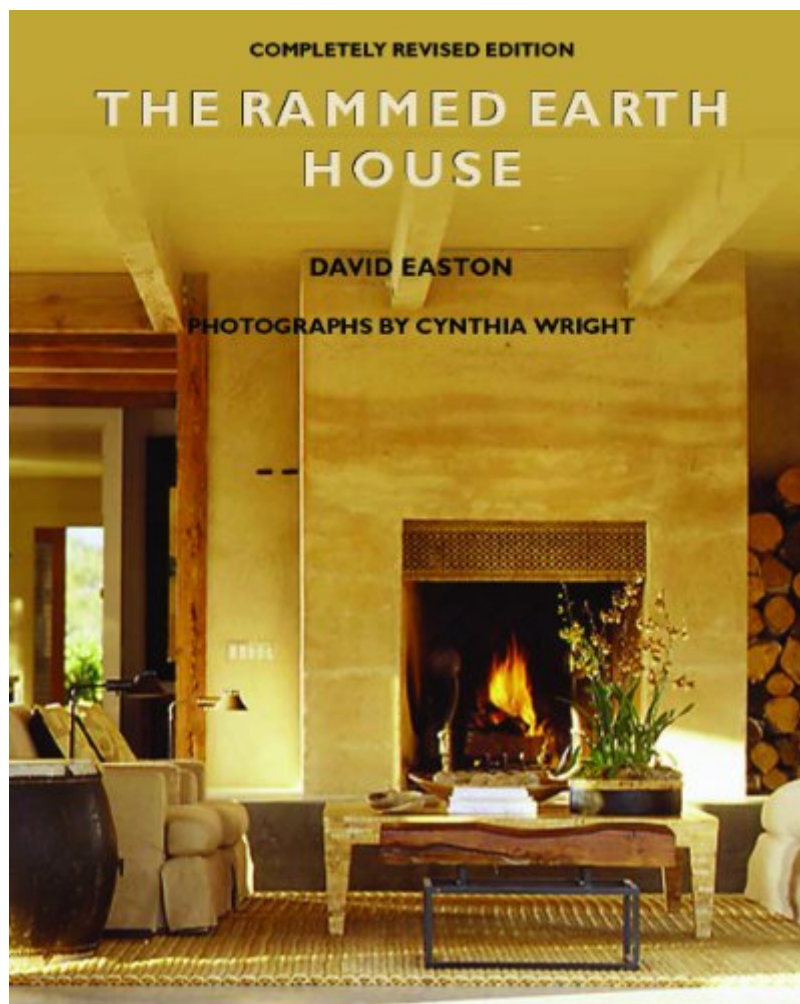


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# Rammed Earth House



## Synopsis

The Rammed Earth House is an eye-opening example of how dramatic innovations frequently have their origins in the distant past. By rediscovering the most ancient of all building materials—earth—homebuilders can now create structures that set new standards for beauty, durability, and extraordinarily efficient use of natural resources. Rammed earth marks a step into a sustainable future, when houses combine aesthetics and practicality with a powerful sense of place. The solid masonry walls permit design flexibility while providing year-round comfort and minimal need for added heating or cooling. From the equatorial tropics to the coldest northern latitudes, the builder and resident of a rammed earth house will experience the satisfaction of creating permanence in a world dominated by the disposable.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In Venezuela, South America, there is some interest in reviving an old method of construction, called "tapial" in Spanish (rammed earth). Many old buildings remain in South America from the time of the Spaniards. The book illustrates how a modern engineer, David Easton, in California, has taken

over the problem of building with rammed earth in country where there is very little "tradition", hence know how, on building with rammed earth. The book lacks detail on the rammed earth system employed by the authors. More drawings and pictures would be very useful to translate modern technology to underdeveloped countries. Best regards, Miguel A. Megias, Professor of Engineering Universidad de Carabobo Valencia, Venezuelae-mail mmegias@telcel.net.v

I purchased this book in order to find an optimistic source on the subject of rammed earth. David Easton does have a positive attitude about the subject. I enjoyed his enthusiasm. I enjoyed the 10 or so pages of color pictures and the many black and white pictures through the book. Like another reviewer, I felt the book lacked some good engineering sketches and some good pictorial illustrations of the forming systems. I was encouraged enough by his book to want to build a rammed earth house somewhere in the coming years. johnkurtz@comcast.net.

This is a beautiful book, which expanded my respect and knowledge of earth construction. I was formally most familiar with rammed earth tire construction (Earthships, by Michael Reynolds), but this more accessible and palatable version of rammed earth has wider appeal. The book lacks good construction and engineering specs. There are plenty of photos of rammed earth forms, but no technical drawings to help in their construction. I assume that Easton thinks that the subject of form building in concrete construction has been thoroughly covered elsewhere. His discussion of soil testing is impressive (as is the soil testing appendix), but at the same time discouraging. It seems that the likelihood of having proper soil at one's site is slim to nill, though most soil types can be amended with portland cement. I admire his reserve in not advising readers to just dig up their site and use whatever is there, without regard for the future durability and function of the structure. Overall, a good book, but it is absolutely not a step by step construction guide for the novice who is unfamiliar with homebuilding.

I found this book, as other books by Real Goods, to be very informative and easy for the layperson to comprehend. David presents the information in a reader friendly style, and the photos greatly enhance the script.

Nice info but drawings would be appreciated instead of pictures that aren't great and very wordy and repetitive at times. There is really good info in the book but you have to hunt for it. More set up explaining for a business wanting to start rammed earth how to do it than for an individuals help.

The book seems to cover all the requirements that need to be known. The explanations are very clear and the photography is also very helpful in visualizing what needs to be done. The book is also very pleasant to read.

I was disappointed in this book. There are lots of colour photos but not one single diagram in the whole book. The explanations are not very detailed and don't go with any diagrams so you are left to imagine how most of the processes work. I bought this book because it was recommended as having good information on soil cement and soil cement tiles by another reviewer. The total amount of information on this in the book is two pages and the gist of it is "try to see what mix works for you and then put it in a mould made of plywood of x dimensions". You get more information on soil cement tiles in the 5 minute video he made on youtube. That being said it is a "nice" book because of the photos but isn't really anything more than a general overview of rammed earth. It lacks detail. If you are looking into rammed earth as a "self build" possibility I think that straw bale, cob, super adobe would be a better solution. This looks like you would need someone with a lot of experience both in building the frames and reading the soil to get it right.

Any owner/builder who would study up on rammed earth construction, both theory and applied concepts, must have *The Rammed Earth House*: this edition has been completely revised and pairs color photos by Cynthia Wright with discussions of the art and technology of rammed earth housing. Chapters come from an architect and discuss everything from field testing soil to understanding layout, design, and soil compaction. A 'must' for any studying alternative housing, and sure to be a popular, repeat lend for any public lending library.

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