

## Dollhouses on a Budget

At one time, dollhouses were the exclusive province of the extremely wealthy. Dollhouse craftsmanship was a skill known only to a few highly trained artisans and every piece, from the shell to the furniture, had to be specially commissioned. These dollhouses were beautiful showpieces for those who could afford them, but were out of reach for the vast majority of the population.

Now, however, mass production and lower material costs, combined with the do-it-yourself craze, have made beautiful and inviting dollhouses affordable for everyone. While some still spend thousands of dollars per dollhouse, this is no longer necessary. With a bit of ingenuity and some guidance, plus a bit of carpentry skill and an artistic eye, you can create an inviting and aesthetically pleasing dollhouse on even the tightest project budget.

If you want to build the dollhouse from a kit, many budget options exist. Generally, a budget dollhouse kit will be constructed from 1/8" plywood or a combination of plywood and MDF pieces. Many parts will be made of pre-formed plastic. These kits are well made and pleasing to look at, although the thinner construction makes them less durable in the end. However, if you are not planning to create an heirloom to survive generations, the budget kits offer a lot of value for your money. You can get small kits for under \$30, with a reasonably large budget kit averaging around \$100. Be sure to shop around, particularly online, as prices can vary widely.

Another option is to build the dollhouse yourself. While plywood is the most commonly used material in dollhouses today, other options are available as well. You could create a dollhouse out of cardboard, shoeboxes, foil pans or many other items that you already have on hand. While a dollhouse made out of these materials may not last as long as one crafted from wood, the dollhouse will be much lighter weight and easily portable. This is a great option for making a dollhouse designed to be played with rather than displayed, since the low construction cost makes the dollhouse easy to replace when necessary.

Dollhouse furnishings need not be expensive either. Take advantage of the wide selection of printables that are available across the internet. Printables are pieces that are designed to be printed out on your computer printer, attached to some form of backing (cardboard works well) and folded and shaped for installation into your dollhouse. Many printables are completely free for personal use; others are available for a very small fee. Printables are available for everything from wallpaper to furniture and from flooring to hat boxes. You can furnish your dollhouse quite extravagantly using only printables. You can also make your own printables from photos and scanned images that you then manipulate in your favorite photo-editing program.

It is entirely possible to build and fully furnish a large dollhouse on a very small budget. Be willing to think outside the box and use your imagination and creative skills. Many books and websites are available to help with your project or simply give you ideas from which to start. Once the province of wealthy aristocrats, the dollhouses of today are accessible to all. Remember that the building process is part of the fun.

## About the Author

Learn more about the fascinating world of miniatures. For a great selection of [affordable dollhouse kits](#), visit [www.TheMagicalDollhouse.com](http://www.TheMagicalDollhouse.com) today.

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