guide to all the tools, tricks, and techniques for building with bags filled with earth—or earthbags. Having been introduced to sandbag construction by the renowned Nader Khalili in 1993, the authors developed this "Flexible Form Rammed Earth Technique" over the last decade. A reliable method for constructing homes, outbuildings, garden walls and much more, this enduring, tree-free architecture can also be used to create arched and domed structures of great beauty—in any region, and at home, in developing countries, or in emergency relief work. This profusely illustrated guide first discusses the many merits of earthbag construction, and then leads the reader through the key elements of an earthbag building: Special design considerations Foundations, walls and floors Electrical, plumbing and shelving Lintels, windows and door installations Roofs, arches and domes Exterior and interior plasters. With dedicated sections on costs, making your own specialized tools, and building code considerations, as well as a complete resources guide, *Earthbag Building* is the long-awaited, definitive guide to this uniquely pleasing construction style. Kaki Hunter and Donald Kiffmeyer have been involved in the construction industry for the last 20 years, specializing in affordable, low-tech, low-impact building methods that are as natural as possible. They developed the "Flexible Form Rammed Earth Technique" of building affordably with earthbags and have taught the subject and contributed their expertise to several books and journals on natural building.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

null (2004-11-24) Over seventy percent of Americans cannot afford to own a code-enforced, contractor-built home. This has led to widespread interest in using natural materials—straw, cob, and earth—for building homes and other buildings that are inexpensive, and that rely largely on labor rather than expensive and often environmentally-damaging outsourced materials. *Earthbag Building* is the first comprehensive guide to all the tools, tricks, and techniques for building with bags filled with earth—or earthbags. Having been introduced to sandbag construction by the renowned Nader Khalili in 1993, the authors developed this "Flexible Form Rammed Earth Technique" over the last decade. A reliable method for constructing homes, outbuildings, garden walls and much more, this enduring, tree-free architecture can also be used to create arched and domed structures of great beauty—in any region, and at home, in developing countries, or in emergency relief work. This profusely illustrated guide first discusses the many merits of earthbag construction, and then leads the reader through the key elements of an earthbag building: Special design considerations Foundations, walls, and floors Electrical, plumbing, and shelving Lintels, windows and door installations Roofs, arches and domes Exterior and interior plasters. With dedicated sections on costs, making your own specialized tools, and building code considerations, as well as a complete resources guide, *Earthbag Building* is the long-awaited, definitive guide to this uniquely pleasing construction style. *Mother Earth News Wiser Living Series*

Kaki Hunter is an award-winning actress who has been involved in the construction industry for the last 20 years, specializing in affordable, low-tech, low-impact building methods that are as natural as possible. Together with her partner Doni Kiffmeyer, she co-developed over the last nine years the "Flexible Form Rammed Earth Technique" of building affordably with earthbags and has taught the subject and contributed her expertise to several books on natural building. Donald Kiffmeyer is a trained fireman who has been involved in the construction industry for the last 20 years, specializing in affordable, low-tech, low-impact building methods that are as natural as possible. Together with his partner Kaki Hunter, he co-developed over the last nine years the "Flexible Form Rammed Earth Technique" of building affordably with earthbags and has taught the subject and contributed his

expertise to several books on natural building.

I love this book. My husband and I have talked for years about building an earthbag house. This book is a wealth of information. It goes through the instructions on how to build an earthbag house. It also has so many amazing and detailed pictures showing different building ideas. This book has so much information in it. If you are wanting to know more about building earthbag houses, this is the book to get. I am so glad I bought this book. It was well worth the money.

I really like this concept and this book explains it all in detail with a host of great pictures. However, don't try this in California until I write my own book on how to build an earth bag home according to title 24. Ha ha... This type of house can be built almost anywhere except California due to the overbearing earthquake restrictions. I have no doubt if constructed as explained this is a very strong structure, but the narrow minded building inspectors we have here just can't get past some things. Overall this is a very nice book with lots of pictures to help explain how to throw up a building using one of the fastest building methods around. I would highly suggest it to any builders library even if you build something else.

If you have ever considered building your own home Earthbag Building is a DIY dream come true. Years ago the California based architect Nader Khalili of the Cal-Earth Institute in Hesperia felt the need for people to be able to build homes using materials found on site. Kaki Hunter and Don Kiffmeyer have expanded on Khalili's technique to produce modern homes that are works of art. More important in our environmentally conscious era, they are green, Eco-Friendly sustainable structures anyone will be proud to own. This is a comprehensive guide suited to the novice or the experienced DIY person. The bibliography alone is worth the price of the book. With hundreds of black and white photos, a full color section of Alison Kennedy's Moab, Utah earthbag house and line drawings that are clear and complete, it's as inspirational as it is practical. Many people today are looking for ways to live lives in harmony with the environment. Here is one option worth considering that uses less forest material, lends itself to recycling lumber, wire, telephone poles and much more. It's a flexible, adaptive approach that allows for what works best for you. Even the book itself is earth friendly. It's printed by New Society Publishers on acid free paper that is 100% old growth forest-free (100% post-consumer recycled) processed chlorine free, and printed with vegetable based inks. So it's a step toward ending global deforestation and climate change. I think you'll like it.

If you want to learn about and how to build a house out of earthbags then you found the right book. I have a piece of property in the north woods of Wisconsin, and I was looking into building a cabin. I looked at all the traditional ways to do it. By accident I was looking at my fav site and it featured a how to on earthbag building. I was intrigued. It was a great intro but it didn't really answer my questions. So while browsing my other fav site () I found this book. After reading it cover to cover, it opened my eyes to the possibilities of building my dream cabin without spending a ton of money nor would I have to worry about chopping a bunch of trees to make a log cabin. If you plan on doing this, make a lot of friends and invite them over to help. Trust me it will cut down on the costs that way too. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to do this. The pro is also a con with this book. It gives you a lot of info on how to do this, but it leaves it open in a way that invites you to experiment with the designs. If you are looking for a way to build with out hurting the world around you, and you want something that can withstand an earthquake, blizzard, and most anything else mother nature can throw at you. This is the book that can help you build it.

Excellent, thorough, technical book on Earthbag building. This is a great book for someone who is really looking to experiment with earthbag building. I bought another book on that is way thinner/fewer pages and far less technical. The other book was \_nice\_ as an easy to read intro book on earthbag building, but this book is very thorough! I recommend this book for those looking into earthbag building! :)

Decided on a semi-whim to go for it and build a small studio out back with earthbags. This book has most of what we've needed to get going on the job. Supplementary info is on the web and in other books, with different approaches that all seem to work, at least for the users. This book could maybe use a little more depth in a few areas, like plumbing and door installation, but I guess the authors assume anyone tackling a job like this is fairly confident, knows some things and knows how to find the rest--which is true enough in this virtual age. Comprehensive and well written, gives you plenty of details to think about as you approach your own project. A touch too much focus on domes, IMO, but that's because I don't intend to make any. If you do, you've definitely got the resources here to get you moving quickly and easily toward your domed domicile.

A superb book! Complete and detailed with every possible question addressed and thoroughly explained. Drawings, picture and diagrams are used to enhance the text perfectly. Links to other resources are abundant and current (there are too many books with dead links) and those links

supply valuable add-on information that will be needed when I can start getting dirty. I am unable to build an earthbag house at the moment, but I continue to read the book in preparation for the day I can put the book to a full use.

I do feel like I could build an Earthbag building now. I still have a few questions about building in my wet climate (this really explains desert/dry climate building very thoroughly and touches on other climates--oh well, that's what online forums are for:) This is a practical guide that walks you through the steps.

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