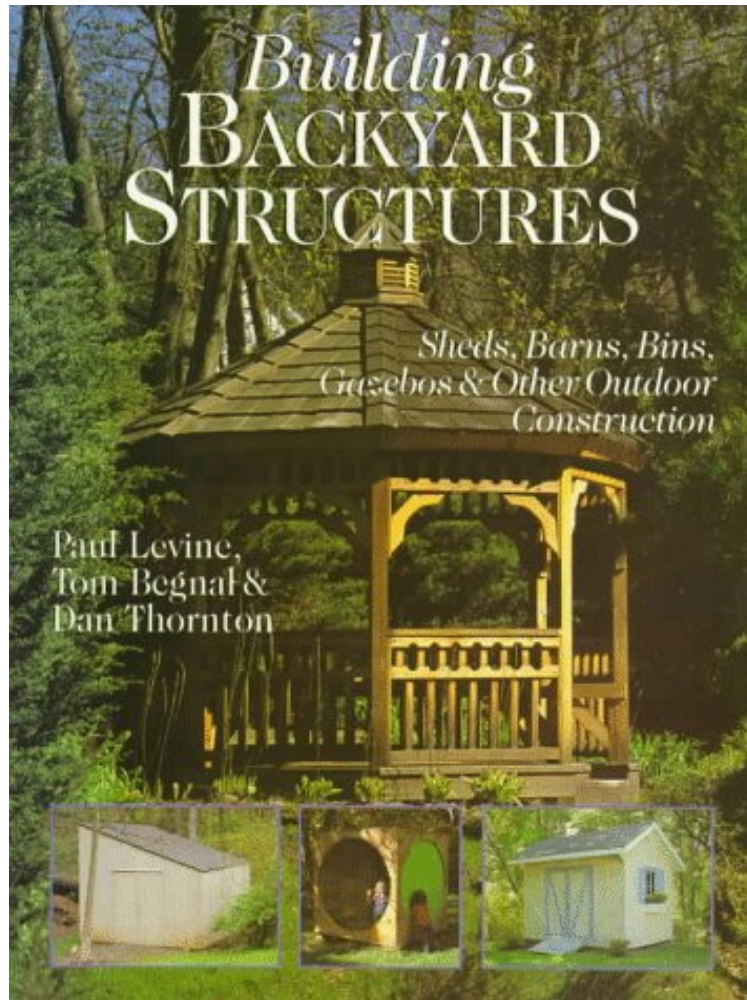


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## Building Backyard Structures: Sheds, Barns, Bins, Gazebos Other Outdoor Construction

*Paul Levine, Tom Begnal, Dan Thornton*  
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**Paul Levine, Tom Begnal, Dan Thornton : Building Backyard Structures: Sheds, Barns, Bins, Gazebos Other Outdoor Construction** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Building Backyard Structures: Sheds, Barns, Bins, Gazebos Other Outdoor Construction:

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Looks pretty, but this is NOT a very useful book By Henry Perkins [Just over 1.5 stars] "Building Backyard Structures" is a deceptively good-looking book. Alas, nice color pictures won't help you design and build the shed or other small building you need in your backyard. A more accurate title would be "Plans for Seven Backyard Structures". If you want ANYTHING other than these exact seven plans you'll need to look elsewhere. The deception starts right at the beginning. The chapters are: 1. Building Materials 2.

Planning Your Project  
3. Foundations  
4. Framing  
5. Roofing  
6. Siding  
7. Doors and Windows  
8. Utility Shed  
9. Pole Barn  
10. Woodshed  
11. Garbage House  
12. Pool or Patio Shed  
13. Gazebo  
14. Children's Playhouse/Outdoor Toy Storage Shed

and you'd reasonably expect that the first seven chapters would provide a useful framework for creating your own small backyard project. You would be wrong, however. In Chapter 3 the book illustrates five types of foundations. Unfortunately, the text then only discusses how to work with two of them; if you've got a wooden post or concrete slab project in mind, for instance, you're out of luck. Chapter 4 is even more disappointing. Rather than tell you what you need to know to frame a shed wall, it merely states that "Local codes and the structure's design will dictate the stud spacing". The chapter goes through the steps of framing in numbered order, but again doesn't tell you enough to know what you're doing. Another quote: "Step 12: Add the Bracing. Walls with plywood sheathing or siding generally do not require additional bracing." There's no further explanation about when this "generally" applies, or why. Moving on to roof framing, the authors once again fall back to "Local building codes and the structure's design are going to dictate the size and spacing of the rafters" -- again, without telling you enough to create or even modify an existing design. Finally, they tell you how to create only bird's-mouth rafters, but then later in the book the plans for two smaller projects use straight rafters and mitered studs, instead. Chapter 5 talks about five types of roofing materials, but then only discusses how to use two of them -- neither of which are suitable for shallow-pitched roofs -- but then the book doesn't tell you about THAT pitfall, either. Moving into the specific projects doesn't provide much greater clarity. Each project has a "Materials List", but in the Quantity column the information is often labeled "as required", meaning multiple trips to the building supply store for you. And don't forget that in addition to the "Materials List", there's also "Miscellaneous Materials"; you need all the materials on both lists, plus the materials they've forgotten to put on EITHER list. Completely missing is any list of tools required; you'll have to read the complete chapter for that. I won't go into all the projects. I'll just mention a few problems, and hope that provides enough insight into this book's suitability for your purposes. Do note, though, that NONE of the seven projects tell you how or why the structure's design will dictate foundation choice, stud spacing, rafter configuration, or roofing material selection. They just present each plan as if all these questions had already been answered. In the Pole Barn project the illustration shows a door made with 2x4 battens without diagonal bracing, and the text then says "Refer to Chapter 7 for information on making and hanging a board-and-batten door." But Chapter 7 only shows how to make a door with 1x4 battens with diagonal bracing, and only how to install a pre-hung door. In the Garbage House project, you'll need a router and four different router bits. No other part of the book mentions a router, how to use it, or why it might be required for a backyard structure. This project also requires you to assemble lattice from scratch, conveniently failing to mention that you can buy the stuff, pre-made, at any home center. Finally, the Pool Shed project includes a tile top, and just has three paragraphs that literally say "install the tile" and very little else. There's no information about what tools are required other than a tile cutter. Nor do the components (tiles, cement backer board, thinset mortar) show up on either the "Materials List" or "Miscellaneous Materials" for this project. (The cement backer board and thinset mortar are my additions; the text doesn't mention them at all.)

Color me VERY disappointed.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Book is Good. The copy I got from the seller ( Marketplace) was not

By MPK Nice overview of building some sheds etc. + Easy, pretty good examples, nice detail in some projects- choppy, some structures are very ornate, some would be \$\$\$\$\$\$ today I would have like more info on the finer details, like flashing, door and window fitting, etc. I'll try to write a separate review of the seller. The bottom line is the copy I received reeked of cigarette smoke. Not just a little smell. It reeked. Like, stick it outside on the deck and find a way to open most of the pages for days stink. Like, use a deodorizer stink. If you're a contractor, or do regular projects, this may be too basic. If you can swing a hammer and use a saw, this ought to be ok.

78 of 89 people found the following review helpful. Very informative!

By A Customer This is the best book of this type I have seen. Separate chapters cover all the basics, such as foundations, roofing, siding, doors windows, etc. Good hand-drawn plans and drawings and lots of pictures make it easy to visualize how to proceed. The book includes step-by-step plans on how to build 7 different structures, but it's the background "how-to" stuff that I found really helpful.

Do you need places to keep the things that make outdoor living so enjoyable? Complete instructions cover the basics of small shed building that are common to all the projects, along with tips on planning, selecting materials, and choosing a style and color that looks good, as well as technical aspects of selecting a site, dealing with grade levels, and water runoff. Construction techniques come with hundreds of photos that show exactly how to lay foundations, set up framing, put on roofing, install siding, and finish doors and windows.