



The Weekend Homesteader: A Twelve-Month Guide to Self-Sufficiency

Anna Hess

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The Weekend Homesteader is organized by month—so whether it's January or June you'll find exciting, short projects that you can use to dip your toes into the vast ocean of homesteading without getting overwhelmed. If you need to fit homesteading into a few hours each weekend and would like to have fun while doing it, these projects will be right up your alley, whether you live on a forty-acre farm, a postage-stamp lawn in suburbia, or a high rise.

You'll learn about backyard chicken care, how to choose the best mushroom and berry species, and why and how to plant a no-till garden that heals the soil while providing nutritious food. Permaculture techniques will turn your homestead into a vibrant ecosystem and attract native pollinators while converting our society's waste into high-quality compost and mulch. Meanwhile, enjoy the fruits of your labor right away as you learn the basics of cooking and eating seasonally, then preserve homegrown produce for later by drying, canning, freezing, or simply filling your kitchen cabinets with storage vegetables. As you become more self-sufficient, you'll save seeds, prepare for power outages, and tear yourself away from a full-time job, while building a supportive and like-minded community. You won't be completely eliminating your reliance on the grocery store, but you will be plucking low-hanging (and delicious!) fruits out of your own garden by the time all forty-eight projects are complete.

The Weekend Homesteader: A Twelve-Month Guide to Self-Sufficiency Details

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From Reader Review The Weekend Homesteader: A Twelve-Month Guide to Self-Sufficiency for online ebook

Justin says

Most homesteading books will gather the complaint that they aren't detailed enough due to the number of concepts they try to tackle. While that usually is true, most homesteading books are equally guilty here. The Weekend Homesteader breaks things up into very small sections and seems much less focused than other homesteading books. This book seems to cover more topics and in less detail. Additionally, while some of the material in other books seems not too useful to me (animal husbandry and soap/candle/cheesemaking are less important to me than gardening) I can usually concede its usefulness to others. This book sometimes includes topics so basic (like making soup) that makes me question who the audience is for. I would assume most people will know how to make soup before they make the leap to self-sufficiency.

Nicole-Rose says

Recommended for: men and women that are interested in making their livelihood from home.

Remarks: despite the title, this book is *not* for people with full-time jobs that are interested in making their families slightly more self-sufficient. This book involves full-blown husbandry from growing fields of vegetables to raising livestock (things you can't do merely on your weekends off). On the other hand, I would recommend this book for stay-at-home moms and families that need a secondary income but want to stay home with their children.

Nicole says

I found this to be an excellent and thought provoking book even though I'm deeply unlikely to make practical use of any of the interesting advice. I am an urban dweller with a small amount of space to work with and an HOA that bans everything from garden sheds and dog houses to clothes lines. My gardening is mostly of the container variety and even if I could sneak a chicken coop or bee hive past my HOA my houseful of rescued PET rabbits is evidence enough that yes, I would be that person running a retirement home for old hens. Still, this book pleasantly combines the author's personal journey into homesteading with practical projects that I can appreciate and enjoy learning about, such as seeding mushroom logs, even when those projects exceed my bandwidth. And hey, I'm inspired to finally put in those rain barrels I've wanted for the last decade! More than anything else I appreciated the thoughtful exercises on being present in your world, knowing yourself (don't grow lettuce if what you really love are beets, even if beets are "harder") and making decisions from that place. That's good advice no matter how small or urban your homestead!

Shari Henry says

I almost shut this book immediately after reading this in the Introduction: "To folks over the age of 50, I usually describe homesteading this way: "Remember the back-to-the-land movement of the 60s and 70s? Homesteading is the same thing. . . without the drugs and free love."

Okay, wow. Coz those of us over 50 don't know what homesteading is. Really? And please, check your history, Ms. Hess, because those of us who came of age in the late 70s totally missed out on the drugs and free love stuff anyway.

I plugged on. Despite the author's loss of credibility with me to this point, it looked like the book covered a lot of ground. (Excuse the pun.) Indeed, she did. There is a lot of information in this book. But it's wrapped in a lot of text and is harder to follow than other similar works. For example, instead of printing an easy-to-read tomato canning recipe, I was subjected to eight pages of narrative mixed with photos of a woman who appeared to be over 50, by the way, explaining how to can tomatoes. The recipe was in there somewhere. I think. Also, the credibility question came up again when the author offers advice on buying in bulk and says that she's read that "you might be able to buy bulk food very cheaply from Latter-day Saints" but she's not sure if you can or not if you aren't a church member.

This book could benefit from some more stringent editing/fact-checking. It has a lot of information to offer, but it is too full of the kind of distractions and leaves the kinds of questions one might expect from a down-home newsletter or novice blogger.

Anna says

I'm not going to rate my own book, but I just got my hands on a real, physical copy, and I'm very impressed by how beautifully the layout turned out! I hope the rest of you enjoy it as much as I do. :-)

Mendocino County Library says

"A good year-round read. It's got it all: Recipes, food, herbs, gardens and more. If you want to learn to be more self-sufficient, this would be a great guide." – Ukiah Staff Recommended

Heather says

As is hinted at by the title, this book is geared more towards someone who is starting out with homesteading and isn't doing it full time. The 12-month guide to self-sufficiency line is a little misleading as you won't be self-sufficient in 12 months even if you utilize all of the ideas in this book. It's more of a guide to help you get started with some of the basics of homesteading. Projects are broken down into (for the most part) weekend-sized plans.

In addition, the book feels more geared towards someone in the city or suburbs rather than someone living in the country. Not all project ideas will work in every area which is true of most books as most authors will write about what they know. This book focuses on more mellow climates that experience mild winters with regular rainfall. The little quick hoops would be blown away by our windstorms and crushed by snowstorms in areas a little further north.

All that said, it's still a good book for those starting out. It has a lot of great ideas. You just may need to ignore the months and go by what works in your area instead. It is an overview, so when you find an idea or plan that you like, you'll want to find a more in-depth book to help you truly incorporate it into your

homestead.

Alisa Kester says

Really enjoyed this book. Great tone, and the projects were nearly all things I am either trying to do, or at least thinking about doing. Her section on growing mushrooms made me realize I absolutely need to add that one to the list!

Anne says

Clearly written book. You can skip to the right month so you can actually do something right now. I decided thanks to this book, that none of this is for me, but that I will try to plant and grow a few herbs in a pot instead.

Krista D. says

This is another book I test drove from the library and I'll be buying this one. Realistically, the "one year" plan is more like a decade long plan for me, with plenty of these things on my hard no list. But it has a lot of "next step" things I'm interested in to increase my gardening and make use of my space. I'm going to get this in ebook, though, because the print book was really difficult for me to read (font choice, font size, glossy pages).

Rachel Cuning says

I picked up this book from the local library looking for some helpful tips that I could implement in my own suburban homestead. I certainly did pick up some useful tips, and I implemented a few of the techniques she used, particularly the kill mulch. She breaks down the possible tasks on a month by month basis, so it can be a useful book to have on your shelf for a longer duration than a library loan. For me, the book's content ranged from "yeah, done this a gazillion times" to "wow, that sounds great/difficult; I'd love to try that!" There's something for most levels of homesteaders in the book, even if I found myself skimming sections on how to cook a chicken and how to use a water-bath canner. At the same time, I must confess, I still find the idea of testing my soil's acidity level entirely more unnerving than I'd like to admit even if I think I could manage it following her instructions. The book is clear and concise, and I enjoyed her tone and writing style.

Missy Ivey says

I love this book! It has lots of good, practical ideas that I have never heard of before, and some I have heard of before. Chapters are separated by month and things which should be done in those months. I have more fruit trees to plant this year and will be using her guidelines on using a "hugelkultur" (p. 28). Looking forward to trying other homesteading ideas in this book.

Josie says

I thought this was a great, practical, and INSPIRING guide to starting homesteading, with very realistic projects and goals. I will be utilizing it the next time we have a yard.

Shaun says

Most homesteader books make me feel overwhelmed and frustrated. This one is nice because it goes by month, throughout the year with tasks, rated by difficulty. Some are easy, some hard but I feel I'm able to pick and choose, make mistakes and chug along as I please. For example, a garden has always seemed so overwhelming and too much work, however Anna gives you an easy no fuss way to convert a simple strip into a garden YOU can manage.

Chloe says**Great book for beginners**

Having researched the subject extensively and begun to wet my feet with homesteading endeavors, I can honestly say this is one of the best newbie guides I've read. The calendar format Hess chose is perfect for making season appropriate suggestions for projects so the tasks don't feel like an overwhelming list. Love the detailed information on composting and soil science; definitely whet my appetite for reading further.
